

## **Research Frustration? We Hear You.**

Medical research can take a very long time. Breakthroughs can be few and far between and waiting for them can be frustrating. How do we know? Well, not only because you share your frustration with us from time to time but also because we feel it too; we would love for these breakthroughs to be reached faster!

We recognise there is medical research fatigue out there and we understand where it comes from. Our primary role is raise funds to ensure ground-breaking and innovative research into diabetes can continue in Western Australia but we also see our role as sharing some inside knowledge about the process of research.

Firstly, medical research is costly and it takes time to gather enough funds to drive into research projects – the more support organisations such as ours get in this regard from the community and corporate groups, the quicker we can get crucial answers that can change lives. Once a project is funded, there are usually ethics approvals to secure and submissions to write to get these approvals and the speed at which this can happen often comes down to how many support staff researchers can afford to have on board, as well as how quickly the ethics offices can view the submission. Often there's a need to find volunteers to take part in the research, which takes time, and of course some research has to be done in real time – that is, there's a need to monitor a study participant over many years to discover what happens with a condition like diabetes over a lifetime.

Add to this the fact that both type 1 and type 2 diabetes, as well as gestational diabetes, are incredibly complex conditions – a fact which it took years to discover! – and there's a very real issue that we can't avoid; finding out how to minimise the complications of as well as to prevent and/or cure diabetes will likely still take some time. We believe, though, that research is our only hope and if we can remain patient and stay on-task, we'll reach our goal.

We also need to stop and remember how far we've come. For example, the Defeat Diabetes Foundation recalls that in 1897, the average life expectancy for a 10-year-old child with type 1 diabetes was about 1 year. Diagnosis at age 30 carried a life expectancy of about 4 years. A newly diagnosed 50-year-old might live 8 more years. We have come a long way thanks to research!

Another way to look at it is to ask, if we stop research into diabetes, what will be the likely result?

Our hope is that, with support, we'll reach our mission to cure diabetes. What can you do? Contribute that spare \$5 to research, sign up to volunteer for studies – and ensure you complete the study, spread the message about our work, attend one of our events, hold your own fundraiser – the possibilities are endless!

We promise that, with your help, we'll continue to fund research with the potential to change lives for those living with diabetes every day – and we intend to do it until a cure is found.

Thanks for reading, I'd love to hear your thoughts. You can email me here:  
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