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# Seychelles: Diabetes

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# Diabetes as a Public Health Issue in Seychelles

Cami Myers

## About Seychelles



**Location:** Seychelles is a cluster of islands off the coast of East Africa.

**Population:** 95,016 as of January 22, 2018;

### ➤ Ethnic

Breakdown: 93% Seychellois Creole, 3% British, 1.8% French, 0.5% Chinese, 0.3% Indian, and 1.2% other.

- Religion Breakdown: 76.2% Roman Catholic, Protestant 10.5% , other Christian 2.4%, Hindu 2.4%, Muslim 1.6%, other non-Christian 1.1%, unspecified 4.8%, none 0.9% (Index Mundi Seychelles, 2010)

**Political Structure:** Seychelles is a republic with executive presidency. The president serves a five year term. The legislative branch, called the “National Assembly” has a total of 34 seats that are elected through “adult suffrage”. Members of the National Assembly will serve a four year term. The Seychelles government is based on a socialist multi-party system.(Sib.gov, 2018)

## Major Challenges:

- Increase in HIV/AIDS epidemic
- Natural disasters and pandemic diseases
- Drug Abuse
- Heart Disease
- Diabetes (WHO, 2011)

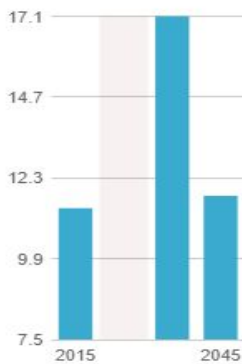
## What is Diabetes?

Diabetes mellitus is a group of metabolic diseases characterized by high blood glucose levels. The most common types are prediabetes, type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes, which affects some women during pregnancy. Type 1 diabetes is insulin dependent diabetes and is usually found in children or young adults. Type 2 diabetes, the most common form, causes your body to not create insulin or use it well. (NIDDK, 2016)

## Symptoms

- Unexplained weight loss
- Increased thirst and urination
- Fatigue
- Increased hunger
- Sores that do not heal (NIDDK, 2016)

**Diabetes in Seychelles:** The prevalence of diabetes is similar to the estimated amounts in countries like Saudi Arabia, parts of Europe, the US and other urban countries. Similar to many African countries, about 55.3% of adults are living with type 2 diabetes. Along with that many people of the African descent have a strand of diabetes that is mistreated by the wrong type of medication. (BMC Public Health 2007)



Estimation of people with Diabetes in Seychelles by 2045. (<http://www.diabetesatlas.org/across-the-globe.html>)

### **Risk Factors:**

- Overweight or obese
- Age 45 or older
- Of African Descent or Asian Descent.
- Lack of physical activity
- Have high blood pressure (NIDDK, 2016)

**Challenges:** Only about 50% of people with pre-diabetic symptoms are aware of their symptoms, so diabetes often goes on silently for a while after the onset. Diagnosing diabetes in a timely manner can help reduce the risk of: premature heart disease, stroke, blindness, limb amputation and kidney failure. (BMC Public Health, 2007)

**Moves to Help?:** As of 2017, a petition was sent out calling for action to help take on the issue of diabetes in African countries, like Seychelles. We need international care to spread awareness, and to give support and hope to those who have a disadvantage.

### **What Else Can We Do?**

- Fund campaigns for awareness of the different types of diabetes.
- Educate people on the benefits of a balanced diet and an active lifestyle.
- Make people aware of the symptoms of diabetes and the biological and environmental risks of diabetes.
- Make resources for checking blood glucose more available to at risk people

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