



Photos: Roger Lundholm, Kennet Ruona, Tord Alanki. The persons in the picture are unrelated to the text.

## Outstanding research centres in the fight against diabetes

Diabetes is the world's fastest growing chronic illness. The number of people affected is expected to increase from around 360 million today to more than 550 million in 2030. Lund University's Diabetes Centre, LUDC, is one of the world's most outstanding research centres in the field. It conducts intensive research to find new ways of preventing, diagnosing and treating the disease.

### LEADING DIABETES RESEARCH

Diabetes develops when the pancreas cannot produce sufficient insulin to keep blood sugar levels in check, and it occurs in two main forms – autoimmune (type 1) and type 2. In most cases, suffering from a chronic disease of this kind means lifelong medication; type 1 diabetes requires a regular provision of insulin, whereas the treatment of type 2 mainly involves changes to diet and exercise habits, combined with medicine in tablet form. In addition, many diabetics live with constant anxiety about the grave complications that can arise over time. Diabetes increases atherosclerosis, which in turn raises the risk of heart attacks, strokes and impaired circulation in the feet and legs. Other potential complications are kidney damage, nerve damage, vision impairment and blindness.

Currently one in ten Swedes is a diabetes sufferer or at risk of developing the disease. The illness is increasing at a rapid pace both here and in the rest of the world. We know that the wrong diet and insufficient exercise increase the risk of acquiring type 2 diabetes, and that hereditary factors can play a role, but we need to find out significantly more about how to slow down and prevent the onset of the disease. Recent research has shown that there are several different variants of diabetes; it does not affect everyone in the same way. LUDC encompasses the broad expertise necessary for increased insight. The centre gathers researchers from all over the world and has a well-developed international network of contacts. There are also many examples of well-developed national collaborations, including that between Uppsala and Lund University.

Among the comprehensive studies that are conducted under the direction of LUDC is TEDDY, which involved examining all newborn babies for increased risk of auto-immune diabetes and which enabled the prevention of ketoacidosis, a serious condition which can result in death, in the TEDDY children who were affected. Currently there is no cure for diabetes. LUDC's researchers raise relevant issues which will hopefully lead to the discovery of new biomarkers and new drugs to benefit patients.

### LUDC'S OBJECTIVES ARE

To find new treatment methods which increase the quality of life for diabetes sufferers. To reduce all the complications of diabetes. To understand the disease so well that we can prevent people from becoming ill.

### FUNDING NEEDS

Support for continuous diabetes research in the form of renewed infrastructure, SEK 5 million per year. Establishment of a professorship in diabetes research, SEK 10 million.

A donation of SEK 10 million enables the identification of children born in Skåne with an increased risk of autoimmune diabetes and to monitor them in order to prevent them developing ketoacidosis.

All donations are welcome, both large and small. Together we can work for a better world.

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