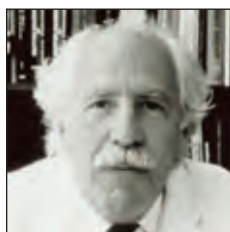


a report by

**Pierre Lefèbvre**

President, International Diabetes Federation (IDF)



Pierre Lefèbvre is President of the International Diabetes Federation (IDF). He is Emeritus Professor of Medicine at the University of Liège, Belgium, where he was Chairman of the Department of Medicine between 1988 and 2000 and Head of the Division of Diabetes, Nutrition and Metabolic Disorders between 1970 and 2000. Professor Lefèbvre's research has been devoted to the physiology and pathophysiology of metabolic regulations, with particular emphasis on glucagon, insulin and physical exercise. He has performed numerous studies on the pathogenesis and treatment of non-insulin-dependent diabetes and obesity. His previous appointments include President of the Belgian Diabetes Association (ABD) and President of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD). Professor Lefèbvre has published more than 25 books and 900 papers. He serves or has served on the editorial board of more than 20 international journals. He is a member of the Royal Academy of Belgium and the Academia Europaea and has been elected Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians (RCP), London.

Diabetes is a silent killer that today kills one person every 10 seconds. It is a global drama with devastating human, social and economic impacts. New data recently released by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) indicate that more than 230 million people worldwide are living with diabetes, and that this number is sadly expected to rise to over 350 million by 2025 if no action is taken.<sup>1</sup>

*European Endocrine Disease 2006* starts this year with an article highlighting how diabetes hits the disadvantaged and the vulnerable hardest. Today 70% of diabetes cases are in low- and middle-income countries. In addition, there is strong evidence that in developed countries, socioeconomic factors such as low income and poverty are linked to the accelerated spread of type 2 diabetes.

To do nothing is no longer an option. IDF just launched a campaign for a United Nations Resolution on diabetes, aiming at raising awareness and seeking recognition among policy decision makers of the global public health challenge at their door. Led by IDF, the "Unite for Diabetes" campaign involves all stakeholders in a concerted effort.<sup>2</sup> One among the many objectives is the implementation of cost-effective strategies for the prevention of diabetes and of its complications.

This issue of *European Endocrine Disease 2006* includes an article on primary prevention of type 2 diabetes as well as several articles on various aspects of diabetes management in order to prevent the occurrence of complications. These include tight blood glucose control both in the basal and the postprandial state. An article deals with the possibility of administering insulin through the pulmonary route.

Further sections are devoted to specific aspects of the treatment of diabetes such as the role of pancreatic islet dysfunction in the onset and progression of type 2 diabetes, the alpha cell function in type 2 diabetes, new and upcoming therapies focussing on GLP-1 and DPP-IV inhibitors, as well as the role of incretin mimetics.

If, despite good diabetes management complications set in, they must be managed effectively. Every 30 seconds, for example, a leg is lost to diabetes. In order to curb this rate, it is crucial that diabetic foot complications are diagnosed early and treated adequately. *European Endocrine Disease 2006* includes a section on diabetic neuropathy and the management of foot ulceration in the person with diabetes. Another section deals with the management of erectile dysfunction.

While much of *European Endocrine Disease 2006* is devoted to the prevention and treatment of diabetes and its complications, there are also sections dealing with other important endocrinology topics. These include hyperprolactinaemia, the medical management of acromegaly and growth hormone deficiency. Finally, a section is devoted to hormone replacement therapy and analyses its risks and benefits, whilst another is devoted to testosterone replacement therapy.

We wish you an enjoyable read! ■

1. Diabetes Atlas, 3rd Edition, International Diabetes Federation, 2006 (in print)

2. Information about the "Unite for Diabetes" campaign can be found on [www.unitefordiabetes.org](http://www.unitefordiabetes.org).



**IDF** 2006  
CAPE TOWN

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International Diabetes Federation

