

Current Health Event

World Diabetes Day 2014

November 14, On World Diabetes Day, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) are calling every year on stakeholders to promote healthy diets as a key approach to prevent diabetes and reduce its complications.

Editorial note:

Almost 1 in 7 Lebanese individuals suffer from diabetes, as a result of poor diet, lack of exercise and rising obesity. (*IDF Diabetes Atlas, 2014*)

Nearly a quarter of a million Lebanese remain undiagnosed. (*IDF*)

The prevalence of diabetes in the Lebanese population could reach up to 1 in 5 by 2035, according to IDF's Diabetes Atlas.

Lebanon ranked 22nd highest rate of diabetes in the world, ranking it seventh in the Middle East. (*IDF*)

The most common form of diabetes in Lebanon and the region is Type 2, which is linked to "modern lifestyle", obesity, physical inactivity, and a diet high in refined carbohydrates.

On World Diabetes Day, WHO and IDF are calling on:

- *Individuals* to make healthy food choices, starting with breakfast
- *Countries* to take immediate action to create environments to enable such choices
- *The media, professionals, associations and civil society* to support public health actions to promote healthy diets

Unhealthy diet is one of the four main risk factors for noncommunicable diseases, which are the leading cause of death in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region. They account for over 2.2 million deaths annually, over 51% of which are premature.

Country/territory	Adult population (20-79) in 1000s	Diabetes cases (20-79) in 1000s	Undiagnosed diabetes cases (20-79) in 1000s	Diabetes national prevalence (%)	Diabetes comparative prevalence (%)	Diabetes related deaths (20-79)	Diabetes related deaths under 60 (%)	Cost per person with diabetes (USD)	One in X adults has diabetes
Afghanistan	13,087	805.2	402.6	6.2	8.1 *	18,514	72.3	101.8	16
Algeria	25,215	1,649.1	824.5	6.5	7.3	14,044	46.1	422.9	15
Bahrain	973	170.6	69.4	17.5	21.9 *	820	70.9	1,195.5	6
Egypt	49,229	7,593.3	3,796.6	15.4	16.6	72,372	47.5	213.2	6
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	53,039	4,581.6	2,290.8	8.6	10.0	38,079	42.4	722.0	12
Iraq	17,107	1,291.2	645.6	7.6	9.6	17,773	54.1	399.9	13
Jordan	4,256	378.3	189.1	8.9	11.5	3,111	48.1	638.7	11
Kuwait	2,373	424.0	172.6	17.9	23.1 *	1,232	57.0	1,949.0	6
Lebanon	3,443	494.3	247.1	14.4	14.9	6,358	30.1	834.3	7
Libya	3,826	326.8	163.4	8.5	9.8 *	2,702	44.7	908.0	12
Morocco	20,844	1,552.2	776.1	7.5	7.9	9,518	42.8	289.2	13
Oman	2,705	220.6	89.8	8.2	14.5	1,220	53.1	1,068.5	12
Pakistan	102,125	6,943.8	3,471.9	6.8	7.9	87,548	52.7	55.7	15
Qatar	1,865	303.7	123.6	16.3	19.8	643	75.6	2,748.2	6
Saudi Arabia	18,546	3,806.4	1,549.2	20.5	23.9	25,527	58.5	1,067.3	5
State of Palestine	2,141	140.9	70.4	6.6	9.2	-	-	0.0	15
Sudan	18,620	3,007.6	1,503.8	16.2	17.9	39,227	69.1	180.9	6
Syrian Arab Republic	11,838	875.7	437.9	7.4	8.8 *	8,013	46.9	181.2	14
Tunisia	7,547	704.4	352.2	9.3	9.4	5,123	40.2	418.6	11
United Arab Emirates	7,528	803.9	327.2	10.7	19.0	1,335	79.6	1,967.4	9
Yemen	12,022	716.6	358.3	6.0	8.3 *	9,661	51.2	131.3	17

Source: *IDF Diabetes Atlas, 6th Edition, revision 2014*

Diabetes, one of the four main noncommunicable diseases, is closely linked to unhealthy lifestyles, especially diet, which in turn is linked to environments that promote unhealthy choices.

Over 14% of the population in the Eastern Mediterranean Region has diabetes, which is a critical challenge for countries. Rising diabetes prevalence in the Region is closely related to the rising prevalence of overweight and obesity. New 2014 WHO estimates indicate that over 17% of people in the Eastern Mediterranean Region are obese.

WHO provided more than 100,000 insulin vials to the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health (MoPH). The medications will serve around 500 insulin dependant diabetic patients in need, benefiting from the MoPH essential medications programme at Primary Health Care centers.

Insufficient policies and public health responses has exacerbated the situation.

On World Diabetes Day, we need to send the message that healthy eating and healthy lifestyles can prevent diabetes and other noncommunicable diseases.

Cumulative Notifiable diseases in Lebanon (Syrian)				
Disease	2013 Cumul	2014 Cumul*	Oct	Nov
Vaccine Preventable Diseases				
Polio	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Acute Flaccid Paralysis	33(7)	39(12)	6(1)	4(2)
Measles	1760 (232)	230(104)	0(0)	0(0)
Mumps	14(2)	413(69)	21(4)	25(4)
Pertussis	59(9)	81(25)	4(3)	1(0)
Rabies	1(1)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Rubella	27(1)	17(11)	0(0)	0(0)
Tetanus	4(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Viral Hep B	141(8)	188(27)	8(1)	6(3)
Water/Food Borne Diseases				
Brucellosis	189(12)	217(33)	10(1)	3(0)
Cholera	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Hydatid cyst	13(3)	13(2)	0(0)	0(0)
Typhoid Fever	407(21)	232(16)	33(0)	3(0)
Viral Hep A	1551 (220)	1887(640)	524 (264)	97 (45)
Other Diseases				
Leishmaniasis	1033 (1032)	476(470)	2(2)	0(0)
Meningitis	204(24)	195(29)	16(4)	7(1)
Viral Hep C	103(4)	74(3)	8(2)	3(0)

Source: *Ministry of Public Health, Lebanon*