

Report profile



Diabetes: Australian facts 2008

Summary

Diabetes mellitus (diabetes) is a disease marked by high blood glucose levels resulting from defective insulin production, insulin action or both (WHO 1999). It is one of the leading chronic diseases in many countries, and is now reaching epidemic levels.

Diabetes: Australian facts 2008 provides an overview of diabetes and its impact on the Australian community. The report presents the latest available statistics on diabetes, including information on risk factors, complications, health service use, and the impact of the disease (including mortality) on Australians. The report includes both summary and trend data related to diabetes in Australia and information useful for health professionals, policy makers, academics and other interested readers.

Diabetes is associated with a range of complications including coronary artery and peripheral vascular disease, stroke, diabetic neuropathy, amputations, renal failure and blindness, and can cause much disability, poor quality of life and premature death, especially if left undiagnosed or poorly controlled (IDF 2006).

The overall rise in diabetes is largely driven by an increase in the prevalence of Type 2 diabetes; however, Type 1 diabetes and gestational diabetes are also on the rise.

This is the second national report on diabetes compiled by the National Centre for Monitoring Diabetes at the AIHW, and is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.

About the unit

The Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes Unit includes the National Centre for Monitoring Diabetes and the National Diabetes Register. We aim to help reduce the impact of cardiovascular disease and diabetes in Australia by informing community discussion and decision making. We analyse a range of data on cardiovascular disease and diabetes; collect data on diabetes; and provide information on the number of people with these diseases, their functioning and disability, use of health services, risk factors and deaths. ■

Fast facts

- Diabetes affects 1 in 25 people in Australia.
- About 700,000 Australians, or nearly 4% of the population, had clinically diagnosed diabetes in 2004–05, and many others have diabetes without knowing it.
- If left unchecked, 1 in 14 adults or an estimated 380 million people worldwide are predicted to have diabetes by 2025 (International Diabetes Federation (IDF) 2006).
- In 2003, diabetes accounted for over 5% of the disease burden in Australia.
- In 2004–05 people with diabetes were twice as likely to have had a heart attack, and four times as likely to have had a stroke.
- Nearly a third of people starting treatment for end-stage kidney disease did so because of their diabetes, and almost 3,400 people with diabetes had lower limb amputations.

Primary contact

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