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Susanne Kaser
„Type 2 Diabetes: A Silent Pandemic“

Abstract

Type 2 diabetes: a silent pandemic
More than 70 million adults live with diabetes in the WHO European Region with Type 2 diabetes (T2DM) accounting for about 90% of all cases. Projections show that 1 in 10 Europeans will be living with diabetes by 2045.The disease accounts for over 109,000 deaths and 5.3 million Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALYs) annually within the EU alone with Central and Eastern Europe experiencing the highest burden. Earlier onset drasUcally shortens lifespan; a diagnosis at age 30 reduces life expectancy by up to 14 years. This premature mortality is driven by macrovascular (myocardial infarcUon, stroke, peripheral artery disease) and microvascular (nephropathy, reUnopathy, neuropathy) complicaUons, chronic liver disease, a higher prevalence
of malignancies and dramaUcally increasing rates demenUa. Development relies heavily on geneUc
background—with a 2- to 3-fold risk increase from family history—intertwined with criUcal modifiable risk factors. High body mass index remains the primary driver, followed by poor diet, physical inacUvity, and smoking. MiUgaUng this burden requires dual-track prevenUon: individual lifestyle modificaUons (dietary opUmizaUon, physical acUvity) and structural poliUcal intervenUons. The la]er include sugar taxes, transparent front-of-pack labeling, acUve urban infrastructure, and unified naUonal health registries.

SHORT CV

Susanne Kaser is Deputy Director of the University of Innsbruck, Department of Internal Medicine I and a university professor of endocrinology and diabetology. She also heads the postgraduate programme in Clinical Nutrition and Preventive Medicine. Her research focuses in particular on diabetes mellitus, insulin resistance, lipid metabolism disorders, nutritional medicine and fatty liver diseases (Metabolic Dysfunction-Associated Steatotic Liver Disease (MASLD)). From 2015, she headed a Christian Doppler research laboratory focusing on insulin resistance and nutrition.
From 2020 to 2021, Susanne Kaser was President of the Austrian Diabetes

Society (ÖDG). Since 2023, she has been a member of the Clinical Committee of the European Society of Endocrinology (ESE). From 2027, she will take on the presidency of the Austrian Society for Endocrinology and Metabolism (ÖGES) for a two-year term. In addition, as an EBEEDM Board Member, she shares responsibility for the European specialist qualification examination in the field of endocrinology, diabetes and metabolism. In 2026, Susanne Kaser was elected a member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts (EASA).

Current positons:

- Professor of Endocrinology and Diabetology at the Medical University of Innsbruck, Austria
- Deputy Head of the Department of Internal Medicine 1 at the Medical University of Innsbruck
- Programm director of the extension study “Clinical NutriNonal and PrevenNve Medicine” at the Medical University of Innsbruck

Professional services:

- Member of the Clinical CommiPee of the European Society of Endocrinology NaNonal UEMS delegate
- Member of Exam Board of the ESE and UEMS European Board ExaminaNon in Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism (EBEEDM) as a development lead in the field of Diabetes mellitus & insulin resistance.
- Incoming president of the Austrian Society of Endocrinology and Metabolism (ÖGES) (2027-2028)
- Past president of the Austrian Diabetes Society (ÖDG) (2020-2021)

Research activity:

Focus: type 2 diabetes, insulin resistance, faPy liver disease, obesity, dyslipidemia, pituitary disorders

Publica3ons: more than 120 peer-reviewed publicaNons including more than 90 original arNcles

Funding highlights: ChrisNan Doppler Research Laboratory (2015-2020), ongoing ERA4Health project