

World Diabetes Day 2009

By Joan Choo

A warm buzz surrounded Bishan Community Club on 14 November 2009 where World Diabetes Day (WDD) was held. This year's event was celebrated in conjunction with Singapore National Eye Centre's (SNEC) Eye Care Day. The theme was "Understand Diabetes and Take Control – Save Sight, Prevent Blindness".

Commemorated worldwide by member associations of the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), WDD is an occasion to stand in solidarity with those with diabetes. It is also an opportunity to raise the awareness of the dangers associated with the disease and to educate the masses on managing the condition. Guest of Honour Mr Zainul Abideen Rasheed, Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and MP for Aljunied GRC, mentioned in his opening speech that diabetes is becoming more prevalent in our society and that 8.2% of the population has been diagnosed as being diabetic. Reiterating DSS' motto for early diagnosis and better control, he urged fellow Singaporeans to make use of the DSS' services and education programs and to stay healthy.

Staying healthy also means getting your health checked. Apart from free health screening for people to find out if they have diabetes or high cholesterol, free eye checks were also conducted by SNEC for diabetics. More people with diabetes are diagnosed with eye disease each year, hence the need for eye screening to prevent the onset of these diabetes-related eye diseases.

Other highlights included health talks conducted by both SNEC doctors and DSS' volunteers on topics such as "Caring for your Feet", "Eating Right for Diabetes and Cholesterol", "What is Diabetes and its Complications?" and "Corneal Diseases & Blindness". Participants enjoyed cooking demonstrations by Temasek Polytechnic and some *taiji* by The Singapore Physiotherapy Association as well as great discounts on diabetic-related items by pharmaceutical companies. In addition, a conversational map conducted by Association of Diabetes Educators of Singapore (ADES) helped to educate patients on the management of diabetes, insulin, and healthy living. Participants went home with a goodies bag each worth over \$10.





Diabetic Society of Singapore would like to thank the following for their support and participation in World Diabetes Day 2009:

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- Bishan Community Club
- Health Promotion Board
- Podiatry Association (Singapore)
- Singapore Nutrition & Dietetics Association
- Singapore Physiotherapy Association
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