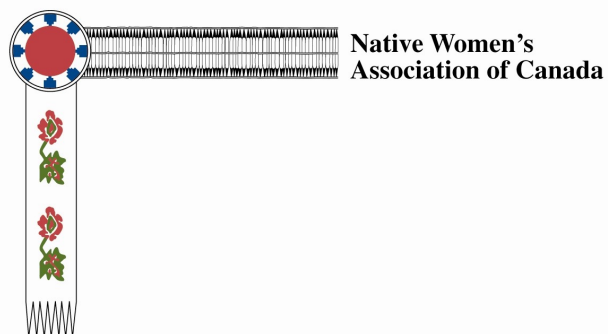
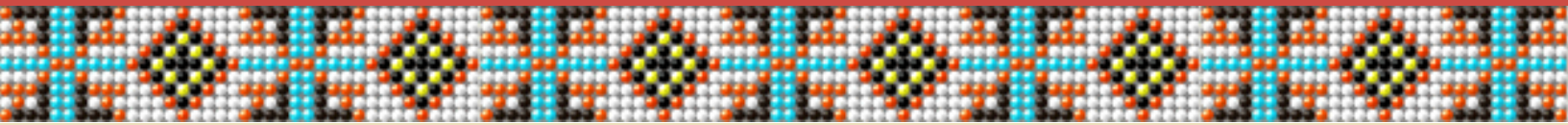


Native Women's Association of Canada

*Diabetes Self-Management Toolkit  
for Aboriginal Women*

*User Guide*





***This Toolkit contains diabetes information and resources. It has been prepared for Aboriginal women, their families and communities by Aboriginal women.***



## Introduction to Toolkit

Diabetes has grown to epidemic proportions among the Canadian Aboriginal population. Many of us know someone who has diabetes or we may have diabetes ourselves. This lifelong disease touches many of us and impacts our health, the health of our families and communities and the health of our Nations. As Mothers, Grandmothers, Aunties, Sisters, and Wives, Aboriginal women play an important role in sustaining the health of our families, communities and Nations, and future generations.

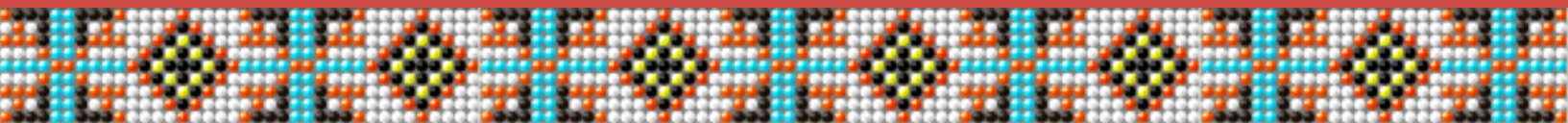
It is upon this foundational understanding that NWAC began its work to address diabetes and increase awareness and prevention mechanisms across Canada. The evolution of this Toolkit has taken several years and is the result and dedication of the many Aboriginal women who first envisioned a diabetes-free people.

NWAC was founded in 1974 with the collective goal to enhance, promote, and foster the social, economic, cultural, and political well-being of Aboriginal women within both Aboriginal and Canadian societies. NWAC is committed to advancing Aboriginal women's health through education and awareness.

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

**This toolkit was designed to supplement information and resources related to diabetes prevention, awareness and management. It was not designed to replace the valuable insight, care and treatment provided by your Health Care Professional.**

