
President's Address

CHARLES M. CLARK, JR.

The following speech was presented 4 June 1989 at the 49th annual meeting of the American Diabetes Association in Detroit, Michigan.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the observation by Oskar Minkowski that removing the pancreas of a dog resulted in diabetes, the first clear indication that the pancreas was involved in diabetes. It is interesting that Minkowski was not looking for a cause for diabetes when he did this operation, but because he had a prepared mind and was a good observer and clinician, when he noted the increased urination, he checked the urine for glucose. I would also like you to note that this is the beginning of the 50th anniversary year of the American Diabetes Association.

Since its inception in 1940, our Association has committed nearly 60 million dollars to diabetes research. The ADA is unique among the voluntary health organizations in that both the professional and the lay members work together to try to find a cure for diabetes. The 225,000 lay members of the Association are as interested in the results reported at the Scientific Sessions as you are. That is why they have committed to double the research budget of the American Diabetes Association over the next five years.

As you know, the National Institutes of Health fund most of the biomedical research. Thus, our research programs must be focused. One effort is to identify young people who may be interested in diabetes research through the Medical Student Research Program. In addition, we work very hard to help young scientists through our mentor-based research program, which has already funded 12 young scientists on their way to diabetes-research careers. We are also interested in targeting research to specific areas. Through the kindness of the Lions Club International Foundation, we have had a focused research program in diabetic eye disease for the past several years in the United States and throughout the world.

We are also interested in translating your work for patients. During the last three years, we have established a program, with standards developed by the National Diabetes Advisory Board, to recognize programs of excellence in diabetes patient education. I am happy to report that as of June, 75 programs in 25 states have achieved recognition, and an additional 60 applications are under review.

In addition, to help the primary-care practitioners who are responsible for the care of 80–90% of the patients with diabetes, the Board of Directors approved standards of care for patients with diabetes mellitus (1). We have also published numerous pamphlets this year covering the basics of diabetes for patients. We have had these translated into Spanish because diabetes is so common in that population. We have published the *Exchange List for Weight Management* (2) based on our *Exchange List for Meal Planning* (3). We have just published the patient-education book *Diabetes and Pregnancy: What to Expect* (4), and I have just approved the text for a second book on gestational diabetes.

Those of you who were here for the Council meetings recognize the growth of the role of our nine professional councils. They are, of course, involved in the Scientific Sessions and also in the Postgraduate Course. Another role of the Council is to give advice to the Association in numerous important areas. For example, the Council on Exercise is working on a position paper on the interactions between diabetes and exercise. The Council on Foot Care and the Council on Youth are also developing position papers in their areas.

During the past year, we have held numerous scientific meetings, including "Current Issues in Nutrition and Metabolism" held in October. In March, we sponsored the 23rd International Research Symposium "Diabetes, Lipoproteins, and Atherosclerosis." Just last month, we held our 3rd Consensus Development Conference on the Role of Cardiovascular Risk Factors in the Prevention and Treatment of Macrovascular Disease in Diabetes, defining state of the art and pointing out directions for future research.

Finally, this year the American Diabetes Association re-

ceived an educational grant from the Upjohn Company to conduct a nationwide clinical education program "Managing Diabetes in the 1990s." This program, running over the next 1½ years, will combine education of primary-care practitioners with a national public-awareness campaign targeted toward people at high risk for the development of diabetes, such as minorities. I am pleased to tell you that Dr. John Colwell, our past president, is heading up this undertaking.

This has been a rough time for biomedical research. Over the last 5 years, I have testified on your behalf before Congress. Although the Association will continue testifying before Congress to increase the biomedical research budget, I would like to challenge you as scientists during this 50th anniversary year of the American Diabetes Association and as we prepare for the 1991 International Diabetes Federation meetings in Washington, DC, to go home, talk to the lay people, talk to the American Diabetes Association people, and talk to your Congressional representatives. Tell them how important what you do is. The best spokespeople for

science are the scientists themselves. We need to be sure to carry the message to people who belong to the American Diabetes Association because they have spouses or they or their families have diabetes. They are interested in your stories. They are interested in your support.

I want to thank you very much for the honor of having been your president for the past year. I also want to thank the American Diabetes Association National Service Center staff for assisting me, the Indiana University Diabetes Research and Training Center staff for looking after the store, and my wife Eleanor for all the weekends she was alone at home.

REFERENCES

1. American Diabetes Association: Standards of medical care for patients with diabetes mellitus. *Diabetes Care* 12:365-68, 1989
2. *Exchange List for Weight Management*. Alexandria, VA, Am. Diabetes Assoc., 1989
3. *Exchange List for Meal Planning*. Alexandria, VA, Am. Diabetes Assoc., 1986
4. *Diabetes & Pregnancy: What to Expect*. Alexandria, VA, Am. Diabetes Assoc., 1989