

AUDIO SCRIPT

[M1: Male Interviewer; F1: Female Interviewee]

M1: Good morning, listeners, and welcome to the Health Report. My guest today is Dr. Susannah Chan. Dr. Chan is in Boston this week to participate in the International Diabetes Conference. Welcome to the program, Dr. Chan.

F1: It's good to be here, Peter.

M1: First of all, what is diabetes?

F1: Diabetes is a disease in which people have higher than normal levels of glucose, or sugar, in their blood. Their bodies don't produce enough insulin.

M1: What is insulin?

F1: Insulin is a hormone that's produced in the pancreas, an organ behind the stomach. The pancreas manages the amount of glucose in the blood. We need insulin to survive.

M1: Is diabetes a modern disease?

F1: No, Peter. Diabetes has been with us for a long time. Ancient Egyptian and Indian physicians first described the symptoms of diabetes in the 16th century BCE. In the 1st century, the Greek physician Aretaeus first used the word *diabetes*. In the 1600s, English physician Thomas Willis noticed the high sugar content in his patients' urine. In the 1800s, German scientists linked diabetes with the pancreas. In 1921, Canadian scientist Frederick Banting discovered insulin. Then, in 1922, Scottish scientist John Macleod demonstrated that insulin benefited his patients.

M1: There are different types of diabetes, right?

F1: Yes, there are three types. Type 1 diabetes is when the body doesn't produce *any* insulin. That's 10 percent of all cases. Type 2 diabetes is when the body doesn't produce *enough* insulin. That's 90 percent of all cases. Then there's gestational diabetes, which affects about 18 percent of women during pregnancy. This form of diabetes is temporary.

M1: I've heard that diabetes is so widespread that it's considered a global epidemic. Is that true, Dr. Chan?

F1: Yes, I believe so, Peter. According to the World Health Organization, about 9 percent of adults worldwide suffer from diabetes. That's nearly one in ten individuals. Health professionals believe it will get worse. For instance, in 2000 about 170 million

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people had diabetes. By 2030, more than 360 million people are expected to have the disease.

M1: Are people in some countries more at risk?

F1: Yes, certainly. More than 80 percent of diabetes deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries. However, the disease affects people in wealthy countries, too.

M1: Such as?

F1: Well, in North America, more than 10 percent of adults have diabetes. About 9 percent of people in the Middle East and North Africa have it.

M1: Who is most likely to get diabetes?

F1: Well, as we get older, our risk for diabetes increases. Other factors such as family history and obesity increase the risk. For example, if your parents have it, your chances increase. If you're overweight, your chances go up, too. So you can do things to lower your risk.

M1: Like what?

F1: Well, watch your diet and exercise regularly.

M1: I see. We'll be back to answer your questions about diabetes right after this short break.