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The Family & Diabetes

Together We Can Beat Diabetes

The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) has designated the theme for World Diabetes Day 2018 and 2019 as “The Family and Diabetes” with the message that Diabetes concerns every family. How true! You would immediately think about the financial and psycho-social impact on the family of a person who gets diabetes. This is compounded if the person first found out he/she has diabetes through a diabetes-related complication like a heart attack, kidney failure, lower limb amputation or even blindness (and this is not far-fetched, as half of Type 2 diabetes patients go undiagnosed and there is a long pre-detection period during which complications develop). However, there are greater ramifications of the theme—family support is crucial in helping a person deal with diabetes, perhaps more so with Type 1 diabetes—understanding of food, exercise requirements, the need to take medication and insulin shots on time and recognising the warning signs of hypoglycaemia in order to intervene. Family environment (‘nurture’) is as important as genetics (‘nature’) in pushing a young child or adult down the road to develop Type 2 diabetes and equally important in preventing diabetes. In a recent global Dawn2 study on diabetes, it was quoted that “Diabetes is a family’s life sentence” and nothing can be more true than this. In being diagnosed with diabetes, the family members who have undergone the same ‘nurture’ are at risk as well and, moreover, being a lifelong condition which requires lifestyle and diet adjustments, the whole family needs to join in this fight. In keeping with this our tagline for this year’s World Diabetes Day is “Together We Can Beat Diabetes”.

We are still in the midst of the ‘War on Diabetes’ in Singapore and this year the battle is focused on educating on pre-diabetes and how to prevent ensuing Type 2 diabetes. The mainstay of this is of course a healthy lifestyle comprising nutrition, exercise and weight reduction if overweight and the family plays a great part in support and encouragement.

So mark the date for this year’s World Diabetes Day Singapore! It is on Sunday, 4 November 2018 at Suntec City Convention Centre Level 3. It is a full-day event from 9am to 4pm, and it’s free to the public. The organising committee has lined up an exciting program with free health screenings and special talks centring on the theme. Come and learn or bring someone new to diabetes along. Show your support by coming together with those living with diabetes. I hope to see you there.

DR KEVIN TAN
 President



On 25 September 1971, Dr Frederick Tan Bock Yam founded the Diabetic Society of Singapore (DSS) to help diabetes patients manage their condition. In November 2017, DSS officially changed its name to Diabetes Singapore (DS).

DS is a non-profit organisation affiliated to the International Diabetes Federation and the National Council of Social Service. DS gratefully accepts donations of any amount to help fight diabetes. **All donations are tax-deductible.** Please make **cash donations** in person at any of our centres. **Cheque donations** should be made payable to ‘Diabetes Singapore’. You may also make **online donations** via <https://www.giving.sg/diabetic-society-of-singapore>.

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