



world diabetes day

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## Diabetes Communities Unite to Celebrate World Diabetes Day November 14

*Leading Diabetes Organizations Join Forces to Fight Diabetes as World Diabetes Day Celebrations get underway in New York City*

NEW YORK, NY (Nov. 5 2007) – Diabetes currently affects 246 million people globally, including nearly 21 million children and adults in the United States. For all of them and the many millions more at risk, November 14, 2007 is a highly significant date as it marks the first United Nations-observed World Diabetes Day.

The International Diabetes Federation (IDF), who leads the campaign, will be joined by the American Diabetes Association (ADA), the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF), and many other organizations to mark the day in celebrations throughout the United States.

World Diabetes Day is the primary global awareness campaign of the diabetes world. It was introduced by IDF and the World Health Organization in response to concern over increasing numbers of people with diabetes around the world. The date marks the birthday of Frederick Banting who, along with Charles Best, first conceived the idea which led to the discovery of insulin in 1921. With the passage of the United Nations' World Diabetes Day Resolution in December 2006, November 14 has now become a United Nations-observed day.

Thousands of New Yorkers will join the millions of people worldwide who will use the day to raise awareness of diabetes and its serious complications. IDF has planned a host of activities throughout the city. These include the formation of a human blue circle on the grounds of the United Nations – the blue circle is the global symbol for diabetes; a 246-step march from the UN down 1st Avenue in honor of people with diabetes worldwide; and a diabetes education rally that will include musical performances and celebrity appearances. As the sun sets on World Diabetes Day, over 120 iconic sites and buildings around the world will light up in blue to mark the day. Monuments in the US include the Empire State Building in New York, Sears Tower in Chicago, Prudential Tower in Boston, Los Angeles Airport (LAX) in Los Angeles, the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument in

Indianapolis, the Four Freedoms Monument in Evansville, San Francisco City Hall and Coit Tower in San Francisco, Qwest Stadium in Seattle and the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield.

Professor Martin Silink, President of the International Diabetes Federation explained the significance of the lightings: "These landmarks are lighting up as beacons of hope for the 246 million people living with diabetes worldwide. The illumination of so many landmarks is a prominent statement to governments everywhere: the global diabetes epidemic can no longer be ignored."

American Idol finalist and recording artist Elliott Yamin, who has type 1 diabetes, will perform "Promise to Remember Me," a song written for JDRF by Grammy-award winning composer Alan Silvestri and lyricist Steven Schwartz. He will be joined in song at the U.N.'s Rose Garden opening ceremony by children with diabetes. Restaurateur and television host B. Smith will emcee the Diabetes Education Rally and lead hundreds of World Diabetes Day supporters. This inspirational and educational event follows the 246-step march from the U.N. building to Guastavino's restaurant under the 59<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge, with each step representing one million people with diabetes.

Dr. Francine Kaufman, who leads the campaign to raise awareness of diabetes in children, the theme of this year's World Diabetes Day hopes that increased awareness of diabetes can lead to improved care: "The United Nations now recognizes diabetes as a serious disease that poses severe risks for families, countries and the entire world. Governments everywhere have now acknowledged the negative effect on economies and development. We now need individuals to appreciate the risks of diabetes and understand what can be done to control the disease and prevent or delay its life-threatening complications."

New York's Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Governor Eliot Spitzer, Chicago's Mayor Richard Daley, Los Angeles' Mayor Antonio R. Villaraigosa, and the Mayor of St. Louis, Francis Slay among others, have all officially proclaimed November 14 as World Diabetes Day in their respective cities. City and town officials throughout the country have responded to the need to recognize the day and the significance of diabetes for so many Americans.

This first U.N.-observed day is a result of the landmark resolution recognizing that diabetes presents as great a threat to global health as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

For more details on World Diabetes Day and events around the U.S., please visit [www.worlddiabetesday.org](http://www.worlddiabetesday.org)

## **About IDF**

*The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) is an organization of over 200 member associations in more than 160 countries. Its mission is to promote diabetes care, prevention and a cure worldwide. IDF is a non-governmental organization in official relations with the World Health Organization and is associated with the Department of Public Information of the United Nations. Visit [www.idf.org](http://www.idf.org).*

## **About ADA**

*The American Diabetes Association is the nation's premier voluntary health organization supporting diabetes research, information and advocacy. Founded in 1940, the Association has offices in every region of the country, providing services to hundreds of communities. In 2006, the Association provided a record \$43.3 million toward funding research to combat type 1 and type 2 diabetes in all people of ages and races. For more information on diabetes, please visit [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org) or call 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2382). Information from both these sources is available in English and Spanish.*

## **About JDRF**

*JDRF was founded in 1970 by the parents of children with type 1 diabetes – a disease that strikes children, adolescents, and adults suddenly, makes them insulin dependent for life, and carries the constant threat of devastating complications. Since inception, JDRF has provided more than \$1.16 billion to diabetes research worldwide. More than 85 percent of JDRF's expenditures directly support research and research-related education. JDRF's mission is constant: to find a cure for diabetes and its complications through the support of research. For more information on type 1 diabetes, please visit [www.jdrf.org](http://www.jdrf.org).*

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