



Minnesota Lions Diabetes Foundation Update

Ready, Set, Go! Physical Activity Challenge Fundraiser

Minnesota Lions Diabetes Foundation (MLDF) is challenging Minnesotans and beyond to participate in its three-month STRIDES for Diabetes Awareness Physical Activity Challenge February 1. – April 30. Net proceeds will raise funds for diabetes research and education.

MLDF chose to conduct this fundraiser because physical activity, as well as healthy food and drink choices, help prevent diabetes, and maintain and restore health. The fundraiser goal is to have participants be active indoors or outdoors at least 15 miles each month.

It is easy to participate! Register by going to MNLionsDiabetes.org and selecting the STRIDES logo on the home page. From there, complete the registration, and learn more about the challenge and diabetes. During the challenge, you choose your activities, and when

and where you want to be active! Countless indoor and outdoor activities — walk, swim, curl, roll, run, ski, snowshoe, cycle, bowl, shovel snow – whatever you enjoy doing! Conversion tables on the Resource tab help you convert minutes of activity and number of steps into miles. Register as an individual. Or, put together a team. Please see the flyer in this issue of the *Informer*.

Research for a Cure

Providing funding for diabetes research is a core mission of the Minnesota Lions Diabetes Foundation (MLDF). In the past, Type 1 diabetes was primarily diagnosed in teens and younger, and Type 2 diabetes was considered to occur only among older adults. However, neither is no longer true. Both types of diabetes are impacting all ages!

It is critical to continue our support for research to find a cure for diabetes, such as what researchers are doing at the University of Minnesota (U of M).

Funds that MLDF grants to the U of M for diabetes research is made possible by all our clubs in 5M-5. It's your hard work, fundraising, and gifts to MLDF that make it possible for us to support diabetes research. We appreciate your generous donations — more than \$25,000 — on January 9 during our Mid-Winter Convention Parade of Green.

Progress in Research

This month, we'd like to update you on research being done by Brian T. Fife, Ph.D., a U of M researcher whose focus is "Cure Diabetes by Stopping the Immune System."

Background

Type 1 diabetes happens when the body's immune system, which is needed to fight undesirable viruses, bacteria, etc., goes rogue and destroys the insulin producing cells (beta cells) within the pancreas. This is an example of an autoimmune disease in which the body destroys itself. Without beta cells, the body does not produce insulin and Type 1 diabetes is diagnosed.

Dr. Fife's lab has focused "inflammatory" immune cells responsible for diabetes in human patients. These cells cause a "wildfire" in the body, leaving behind burned down and dead insulin-producing beta cells. His lab has generated regulatory immune cells or "firefighters" that can regulate or control destructive cells and put the "fires" out. Using a new approach, Dr. Fife's lab has made islet-specific "firefighters" to cure and prevent Type 1 diabetes in mice.

The Fife lab plan for the upcoming year is:

- Apply "firefighter" cells to humans (i.e., identifying and destroying the cells that cause Type 1 diabetes)
- Test the "firefighter" in human models
- Ensure that insulin-producing cells are not destroyed in humans, thereby stopping and curing Type 1 diabetes.

Club Visits

Please reach out to your Trustee to schedule your club visit. Whether your club is meeting in person, or virtually, we are available to visit!

Thank you for your generous support of our mission to find a cure, and to increase awareness of diabetes through screening and education.