**Always consult your Health Care Professional**



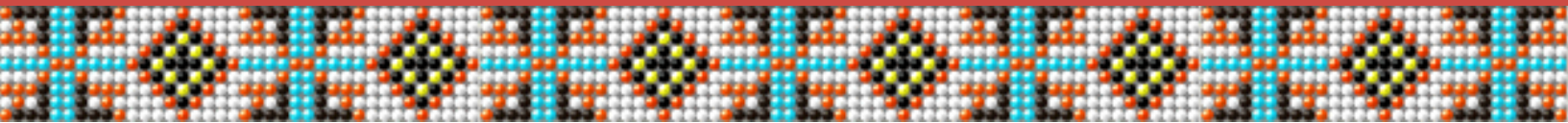
## Development of Toolkit

Since attaining capacity support through the Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative (ADI), NWAC has actively engaged grass-roots constituents by conducting a series of research initiatives and surveillance activities. In 2005 alone over 1200 Aboriginal women contributed to the development of recommendations, including: culturally relevant diabetes resources, securing of funding for regional and community based diabetes workshops and health fairs. An overview of existing literature was performed in 2004, followed by a more extensive literature review in the 2007-2008 fiscal year. This literature review was specific to identifying the incidence of diabetes type 2 across the life span of Aboriginal women from the prenatal environment to infancy, childhood, adolescence, expectant mothers, adults and elders. During this review, it was discovered that limited literature on gender and diabetes exists; therefore Aboriginal people in general were reviewed. This literature review combined with input received during various meetings and related functions during the last few years was instrumental in the development of the NWAC Diabetes Action Plan aimed at the prevention of type 2 diabetes in Aboriginal women.

The NWAC Diabetes Action Plan focuses on three key elements: prevention, partnerships, and cultural approach, and identifies two goals along with supporting strategies aimed at the prevention of type 2 diabetes in Aboriginal women. The *intent* of this Action Plan is to provide NWAC with strategies designed to reach Aboriginal women (living on-reserve, in rural areas, and in cities) and inform them of measures and best practices to undertake in the prevention of diabetes Type 2.

In the fiscal year, 2008-2009 NWAC focussed on how to implement the Action Plan and envisioned a toolkit that would empower Aboriginal women to self-manage diabetes in their life, in their families life and that of their community. This led to a special session held during the 2009 NWAC Annual General Assembly that enabled Aboriginal women from across the country to provide comments, inputs, insights, and other contributions to the development of this toolkit.

It is with great gratitude for these many “guiding lights” who were instrumental in this development phase, resulting in this first “beta” version of the toolkit as you see it now. This version of the toolkit will be reviewed by Aboriginal women during the 2010-2011 fiscal year and will be revised according to their recommendations before full distribution in 2011-2012.



***Diabetes can be viewed not as a life sentence but as a life opportunity to do things in a good way, to live well, and to inspire those we love to live well so that they too go on to inspire others.***



## Toolkit Contents & Usage

### NWAC Diabetes Action Plan - Booklet

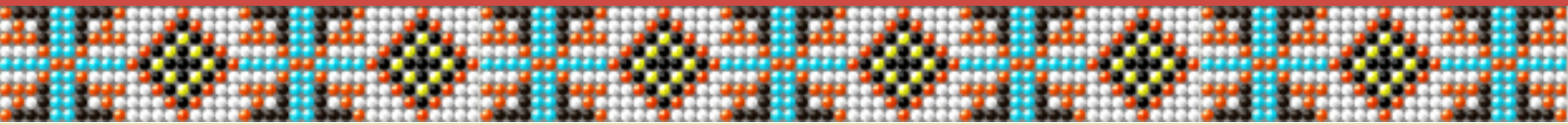
This booklet introduces the NWAC Diabetes Action Plan and takes you through the process of developing your own personalized Diabetes Action Plan. Within, you'll find the "Model to Raise Awareness and Knowledge of Diabetes". This model is presented using the medicine wheel quadrants making it easier to visually understand. Each quadrant includes key messages along with suggested action items. You will find many of these action items useful and relevant to your every day lifestyle and needs. You are encouraged to identify more actionable items as you go through this section, so a page for your notes can be found in the back. A special section is also included in how to develop and make the action plan your own. You will find samples on how to fill in the forms, this will guide you as you develop your own action plan. Refer to this booklet when working through the "My Personalized Diabetes Action Plan" booklet.

