

# THE HEARTBREAKING TRUTH ABOUT DIABETES

## The strong link between diabetes and cardiovascular disease



Diabetes is nothing new. For 2,000 years, it was known as a disease without a cure. Only with the discovery of insulin in the early 20th century was diabetes able to be managed, understood, and prolong the lives of those affected. Yet, despite the medical breakthroughs in diabetes treatment in the last 75 years, more people are living with the disease than ever before and they are also suffering from its other unwanted, health-related risks that include one of the leading causes of death worldwide—cardiovascular diseases.



SKINVESTING  
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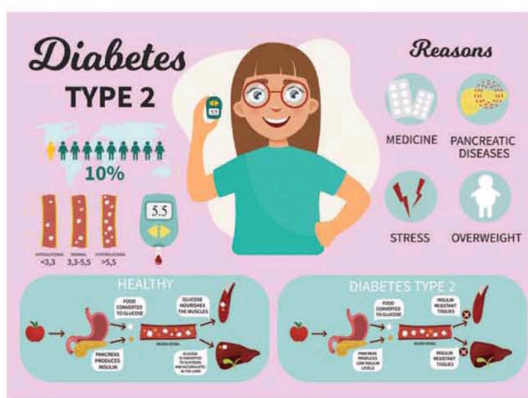
the blood stream to the cells for energy. Lack of insulin will cause too much sugar in the bloodstream that can lead to more serious health issues, such as kidney problems, nerve problems, and cardiovascular diseases (CVD).

CVDs are heart and blood vessel problems that include stroke, coronary artery disease, rheumatic heart disease, and congenital heart disease. Cardiovascular diseases and diabetes are among the leading causes of death worldwide. Unfortunately, diabetics are at a higher risk of developing cardiovascular diseases than non-diabetics, according to the IDF.

Reports also indicate that CVD is the leading cause of death and disability among diabetics. This is why as the number of diabetes cases increase, so do CVD cases. Income per capita affects CVD mortality rates, too. IDF reports that there are lower rates of CVD deaths in high-income countries than middle- and low-income ones. This may be due to a higher allocation toward health care and the availability of monitoring systems.

### From heartbreak to healing

While CVD and diabetes cases rise, there is still hope. World Diabetes Day, a global campaign to raise



awareness about the disease, was observed. This year, a new anti-diabetes medicine called *dapagliflozin* was in-

the bloodstream and instead pass it through urine. These SGLT2-inhibitors are said to lower the risk of CVDs

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troduced by pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca. *Dapagliflozin* promotes SGLT2-inhibitors by not allowing the kidneys to reabsorb sugar in

and promote weight loss. *Dapagliflozin* has been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration and is now available in 40 countries including

the Philippines. It is a prescription medicine to be used in conjunction with other therapies or medications as advised by the physician.

### A sweeter life ahead?

Diabetes patients need to have regular screenings and check-ups to monitor changes in their health that may impact the quality of their lives. It is equally important, however, to maintain a healthy lifestyle by eating well and adding physical activity to their daily routine.

The government is currently offering free medications, such as oral anti-diabetes medicines and insulin, according to the Department of Health (DOH). The DOH also provides free screenings in *barangay* health stations, public hospitals, and health centers. Moreover, the DOH also conducts training for health care providers to assist others in educating and managing the disease.

Diabetes is truly a challenging disease. But with the government's efforts and patient's willingness to change their lifestyles, they can save themselves from heartbreak—literally!—and live a sweeter life.