



POLMED

OUR INVESTMENT OUR HEALTH OUR FUTURE



YOUR CARE POLMED

November 2025

**“Take care of your body.
It’s the only place you
have to live in.”**

Jim Rohn

Dear POLMED Member,

Living well with diabetes is not about perfection; it’s about progress. Each healthy choice you make, every check-up, every mindful meal and walk adds up to real power over your health.

In this month’s Your Care newsletter, we focus on practical ways to take charge of diabetes rather than letting it define your life. From understanding your blood sugar levels to building daily habits that protect your heart, feet, and eyes, every small action matters.

Vaccines also play a vital role in your long-term wellbeing and that of your children. Routine childhood vaccinations not only keep kids safe from diseases like measles, polio and whooping cough but also protect families and communities through herd immunity. By keeping children’s immunisations up to date, parents give their little ones the strongest start in life and help build a healthier future for everyone.

We also shine a light on gender-based violence (GBV), an ongoing issue that affects countless South Africans. Health isn’t only about your body, it’s about safety, dignity and support. If you or someone you know needs help, please reach out. You are not alone.

As always, we are here to support you.

Yours in health,
The YourCare Team

In this issue...

LIVING WELL WITH DIABETES

With 7.2% of adult South Africans living with diabetes, the campaign, which raises awareness, educates communities and empowers those living with the condition, continues to highlight the importance of embracing a holistic view of diabetes.

[> READ MORE...](#)

16 DAYS, ONE GOAL: A WORLD WITHOUT GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, observed on 25 November is a call to action against a global human rights crisis affecting women and girls of all ages and social backgrounds.

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VACCINES SAVE LIVES

Vaccines serve as a lifelong line of protection, safeguarding not only children from life-threatening diseases, but also their family and friends, fellow learners and entire communities.

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Living well with diabetes

“**Diabetes and wellbeing**” is the theme of World Diabetes Day this November.

With **7.2% of adult South Africans living with diabetes**, the campaign, which raises awareness, educates communities and empowers those living with the condition, continues to highlight the importance of embracing a holistic view of diabetes.

UNDERSTANDING DIABETES

Diabetes is a chronic condition characterised by high blood sugar. There are three types:



Type 1 diabetes:

A life-long autoimmune condition where the body mistakenly attacks and destroys insulin-producing cells in the pancreas.



Type 2 diabetes:

A condition resulting from elevated blood sugar levels caused by insulin resistance and insufficient insulin production. This can be due to lifestyle factors such as poor diet, obesity, lack of exercise, genetics, age and family history.



Gestational Diabetes

This occurs during pregnancy and typically resolves after birth.

THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF DIABETES

Diabetes can lead to serious health complications if poorly managed. These include:



Heart disease



Kidney failure



Vision loss



Nerve damage



Even amputation

But diabetes can have an impact on other aspects of your life too, such as your mental and emotional wellbeing. Strategies for managing these are equally important.

DIABETES AND MANAGING YOUR OVERALL WELLBEING

Around 84% of South Africans living with diabetes experience anxiety, depression or other mental health challenges associated with the condition. Psychological support can help you develop coping mechanisms.

Lifestyle changes are also important. These include:



A balanced diet containing whole grains, legumes (such as beans and lentils), and non-starchy vegetables (such as broccoli and spinach), and avoiding processed foods (such as biscuits, kotas and takeaways), alcohol and sugary drinks such as fruit juices, sodas and energy drinks



Regular exercise



Stress-reduction, through techniques such as meditation, deep breathing and journalling



Sufficient good-quality sleep



Self-care and a structured routine that includes practising mindfulness, making time for hobbies and putting reminders on your phone to take your medicine

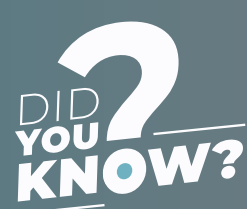
Managing diabetes can be challenging, but you don't need to feel alone. By embracing the support of family and friends, you can enjoy a balanced and fulfilling life.

IN THE EVENT THAT YOU ARE DIAGNOSED WITH DIABETES, FEAR NOT, POLMED HAS YOU COVERED.

Early detection of diabetes can save lives. Consult your doctor to be screened for the condition, which can be done with a simple finger-prick test. Knowing your blood sugar levels can help you better manage your health.

POLMED uses a process called disease authorisation to approve the treatment of your chronic condition as a whole and not just a single medication. This gives you access to a whole list of pre-approved medication for your condition, which is referred to as a basket.

When you need to change or add a new medication for your condition, just take your new prescription to your pharmacy, and they will see if it is linked to your existing condition basket. If the new prescription is not linked, contact the Chronic Medicine Management Programme on **0860 765 633** with your prescription details.



POLMED offers a comprehensive Disease Risk Management Programme designed to support members living with chronic conditions? One of the key conditions managed through this programme is diabetes, which requires ongoing care and monitoring to ensure optimal health outcomes.

If you would like more information or wish to register for the programme, please contact us via:

✉ polmeddiseaseman@medscheme.co.za

📞 0860 765 633

Early intervention and consistent management can make a significant difference—take the first step toward better health today.

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16 Days, One Goal: A World Without Gender-Based Violence

South Africa has one of the highest rates of femicide (the murder of women because they are women) in the world.



3 WOMEN



are killed per day by an intimate partner in South Africa.

Campaigns raising awareness about gender-based violence (GBV)

The **International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women**, observed on **25 November**, is a call to action against a global human rights crisis affecting women and girls of all ages and social backgrounds.

