

## American Diabetes Association

There are over 20.8 million people or approximately 7% of the US population that has diabetes. Internationally, this figure is much larger. Nearly one in three people do not know that they have diabetes. This disease carries with it many risk factors which can impact dental treatment. These include diabetic episodes such as hypoglycaemia, hyperglycaemia, increased risk of infection and inability to heal. Any one of these situations can compromise dental treatment. With this in mind, it is imperative that the dental professional be aware of the signs, symptoms, treatment and complications of diabetes and adapt their treatment to minimize the risk for these patients.

The American Diabetes Association hosts a website at <http://www.diabetes.org/home.jsp>

This website serves to provide the consumer, as well as the healthcare professional, with information about diabetes, its history, development, treatment and impact on the lives of the diabetic patient.

The website homepage makes information available in both English and Spanish. It is designed to give quick information to the viewer about the latest research and news summaries, a tip of the day, a recipe of the day, personal health risks for diabetes and a link to get local information about diabetes through your zip code. The sidebar of the homepage has the following sections which provide more in-depth information on: (i) *All about Diabetes*; (ii) *Nutrition and Recipes*; (iii) *Weight loss and Exercise*; (iv) *Diabetes Prevention*; (v) *Diabetes Research*; (vi) *Advocacy and Legal Resources*; (vii) *Community Programs and Local Events*; (viii) *For Parents and Kids*; (ix) *For Health Professionals and Scientists*; (x) *Support the Cause*; (xi) *Shop for Books and Gifts*.

The section on *All about Diabetes* is a wealth of information and includes types of diabetes, diabetes risks, pre-diabetic conditions, diabetes as it relates to heart disease and stroke, as well as diabetes statistics. There are also links to multimedia educational programs and 'ADA Live' – a question and answer forum.

The sections on *Nutrition and Recipes* and *Weight Loss and Exercise* are designed with the diabetic patient in mind. These

sections provide excellent guidelines and support in these areas. The section on *Diabetes Prevention* also targets the consumer with information about risk factors and prevention strategies.

The *Diabetes Research* section would probably be of most interest to the dental clinician and/or educator. It gives access to the American Diabetes Association Research Fund, grant applications and also provides a link to research databases and clinical trials.

The *Advocacy and Legal Resources* section is a guide to dealing with discrimination, health insurance and state and federal legislation concerning diabetes. The sections on *Community Programs and Local Events*, as well as, *For Parents and Kids* provide information on community involvement in diabetes and how children and their parents can manage this disease.

Probably the most pertinent section for dental professions is the *For Health Professionals and Scientists* area. This section provides clinical recommendations for treatment, journals, clinical resources and research on the topic. The last 2 sections, *Support the Cause* and *Shop for Books and Gifts*, promote financial support and awareness about diabetes.

Overall, this website is designed for the consumer and those individuals and their families who have diabetes. But with the increase in the occurrence of this disease in our clinical population, this website can provide both the dental clinician and educator with up to date information on treating and educating patients with diabetes.

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