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COVID-19 no reason to delay diabetes checks

Diabetes Victoria urges people with diabetes to continue seeing their diabetes care team and not skip medical appointments, especially now during the COVID-19 crisis. It is crucial for people with a chronic health condition like diabetes to continue with their annual cycle of care via face-to-face or telehealth appointments. A range of health professionals, including GPs and credentialed diabetes educators, now offer consultations via phone or video call which are rebated via Medicare.

“It’s important to continue your annual cycle of care to identify any health concerns early and discuss the best treatment options with your doctor and diabetes health professionals,” says Diabetes Victoria CEO Craig Bennett. “Without regular checks, diabetes can lead to complications that can affect the whole body. Diabetes increases a person’s risk of heart attack, stroke, kidney failure, loss of vision or loss of a limb.”

“Recently, there have been reports that people with diabetes are delaying their health appointments – with possibly detrimental effects to their health,” Mr Bennett continues. “Now we have more options than ever to engage with our health professionals who are using telehealth to consult with patients who don’t require or can’t organise a face-to-face visit.”

Diabetes is a complex and serious condition to manage. The annual cycle of care for people living with diabetes is made up of a number of important health checks; including HbA1c (average blood glucose levels over a 12-week period), blood pressure, foot assessment, eye examination, kidney health, blood fats, weight, exercise, nutrition and of course a review of diabetes medications.

“If you do need to see your doctor face-to-face, waiting rooms around the country have adapted to cope with the requirements of health authorities to keep people safe,” Mr Bennett says. “So there is no reason for people with diabetes to delay their health checks.”

In Victoria, more than 342,000 Victorians are living with diabetes and are registered with the National Diabetes Services Scheme.

We **support, empower** and **campaign for** all Victorians affected by, or at risk of, diabetes.

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