



DEBUNKING DIABETES

MYTH: Diabetes is not a serious disease

Dr. Schatz: “Uncontrolled blood sugar is very dangerous. Long-term high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) leads to complications that affect the heart, kidneys, nerves, and eyes. With good control of blood sugar, people with diabetes significantly decrease their risk of developing complications and can lead active lives.”

MYTH: Eating too much sugar can lead to diabetes

Dr. Haller: “Diabetes is not caused by an increased sugar intake. But it is important to note that a diet high in sugar can lead to weight gain which increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.”

MYTH: Only overweight people develop diabetes

Dr. Schatz: “The development of type 1 diabetes is not related to a person’s weight. Type 2 diabetes develops more rapidly in at-risk individuals who are overweight.”

MYTH: Children can outgrow diabetes.

Dr. Haller: “Children cannot outgrow diabetes. Type 1 diabetes occurs when the insulin-producing beta cells of the pancreas are destroyed. Because the body is unable to replace these cells once they have been lost, type 1 diabetes is a life-long disease/condition. Type 2 diabetes develops when the body does not make enough insulin or when it becomes resistant to the insulin being produced. Treatment includes weight control, exercise, a healthy diet, and if necessary an oral glucose control medication.”

MYTH: Children with diabetes can only participate in limited exercise.

Dr. Haller: “With careful blood glucose control, children with diabetes can participate in athletics and are encouraged be active.”

MYTH: Insulin cures diabetes.

Dr. Schatz: “Insulin is the treatment for type 1 diabetes, but it is not a cure. Because the beta cells have been destroyed, the body is no longer able to produce insulin. This loss of insulin causes the blood sugar levels to be out of control. Uncontrolled blood sugar (due to type 1 or type 2 diabetes) causes severe complications and can be fatal. By taking insulin, people with type 1 diabetes are better able to control their blood sugar. Type 2 diabetes is treated with diet, exercise, and oral glucose control medication; on rare occasion these

patients sometimes require insulin as well. At the University of Florida Diabetes Center of Excellence, our research teams are working hard to develop better treatments and find a cure.”



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DIABETES PROGRAMS AT UF HEALTH

For more information on available patient care services or clinical trials, please visit www.diabetes.ufl.edu