

The **DIAGNOSIS** that CHANGED **EVERYTHING**

November is World Diabetes Awareness Month and Ottawa City Councillor TIM TIERNEY is opening up about his diabetes journey for the first time.

TIM'S STORY

It was 2023 when Tim's vision started to blur but he brushed it off as a simple fact of life.

Everyone's eyesight changes eventually, he thought, and glasses would fix it.

Despite that, however, it didn't stop him from playing the sports he loved like hockey and soccer, which was also a way for him to manage his fluctuating weight.

Tim has always struggled in that department, so he'd do anything he could to shed pounds, including diets like Keto.

As time went on, though, his eyesight kept getting worse, getting to a point where he had no choice but to wear magnifiers at 4 times the strength.



Tim Tierney, Ottawa city councillor for Ward 11 Beacon Hill-Cyrville and First Vice-President of the Canadian Federation of Municipalities

He became more lethargic, and his energy plummeted. His stomach acid burned constantly, and the acid reflux grew so bad it felt like his throat was on fire.

All this worried Tim enough to see his doctor.

One blood test and a glucose test later, Tim got his diagnosis: Type 2 diabetes.

"It was a major wakeup call, and it helped me change my life," Tim says. "I've had many people concerned about my health, but rest assured that after this reality check, I knew I had to make some major changes."

It's been two years to the month since Tim's diagnosis and the start of his transformation journey.

Despite his open and honest approach to his life and work, he's chosen to keep this part of his life private – that is, until now.

Tim was put on medication, which also meant injecting himself with insulin daily, and in four months he lost 50 lbs.

Shortly after, he was switched off the insulin to GLP-1 medication, which he now only takes once a week.

Type 2 diabetes cannot be cured, but he knew medication alone wouldn't be enough to help him manage his chronic illness, so he made some dramatic lifestyle changes. Since then, he follows a fitness regime, eats a very controlled diet and has even cut out

In fact, Diabetes Canada says that people with diabetes are over three times more likely to be hospitalized with cardiovascular disease; 12 per cent more likely to be hospitalized with end-stage renal disease; and almost 20 times more likely to be hospitalized for a non-traumatic limb amputation compared to the general population.

Diabetes can also result in other serious complications like strokes, heart attacks or vision loss.

and sleep," Tim says.

"Diabetes is so misunderstood and, I'm no preacher, but if people take the time to learn more about it, I know it could persuade people to get tested and possibly diagnosed. Once you know what you're dealing with, your life can — and will — change for the better."

TIM'S "WHY"

Since Tim's made the tweaks to his lifestyle, his

***"I'm the healthiest I've been in my entire life.
I've literally turned the clock back 10 years."***

THE BIGGER PICTURE

November is World Diabetes Awareness Month, and Tim's story is just one of the 3.8 million stories among Canadians who have been diagnosed with diabetes (or about 9.6 per cent of the Canadian population).

And according to Health Canada, it's estimated that by 2031, this number could increase to about 4.2 million, or 12 per cent of the population.

Looking closer to home, Diabetes Canada reports that 31 per cent of Ontarians live with diabetes or prediabetes.

By 2034, that number will climb to 33 per cent, or over 5.7 million Ontarians.

Diabetes is a complex and round-the-clock condition that affects nearly every aspect of a person's life.

WHEN WE STAND TOGETHER

Canada is the birthplace of insulin. The medicine was invented in 1921 by a team of Canadian researchers at the University of Toronto, led by Frederick Banting, Charles Best, J.J.R. Macleod and Jame Collip.

Despite this major accomplishment from 105 years ago, Tim says he thinks Canada can do even more to find something that will help both type 1 and 2 diabetics.

Part of that, he says, is the country's continual investment in important research.

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"I'm the healthiest I've been in my entire life. I've literally turned the clock back 10 years," Tim says. "I'm happy to say that as of today I've pretty much beat it but —

with a big but — it requires me to not slip back into old patterns. I will have a very healthy and full life and I want to take this opportunity to be a public advocate.”

Tim is also going to be a grandfather for the first time in March at the age of 51 and is incredibly excited. He says he wants to continue to be the healthiest version of himself for his family's new arrival.

“I can't wait to meet my grandchild,” Tim says. “And I want to make sure I'm doing everything I can to not only show my grandchild how important it is to take care of yourself and your health, but also how much of an inspiration they have been to me and my health and just how much power they and their generation can have to influence change.”



ABOUT COUNCILLOR TIM TIERNEY

Tim continues to proudly serve as an Ottawa city councillor for Ward 11 for 16 years and is a life-long resident of Beacon Hill-Cyrville.

Tim was first elected to Council in 2010 and since then has spearheaded many projects in which he is proud of – not only for his own ward, but across the Ottawa.

He is especially proud of the New Gloucester Emergency Food Cupboard and Richcraft Sensplex, and the expansion of both Pat Clark Community Centre and Beacon Hill North Community Centre.

Councillor Tierney also serves as the First Vice-President of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), the national voice for local governments in Canada.