



19 March 2007

Diabetes Awareness

According to Diabetes Australia, approximately 275 adults in Australia are diagnosed with diabetes every day – more than 100,000 per year.

Diabetes is Australia's fastest growing chronic disease, affecting about 8 in every 1,000 people.

With figures like that, the chance of you witnessing someone have a diabetic attack is significant, and Ambulance is urging the community to make themselves familiar with the disease.

Diabetes can involve either a drop in blood sugar level or heightened blood sugar level, and both cases can be very serious. These attacks are usually as the result of hormone levels fluctuating up and down.

Some indications of a diabetic attack include:

Low blood sugar level (symptoms occur within several minutes)

- trouble talking and irrational behaviour
- appears intoxicated
- sweating
- confused or disorientated
- aggressive
- feeling sleepy and/or weak
- unconsciousness

High blood sugar level (symptoms occur over days)

- flushed hot skin
- extreme thirst
- constant need to urinate
- restlessness
- unconsciousness



Ambulance Service of New South Wales

media release

In the event that you witness a suspected diabetic attack, there are a number of steps you can take to help reduce the severity:

- in a medical emergency **dial Triple Zero immediately and ask for Ambulance**
- if the person is in a dangerous environment try to remove them from the danger if it is safe for you to do so
- if the person has collapsed and injured themselves, you may need to apply first aid. The Ambulance Triple Zero call-taker can give first aid instructions if required
- people who suffer from diabetes should ensure that their condition is well managed, by attending regular check-ups with their doctor, and ensuring meals and medications are always taken correctly

Ambulance recommends that all persons undertake a first aid course with an accredited provider – it may help you to save a life.

~ ENDS ~

For further information or local media opportunities please contact Ambulance Media on (02) 9320 7796.