



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HEALTH FAIR OFFERS FREE DIABETES INFORMATION AND SCREENING

Education event targets people struggling with cost of living with diabetes

VANCOUVER, BC — Nov. 12, 2008 — As part of Diabetes Awareness Month and in light of the costs associated with living with diabetes, the Canadian Diabetes Association is presenting a free Public Health Fair on Nov. 16.

“People with diabetes incur medical costs that are two to three times higher than those without diabetes. A person with diabetes can face direct costs for medication and supplies ranging from \$1,000 to \$15,000 a year. In recognition of Diabetes Awareness Month, the emphasis of this Public Health Fair is on the word *free*,” said Donna Van Wallegem, regional director, Canadian Diabetes Association, Pacific Area.

The health fair is presented in collaboration with the Canadian Podiatry Education Foundation, with free foot health screening offered by the BC Association of Podiatrists. Dr. Timothy P. Kalla, a podiatrist with the BC Foot and Ankle Clinic, Providence Health Care, and clinical instructor at the University of BC, insists foot care and diabetes is not a concern on which to tread lightly.

“Up to 90 per cent of lower extremity amputations in Canada are for diabetes-related causes rather than trauma. Given the high prevalence of diabetes and number of people who go undiagnosed, it is important people look to their feet for signs of diabetes such as numbness, burning, non-healing wounds and infections,” said Dr. Kalla.

Also featured will be a tax seminar on the Disability Tax Credit by Eileen Reppenhagen CGA, and free health screening (blood pressure, blood glucose, Body Mass Index) facilitated by Vancouver Coastal Health. An array of health experts will be on hand to answer diabetes-related questions. CKNW’s Dr. Art Hister will be a keynote speaker with his presentation, “Living Well with Diabetes.”

The Public Health Fair takes place Sunday, Nov. 16, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Marriott Pinnacle Hotel, 1128 West Hastings. Admission is free. For information, call 604.732.1331 ext. 229.

Diabetes Facts

- More than two million Canadians have diabetes and that number is expected to reach three million by 2010.
- One in three people with diabetes has it and doesn’t know it.
- On average, people have diabetes for seven years before diagnosis.
- Diabetes is a contributing factor in the deaths of approximately 41,500 Canadians each



year.

-Canadian adults with diabetes are twice as likely to die prematurely, compared to people without diabetes.

Diabetes and Heart Disease

-Today, one in five people with diabetes survives heart disease.

-Heart disease hits at an earlier age for people with diabetes.

-Up to 80 per cent of people with diabetes will die from heart disease.

-Over 60 per cent of people with diabetes have high blood pressure and almost 60 per cent have high cholesterol. Both are risk factors for heart disease and stroke.

-Diabetes puts you 15 years closer to a heart attack, stroke or death from any cause. A 40-year old with diabetes has the same level of risk as a 55-year old without diabetes. Risk increases from moderate to high at around 41 for men and 48 for women.

-Early diagnosis and good diabetes management can lower cardiovascular age and reduce risk.

-Research has proven that the risk of heart disease can be reduced by more than 50 per cent by a combination of lifestyle approaches and medications that protect against cardiovascular disease.

The High Price of Diabetes

-Over 50 per cent of people with diabetes have serious complications.

-The cost of treating diabetes and diabetes-related complications in Canada is enormous – more than \$13 billion annually in health care costs, not to mention the emotional and financial impact on individuals and their families.

-By 2010, these costs are expected to rise to \$15.6 billion.

-One in ten hospital admissions lists diabetes as the underlying cause.

-Nearly 40 per cent of heart attacks treated in hospital result from diabetes.

About the Canadian Diabetes Association

The Canadian Diabetes Association works in communities across the country to promote the health of Canadians and eliminate diabetes through our strong nationwide network of volunteers, employees, healthcare professionals, researchers, partners and supporters. In the struggle against this global epidemic, our expertise is recognized around the world.

The Canadian Diabetes Association: setting the world standard. To learn more, visit diabetes.ca or call 1-800-BANTING (226-8464).

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