

# New study shows right way for diabetics

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As much as that plate of chilli crab may be tempting, “eat now, think later” is a mantra that spells trouble for diabetics.

Putting off a healthy lifestyle or failing to take medication regularly is easy but the negative effects from such actions may well be irreversible, according to a new study by the National University of Singapore (NUS).

It shows that even if a diabetic’s sugar level improves later, a duration of very high blood sugar level will still cause them to be two to three times more likely to develop complications like heart attack and kidney failure, or even die. The 11-year study of 6,000 Singapore diabetics aged between 52 and 67 started in 2004.

Assistant Professor Kavita Venkataraman of NUS said it shows it is not only important to control diabetes well, but it is also important to control it well over time. If doctors can identify and intervene early, the nasty effects can be mitigated, even in cases of high blood sugar levels.

Dr Goh Su-Yen of Singapore General Hospital said many medical and therapy options are available, but most importantly, a patient must take ownership of his or her condition.

The study is significant as diabetic cases in Singapore are rising.

In 2010, an estimated 11.3 per cent of Singapore residents aged 18 to 69 had diabetes. In 2015, 12.8 per cent of people aged 20 to 79 had the disease.

Stock trader Tan Kok See, 56, a diabetic, said people like him often struggle with such issues as poor diet and not enough exercise. “The study’s results point out the importance of consistently managing weight, body mass index and blood pressure.”

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