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DID YOU KNOW | The areas with the highest prevalence of diabetes in metro Melbourne are Brimbank and Greater Dandenong.

Diabetes bites hard

Nearly 5200 of city's residents have condition compared with about 2000 a decade ago

Health | Anna Prytz

THE number of people with diabetes in Manningham has increased by 159 per cent in 10 years.

A report, *The Diabetes Epidemic 10 Years On*, released on Monday this week, found six people were diagnosed with diabetes in Manningham each week and that the number with diabetes had risen from 2003 cases in 2001 to 5195 cases this year.

Doncaster East's James Tan was caught up in the diabetes epidemic but has turned his life around in the three months since being diag-



Coralie Souvatzis, James Tan and diabetes educator Christine Knight. N19DT314

nosed with Type 2 diabetes. Clinically obese Mr Tan, 37, turned his despair at his diagnosis into motivation for adopting a healthier

diet and exercise regime. "I knew I wasn't right so I went to the doctors and when they told me I just couldn't accept it," he said.

"For the first weeks I was devastated, but then I realised if I have to live with it forever, I need to be on top of it."

Armed with the knowledge that his grandfather's leg was amputated due to the disease, Mr Tan walks between 11-16km a day.

"It's still very sad that I'll have this in my life always, but I've already lost a lot of weight and feel much better than I did."

Diabetes Australia says 252,000

Victorians are living with diabetes, with the figure increasing by 73 new cases each day.

Manningham Community Health Services diabetes educator Christine Knight runs weekly information and support sessions for the newly diagnosed.

"We're doing it to promote awareness and it's about making sure people make informed decisions about managing their condition," Ms Knight said.

The health centre will run a World Diabetes Day event next Monday, November 14, from 10am-1pm. Details: 8841 3000.