Abbott's 'Above The Bias' Film Reveals Misconceptions Can Impact Diabetes Care

- New survey shows 40% of people living with diabetes have skipped or missed a doctor's appointment due to shame or stigma[1]
- 70% of people with diabetes said supportive comments from others can significantly boost their motivation to manage their condition[1]
- Abbott launches film that highlights challenges of living life with diabetes

ABBOTT PARK, Ill., Feb. 4, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- 'One cupcake won't kill you,' 'I'm going to get diabetes just looking at that,' 'That person doesn't look like they have diabetes.' New survey results and a film released today by Abbott highlight how everyday comments like these may affect people living with diabetes.

Experience the full interactive Multichannel News Release here: https://www.multivu.com/abbott/9294252-en-abbott-above-the-bias-film-aims-to-reduce-stigma-about-diabetes

People living with diabetes – which now includes 1 in 6 adults in America[2] – face many barriers to receiving care. Survey data reveal that the misconceptions and stereotypes around the condition can weigh heavily on the minds of those living with diabetes, creating one more barrier and potentially preventing them from managing their health.[1]

"How many times have we heard 'That looks like diabetes on a plate' when we're watching a movie, eating at a restaurant or scrolling through social media?," said Dr. Susan Guzman, Behavioral Diabetes Institute co-founder, clinical psychologist, and diabetes specialist. "After more than two decades of research and working with people managing diabetes, I can tell you that misconceptions around diabetes take a real toll on people. If we want to help people have healthier lives, we have to recognize where and how bias around diabetes exists and promote a compassionate and fact-based understanding of diabetes."

Data[1] from a survey of more than 2,600 people living with diabetes across eight countries, including the U.S., highlights they may not be getting the care they need due to the shame and stigma around their condition, which can lead to real and often unnoticed health consequences:

- **Diabetes Stigma is an Issue:** Nearly 70% believe there is stigma associated with their condition.[1]
- **Diabetes as a Punchline:** 85% of people living with diabetes say they have seen inaccuracies about diabetes in the media, including on TV shows, movies, and social media, and 40% of people felt that diabetes is often used as the punchline of a joke.[1]
- **Shame Causes Silence:** Almost 25% have avoided sharing their diagnosis with family or friends out of embarrassment or concern.[1]
- **Health Consequences:** 40% have skipped or missed a doctor's appointment due to shame or stigma.[1]

Additional biometric testing revealed that nearly 40% of individuals had an elevated physiological response to stigmatizing statements, even if they don't show outward signs or expressions.[1]

- **Food Elicits the Most Significant Response:** The question, "Should you really be eating that?" prompted the strongest biometric response, causing elevated heart rate and increased perspiration — similar to the stress of a job interview or a first date.[1]

But while words can hurt, they can also help.

- **Support Leads to Progress:** The survey also revealed nearly 70% believe supportive comments from others can significantly boost their motivation to manage their condition.[1]

Above the Bias
Abbott's new Above the Bias initiative aims to help others see the world from the perspective of someone living with diabetes. The initiative builds upon efforts by several diabetes organizations, patient advocacy groups, and experts that continue to work to reduce stigma about diabetes.[3] People can learn more about Above the Bias and watch the film atAboveBias.com.

"From the very early days of Libre, it's been our job to make living with diabetes easier," said Chris Scoggins, executive vice president of Abbott's diabetes care business. "But technology alone can't fix every barrier that people face. We're committed to doing our part, but we can't do it alone. We need the ongoing help of others to support people living with diabetes, so they can get the care they need to manage their health."

About FreeStyle Libre:
Abbott continues to pioneer ground-breaking technology to support people living with diabetes. The company revolutionized diabetes care 10 years ago with its world-leading FreeStyle Libre continuous glucose monitoring portfolio, which today is used by about 7 million people in more than 60 countries.[4] People use Libre to see their glucose numbers in real-time, providing insights into how food, activity, or insulin impacts their glucose to help them make progress on their health goals.

About Abbott:

Abbott is a global healthcare leader and continues to pioneer ground-breaking technology and initiatives to support people live more fully at all stages of life. The company revolutionized diabetes care 10 years ago with its world-leading Libre continuous glucose monitoring portfolio, which today is used by 7 million people in more than 60 countries.[4] Abbott's other technologies span the spectrum of healthcare, with leading businesses and products in diagnostics, medical devices, nutritionals and branded generic medicines. Our 114,000 colleagues serve people in more than 160 countries.

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Product for prescription only; for Important Safety Information, please visit FreeStyleLibre.us.

1. Data on file. Research conducted by Savanta on behalf of Abbott between May and August 2024 was executed in three distinct phases among people with diabetes across Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the UK, and the U.S.
2. National Diabetes Statistics Report, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: National Diabetes Statistics Report | Diabetes | CDC
3. J. Speight, E. Holmes-Truscott, M. Garza et al. Bringing an end to diabetes stigma and discrimination: an international consensus statement on evidence and recommendations. Published January 2024. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/S2213-8587(23)00347-9
4. Data on File. Abbott Diabetes Care.

Additional assets available online:

Video (1)
Photos (1)