### My Personalized Diabetes Action Plan - Booklet

This booklet was designed to enable you to personalize the action plan and is meant to be used in conjunction with the NWAC Diabetes Action Plan booklet. It contains the forms referred to in the NWAC Diabetes Action Plan. Take some time to review the forms and the booklets within this toolkit before beginning. It is recommended that you be at peace and take your time with this. Be honest with yourself, you know best who you are and what you are capable of. Remember to use a pencil when filling in your forms, and be good to yourself. Diabetes can be viewed not as a life sentence but as a life opportunity to do things in a good way, to live well, and to inspire those we love to live well so that they too go on to inspire others.

### Diabetes Information and Resources - Booklet

This booklet contains diabetes information and resources and is a great reference piece to supplement your knowledge about diabetes in general. It also contains some statistical information relating to diabetes in the Aboriginal population and some interesting gender differences in terms of diabetes effects and impacts.



### Healthy Living - Booklet

You're sure to find something interesting in this booklet! It's full of information and offers up some fun ways to live a healthier more vibrant life, for yourself, your family and community!

### Diabetes In The Kitchen - Booklet

This practical booklet is your perfect kitchen companion. Simple and easy to read, you'll discover some practical solutions that can make your kitchen more diabetes friendly while inspiring good eating habits.

### Traditional Foods & Recipes On The Wild Side - Booklet

When Aboriginal women came together to discuss what should be included in this Toolkit, an overwhelming recommendation was to include information on traditional foods and recipes. In addition to traditional foods, it was also recommended that we include a cultural component, which we have done by adding a Creation story. Many thanks to Brenda Gatto, Cayuga sister of the Wolf Clan.

### Helpful Resources

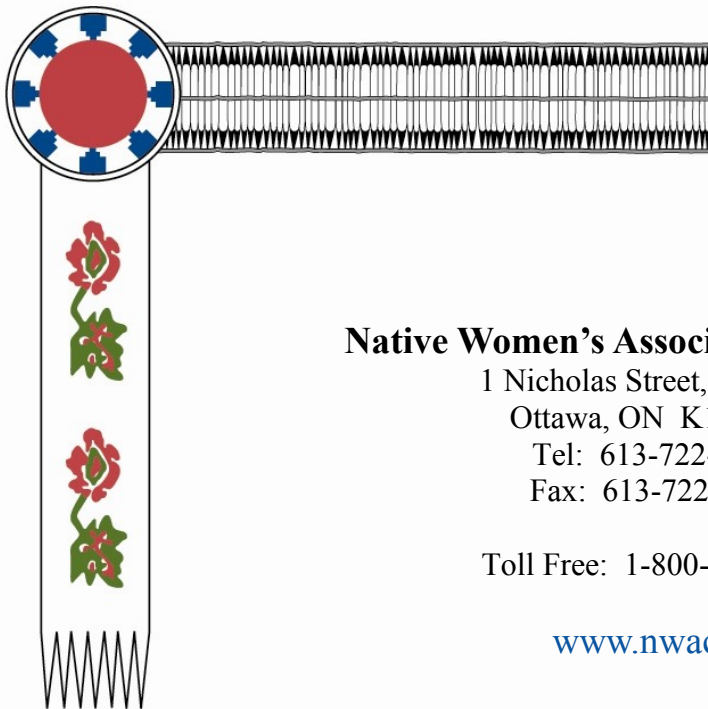
Included in this toolkit are a "Weekly Meal Planner", and "Weekly Exercise & Calorie Tracker". You may find these useful in planning both meals and activities. Keep a blank copy, so that you may photocopy additional copies for yourself, family and friends.

### Factsheets

Currently two fact sheets are available and included in this toolkit: Foot care and foot wear, and Understanding the Glycemic Index. In the future, we hope to add more, stay tuned!

### Fun Stuff

Included in this toolkit is a Pedometer, Compass and other fun stuff. Be inventive with their use, have fun with yourself and family while doing activities that encourage physical activity!



# **Native Women's Association of Canada**

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