

# FSU College of Medicine illuminates living with Diabetes on World Diabetes Day

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To raise awareness about living with diabetes and the key differences between the two types, Florida State University's College of Medicine hosted an informative event on World Diabetes Day Tuesday, Nov. 15.

According to Florida's 2017 Diabetes Report, over 2.4 million adults in Florida have been diagnosed with diabetes. This number doesn't reflect children or teens, who are being diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at a rate of about 18,000 per year.

Started in 1991 by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) and the World Health Organization (WHO), World Diabetes Day aims to raise awareness about this global health issue and advocate for coordinated actions that can confront this growing affliction.



(Photo: Morgan Dobbins/FSView)

In 2006, World Diabetes Day was designated as an official United Nations Day and now reaches a global audience of over one billion people in more than 160 countries.

World Diabetes Day falls during November, which has been deemed National Diabetes Month in the United States. Over the past few years, FSU's College of Medicine has been involved with raising awareness about this disease and ways it is affecting individuals and the university as a whole through hosting a World Diabetes Day event.

As part of this commitment to diabetes awareness, the College of Medicine has partnered with the Charlotte Edwards Maguire Medical Library and the Diabetes Empowerment Foundation to create The Plaid (People Living with And Inspired by Diabetes) Journal, which aims to share important research, case studies, and perspectives regarding diabetes.

Martin Wood, MSLIS, AHIP, Editor and Chief of the Plaid Journal, has been living with type 1 diabetes since he was two-years-old.

He explained that because diabetes is considered a disability, it can be hard to find exact numbers on students within the FSU community that are affected by diabetes. But he hopes this event and platform would inform students, faculty and other Tallahassee members about what living with diabetes can be like and how different individuals manage the disease.

"Everyday with diabetes is a little bit different," Wood shared. "What I do today, I could do the exact same activities, eat the same exact food, wake up at the same exact time, but tomorrow it would be a different day. My blood sugars might be perfect today, but a disaster tomorrow."

Katherine Owen, Certified Diabetes Educator, was diagnosed as an adult with type 1 diabetes, which she explains is different from type 2 in that her pancreas does not function to regulate insulin. Those with type 2 may be able to help reverse their failing pancreas through dietary and lifestyle changes, but those with type 1 will always need some sort of insulin to help them regulate their blood sugar.

"I wear an insulin pump that is augmented by a sensor. I have two different insertion devices in my body. One is infusing insulin for me and the other one is testing and reading my blood sugar every five minutes," Owen explained. "The sensor reading is also adjusting my background insulin based on the sensor reading."

Wood highlights the dangers of improper insulin use and how vital education about insulin and diabetes can be.

"Insulin is one of the most dangerous drugs we send people home with and tell them figure it out," Owen said. "It's this fine line where you can take too little and your blood sugar can skyrocket. You take too much and you can find yourself on the floor from low blood sugar."

Nicole Cordoba, a senior at FSU and President of Students with Diabetes at FSU, a chapter of the college diabetes network, has lived with type 1 diabetes since she was four-years-old. This past week, the group hosted College Diabetes Week last, which included a bake sale to raise money to send a diabetic child to diabetes camp.

Cordoba explains that her diabetes doesn't hold her back from living her fullest life.

"I travel a lot and I'm a morale captain for Dance Marathon. It's a 20 hour marathon, where I am standing up raising money and awareness for pediatric illnesses just like mine," Cordoba said. "It is a hard accomplishment with diabetes, but diabetes doesn't stop me. I can do anything you guys can do."