PRESS RELEASE

**German Diabetes Study Welcomes the Thousandth Study Participant in Düsseldorf**

**Around 6.5 million people in Germany have diabetes. Thus, Germany ranks second in Europe in the number of cases of the disease. The German Diabetes Study, which has been conducted for more than ten years at the German Diabetes Center (DDZ), the coordinating center located in Düsseldorf, has now accepted the thousandth person as participant in the study. This study, which is organized at eight locations of the German Center for Diabetes Research (DZD), investigates people with newly diagnosed diabetes. This involves research into how the course of the diabetes changes over time and which factors are responsible for the development of diabetes and its complications.**

**Düsseldorf (DDZ)** – Diabetes and its sequelae are among the ten most common causes of death worldwide. Clinical studies such as the multicenter German Diabetes Study play a crucial role in the further development of personalized prevention and therapy approaches. These studies can only function if those affected are actively involved. At the DDZ, Michaela Schwellnus from Moers is the 1,000th study participant in the German Diabetes Study. To date, a total of 1,520 people have participated in the study nationwide. “My heart's desire is to learn more about my recently diagnosed type 1 diabetes and all the interrelationships," she said. It was particularly difficult for the 46-year-old to explain to her daughter that she was suffering from diabetes. "I'm worried about the long-term damage that diabetes can cause. I have always told my daughter that I will live to be 120 years old," Schwellnus added. “Through the study, I receive comprehensive information on how to avoid complications and how to manage my diabetes in the long term.”

To date, molecular processes in cells in patients with diabetes and the mechanisms that occur over time causing long-term damage effects have not been fully elucidated. “Study participants like Ms. Schwellnus are important to us. They aid our research and also benefit from the intensive medical care they receive," said Professor Michael Roden, director of the German Diabetes Center and head of the German Diabetes Study. According to Roden, the objective of this multicenter study is to identify risk groups in order to prevent or at least delay complications in the future.

The diagnosis is often unclear at disease onset because it is difficult to distinguish between the diabetes types in the individual case. 95 percent of those affected have type 2 diabetes. They have a disturbance of insulin action. The degree of insulin resistance is highly variable and therefore relevant to the individual. Results of the German Diabetes Study show that the first signs of nerve dysfunction are already present in seven percent of patients with newly diagnosed diabetes. This very early, clinically barely detectable nerve damage is associated with insulin resistance. Diabetes patients should therefore receive individualized treatment in order to prevent damage at an early stage from diabetes sequelae.

**German Diabetes Study (DDS):**

The German Diabetes Study (DDS) observes patients with newly diagnosed type 1 or type 2 diabetes in the first year after diagnosis for a period of 10 years. The objective of the German Diabetes Study is to identify early markers for various courses of diabetes in order to develop new treatment concepts and use them in a targeted manner. In this way, early warning signs for later complications can be detected, and approved therapy methods can be compared in parallel. In this study, the influence of genes on the course of the disease is also being investigated. Within the framework of the German Center for Diabetes Research (DZD), the study is being conducted at eight locations in Germany: Berlin/Potsdam, Dresden, Düsseldorf, Heidelberg, Leipzig, Lübeck, Munich, and Tübingen.

Participants of the German Diabetes Study receive, free of charge, the opportunity of early detection of diabetic secondary diseases such as nerve, vascular and retinal damage. If you are interested in participating in the study, please register at the Clinical Study Center at the German Diabetes Center (Deutsches Diabetes-Zentrum, DDZ) under the telephone number 0211/ 3382 209 or send an e-mail to [studienzentrum@ddz.uni-duesseldorf.de](mailto:studienzentrum@ddz.uni-duesseldorf.de).

**Photo:**

Prof. Dr. Michael Roden (3rd from left), Director of the German Diabetes Center and head of the German Diabetes Study, with Michaela Schwellnus (4th from left), the thousandth study participant of the German Diabetes Study, study physician Kálmán Bódis (5th from left) and part of the team of the Düsseldorf Study Center.

**Source**: DDZ

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The German Diabetes Center (DDZ)  is a German reference center for diabetes. Its objective is to contribute to the improvement of prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment of diabetes mellitus. At the same time, the research center aims at improving the epidemiological data situation in Germany. The DDZ coordinates the multicenter German Diabetes Study and is a point of contact for all players in the health sector. In addition, it prepares scientific information on diabetes mellitus and makes it available to the public. The DDZ is part of the Leibniz Association (Wissenschaftsgemeinschaft Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, WGL) and is a partner of the German Center for Diabetes Research (DZD e.V.).

**Recent press releases of the DDZ are available at** [**www.ddz.uni-duesseldorf.de**](http://www.ddz.uni-duesseldorf.de)

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