

ICLDC throws spotlight on 'diabetes during pregnancy'; research reveals 4% of mothers in UAE develop diabetes while carrying

ICLDC's DIABETES. I WONDER... screening booth moves to Corniche Hospital, Abu Dhabi

(For more information log on to www.diabetesuae.ae)

Abu Dhabi, August 2007: The DIABETES.KNOWLEDGE.ACTION. public health awareness campaign has been quick to respond to recent figures published by the capital's Corniche Hospital on diabetes during pregnancy by moving the roving diabetes screening booth to the hospital.

The hospital's research has revealed that four out of every 100 mothers who participated in the study developed gestational diabetes. This is in the upper bracket of global figures that suggest between 2-5% of pregnant women develop diabetes during their term.

Dr Bashir Salih, Chief of Service Obstetric Medicine at Corniche Hospital observed that with the UAE populations' tendency to diabetes, placed second highest worldwide at 19.5%, the high show of gestational diabetes is not surprising.

"Mothers in the UAE are proven to be at high risk of gestational diabetes but this risk can be greatly reduced by adopting a healthy lifestyle - both exercise and diet - before pregnancy. However, if contacted, it is important that gestational diabetes be detected early, as high blood sugar in the mother may adversely affect the pregnancy," he added.

According to Dr Maha Taysir Barakat, Endocrinologist and Medical Research Director at Imperial College London Diabetes Centre (ICLDC), pregnant women are considered at high risk if they have a family history of diabetes, are obese or generally overweight, and lead a sedentary lifestyle.

She also stressed that women who experience gestational diabetes have an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes in later years.

Dr Maha confirmed that the Centre's remote screening booth will focus on gestational diabetes by moving to Corniche Hospital (this month, August).

She also said that more than 20,000 people have received one-on-one consultations over the past 16 weeks, as part of the campaign's outreach programme I WONDER... with over 17% of those who took the simple blood test called back for diabetes treatment.

"The I WONDER... campaign is exceeding expectations. However, this is still the beginning of a long fight against diabetes. We fear that those who are most at risk are often immobile and not yet had contact with consultants," she added.

DIABETES. I WONDER... is a joint public health awareness initiative by ICLDC and Emirates Foundation, endorsed by the Health Authority Abu Dhabi (HA-AD). The booth kicked off in April at Abu Dhabi's Marina Mall, and moved onto Jimi Mall in Al Ain, before its return to the capital at the Corniche Hospital.

For more detailed information, visit www.icldc.ae and www.diabetes.ae

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Notes to the Editor

About Imperial College London Diabetes Centre

The Imperial College London Diabetes Centre is a state-of-the-art specialized out-patient clinic dedicated to help detect, prevent and treat diabetes. The centre is a one-stop-facility that specializes in Diabetes Treatment, Research, Training and Public Health. Located in Abu Dhabi (next to the Zayed Military Hospital), ICLDC allows the highest level of specialized patient care, from first diagnosis to the continued management of all complications associated with diabetes.

Imperial College London holds a renowned history and expertise in the study of diabetes, bringing one of the leading medical academic institutions in the world to Abu Dhabi as a core working partner. Under ICLDC practices, one of the Centre's primary objectives will be to provide continuing education for health professionals and the general public. For more details visit: <http://www.icldc.ae>

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