



OUR RESEARCHERS | DR. MINNA WOO

Thank you for your generosity. Diabetes Canada is grateful to our donors for supporting critical research that will end diabetes.

Through your support, Dr. Minna Woo, professor, Departments of Medicine, Institute of Medical Science, Immunology, and Pharmacology and Toxicology and Director, Banting & Best Diabetes Centre at the University of Toronto, is bringing us one step closer to improved treatments for people living with diabetes.

In healthy individuals, blood sugars are controlled by a hormone called insulin, which lowers blood sugar levels. For people with diabetes, their bodies can no longer produce or use insulin to control their blood sugars, which can lead to health complications such as nerve damage, blindness, heart disease, kidney failure, anxiety, amputations, and even death.

The autonomic nervous system controls body functions such as food digestion and breathing. The vagus is an important branch of this nervous system that can regulate blood sugar levels by controlling insulin activity. When the vagus nerve malfunctions, this can precede the development of diabetes.

Dr. Minna Woo is examining whether manipulating the vagus nerve can prevent or treat diabetes. Currently, some conditions such as depression and epilepsy can be treated through vagus nerve stimulation. Her research will determine whether this innovative treatment can also be used to treat diabetes.

Thank you for giving hope for a healthier future to people with diabetes.