The **16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children** campaign concludes on **10 December (International Human Rights Day)**.

These campaigns aim to **raise awareness about GBV** and **promote gender equality and safety**.

UNDERSTANDING GBV

GBV refers to violence or harm perpetrated against an individual or group due to their perceived gender, sexual orientation and/or gender identity, including:



Physical abuse



Sexual abuse



Psychological abuse



Economic deprivation

In South Africa, many cases of GBV stem from:

- Unequal power dynamics
- Fixed societal and cultural norms that emphasise male dominance

There is also a higher unemployment rate among women than among men.

Around **33% of South African women** over the age of 18 have **experienced physical violence**.

Almost **10% of women** have experienced **sexual violence** in their lifetime.

PREVENTION AND RESPONSE TO GBV

As GBV thrives in silence and ignorance, awareness is key.

Schools, government and community centres can provide comprehensive education to:

- Challenge harmful stereotypes
- Inspire respectful and non-violent relationships
- Encourage men and boys to take an active role in promoting gender equality

GBV RESOURCES OFFERING SUPPORT

Those affected by GBV are also encouraged to make use of resources for support, such as:

Gender-Based Violence Command Centre (GBVCC) 24-hour GBV helpline

Tel: 0800 428 428

Stop Gender Violence Helpline (LifeLine South Africa)

Tel: 0800 150 150

TEARS Foundation Helpline

Tel: 0800 083 277

Gender-based violence (GBV) leaves deep, invisible wounds. Survivors often face long-term psychological effects such as trauma, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Addressing these mental health challenges is not only compassionate, it is essential to the healing journey.

POLMED offers a dedicated Mental Health Programme that provides support for conditions like PTSD and depression. If you or someone you know needs assistance, please contact us at **0860 765 633** or email polmedpsych@medscheme.co.za for more information.

Help is available. Healing is possible.

Putting an end to GBV also demands systemic change. Not only should governments enforce existing laws and hold perpetrators to account, but they should also promote women's empowerment and ensure the necessary support for survivors of GBV.

REFERENCES:

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- https://www.samrc.ac.za/sites/default/files/attachments/2024-10/FemicideBrief2024_0.pdf
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Vaccines save lives

From birth, a child's immune system is routinely exposed to dangerous infections.



Vaccines serve as a lifelong line of protection, safeguarding not only children from life-threatening diseases, but also their family and friends, fellow learners and entire communities.



Childhood vaccine rates in South Africa

SOUTH AFRICA RANKS SIXTH GLOBALLY in terms of under-immunised children.

AROUND 200 000 CHILDREN are currently considered “zero-dose” – not having received their routine childhood vaccinations.

DEBUNKING VACCINE MYTHS

Unfortunately, despite the proven safety and success of vaccines, misinformation abounds, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

The most common myths include:

Vaccines cause autism:

There is no scientific link between vaccines and autism.

Vaccines aren't safe:

Vaccines undergo intensive and exhaustive evaluation to ensure both their safety and efficacy.

Proper hygiene and sanitation are better than a vaccine:

Regardless of cleanliness, many diseases, such as polio and measles, can still spread without vaccination.

Vaccines contain microchips:

This is technically impossible.

ESSENTIAL CHILDHOOD VACCINES

The South African Department of Health has a comprehensive Expanded Programme on Immunisation.

This programme offers free vaccinations to all children, with key vaccines including:

Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine: Against tuberculosis

Oral polio vaccine (OPV): Against poliomyelitis

DTaP-IPV-Hib-HBV (hexavalent vaccine): Against diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, haemophilus influenzae type B and hepatitis B

Rotavirus vaccine (RV): Against severe diarrhoea caused by rotavirus

Pneumococcal conjugated vaccine (PCV): Against pneumonia, meningitis and middle-ear infections

Measles vaccine: Against measles

Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine (for girls from the age of nine):

Against cervical cancer caused by HPV

Parents, guardians and caregivers are urged to follow the Department of Health's routine childhood immunisation schedule, which outlines the vaccines a child should receive and their age.

POLMED is committed to supporting your wellness through proactive care. As part of our Preventative Benefit, several vaccines are covered to help safeguard you and your family against preventable illnesses. For detailed information on the vaccines available and how to access them, please refer to your Benefit Guide.

You can also reach out to us through the following channels:

-  Add 0860 702 547
-  polmed@medscheme.co.za
-  0860 765 633

Take charge of your health—prevention is better than cure.

VACCINES COVERED UNDER THE POLMED PREVENTATIVE CARE BENEFIT

Benefit description	Age	Tariff codes/ICD-10	Cycle
Hepatitis B vaccine	18 years and older		
Maternal Pertussis Booster			Limited to 1 (one vaccine per pregnancy in the third trimester, as part of the maternity programme)
HPV vaccine for girls aged 10-17 years	10 – 17	710020	2 x vaccinations per beneficiary
Pertussis booster vaccine (Beneficiaries 7 years and older)	>7		
Child immunisations provided by the Department of Health (DOH) for children twelve (12) years and younger	12<	As per DOH age schedule according to the Road to Health Chart	Immunisation – National Department of Health
COVID-19 vaccine benefit			Limited to PMB requirements
Flu vaccine	10 – 17	732826, 07355	Annually
Pneumococcal vaccine			Limited to one every five years

By vaccinating your child, you're giving them, and your community, the best possible chance of a healthy life and a healthy future.

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- https://knowledgehub.health.gov.za/system/files/2025-05/Global%20updates%20on%20vaccination%20uptake_final.pdf
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