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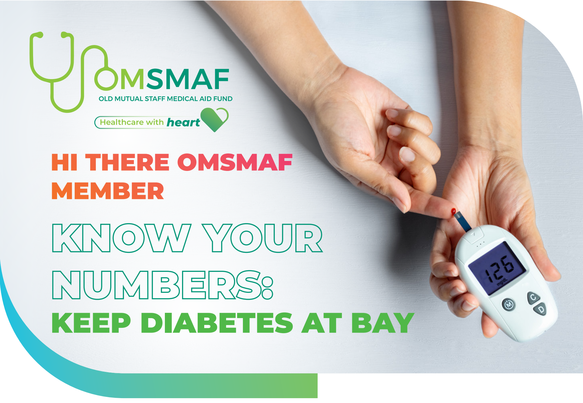
OLD MUTUAL STAFF MEDICAL AID FUND
Healthcare with heart



HI THERE OMSMAF MEMBER

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS: KEEP DIABETES AT BAY

Whether you're a youngster breaking out into your own place, a wise sage enjoying the golden years, or somewhere in between, you probably know a few people affected by diabetes – you might even be one of them.

As one of the most common lifestyle diseases, diabetes affects more than 1 in 10 South Africans between the ages of 20 and 79, according to the South African Medical Research Council, and it is on the rise. When left untreated, this condition can have devastating complications, such as blindness, kidney failure, heart attack, stroke and, lower limb amputation. There is good news, however – Type 2 diabetes, the most common kind, can be prevented or delayed with proven lifestyle changes.

And while we're here to support you wherever you may be on your healthcare journey, we are sure you will agree that helping to avoid any conditions that could impact your quality of life or shorten it is first prize.

Snapshot of diabetes

Diabetes occurs when either the pancreas does not produce enough insulin or when the body struggles to process the insulin it produces. Raised blood sugar levels, a common effect of uncontrolled diabetes, can lead to serious damage to many of the body's systems over time. Type 1 diabetes requires the injection of insulin up to several times per day since the body does not produce enough of it. Type 2 diabetes makes it hard for the body to use insulin effectively and is largely preventable.

Symptoms of Type 2 diabetes

- Severe thirst
- Frequent need to urinate
- Blurred vision
- Feeling tired
- Unintentional weight loss

You can have Type 2 diabetes long before any symptoms are noticeable, which is why routine testing is so crucial.

Preventing Type 2 diabetes

The World Health Organisation recommends the following for preventing or delaying the onset of Type 2 diabetes:

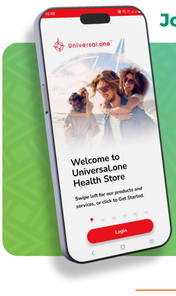
- Maintaining a healthy body weight
- Physical activity – at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise each week
- A healthy diet high in whole foods and low in sugar and saturated fat
- Avoiding smoking

Healthy choices are not always easy to make, especially when you are rushing through day after busy day and attending to the needs of others. Not sure where to start? Why not begin with your Pharmacy-based wellness screenings as a first step?

If there are any early warning signs, flag them with a registered Dietitian on the Universal Network, covered by your nutrition assessment and healthy eating benefit as mentioned in our previous mailer. This gives you the opportunity to develop a personalised nutrition plan that works for your lifestyle, preferences and actual healthcare needs. And if you need inspiration on how to incorporate more movement into your day, there are loads of helpful health resources available on the OMSMAF website under the Health Insights section **omsmaf.co.za/health-insights/**.

As always, OMSMAF is here to support you with practical foundations that you can use in your daily life to find your way on the path to better health. **Together, we can make like Nike and just do it!**

Join the digital world of OMSMAF



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Chat soon,
The OMSMAF Team

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