

DIABETES AWARENESS DAY
November 29, 2005

Distinguished Guests

Illustrious Professors

Dear Students and Participants.

On this special day, I would like to welcome you all at Notre Dame University. November in general is considered to be the Diabetes Awareness Month, and the 14th of this month in particular is internationally celebrated as the Diabetes Awareness Day. We, at Notre Dame University, strongly believe that awareness is a very essential step in the process of facing diabetes. This belief led us today to host a seminar on “Diabetes Awareness”.

Speaking of awareness, I would like to distinguish between Awareness of Health and Awareness of illness. In as much as we need to be aware of disease, we are called to be aware of health. As a matter of fact, awareness of disease is first of all awareness of health. This distinction tells us how vital prevention is to our life. Keeping health requests prevention, whereas fighting disease necessitates intervention. In both cases, whether prevention or intervention, awareness remains the right approach against all diseases.

A Spanish proverb states: “A man too busy to take care of his health is like a mechanic too busy to take care of his tools”. Health is a gift to be taken care of, to be protected and defended. It is indeed an essential tool for life. Therefore, health expects time and attention to be dedicated for it. An

unknown author has once said: “We, who have no time for our health today, may have no health for our time tomorrow”.

Being healthy is the most solid starting point to fight disease. I see health as a credit we enjoy. Let us protect our credit and invest it. I see health as a positive aspect a human being has. Let not then the negative aspect take place. Let the positive always prevail.

In these days, unfortunately, half of our diseases come from neglect of the body in the overwork of the brain. It is about time to make our brain worry about our body. I believe it is much easier to keep health healthy than bringing back ill health to health. Prevention is much more effective than intervention.

Do not allow your health to become diseased!

Nonetheless, on the other hand, awareness of illness is as imperative as awareness of health. The nineteenth-century Swiss philosopher, Henri Frederic Amiel, said it openly: “There is no curing a sick man who believes himself in health”. As a matter of fact, awareness of illness should lead to seeking and striving to regain health. Dale Carnegie, an American writer of the twentieth century, said: “I know men and women can banish worry, fear and various kinds of illnesses, and can transform their lives by changing their thoughts”. That is actually the purpose of awareness, changing one’s thoughts.

At last, allow me to thank you all for being here present today. My sincere gratitude goes to all speakers who, out of their kindness, are sharing their time and knowledge with all of us, for the well-being of humankind. My

frank encouragement is expressed to Dr. Najat Yahia who, in spite of all inconveniences, she was able to convene this gathering.

Wishing you all blessings for your noble work, I leave you with the words of Hippocrates, the Father of Medicine, saying: “Let your food be your medicine. Let your medicine be your food”.