

'Undefeeted': what is it and what are the benefits of joining?

Undefeeted is a global awareness campaign preventing avoidable, diabetes-related, lower-limb amputations. This global, not-for-profit organisation was founded by husband and wife team Peter and Tina Allton, both directors of Circle Podiatry. Its vision is that by 2035, the number of people requiring diabetes-related amputations will be cut from the present rate of one every 20 seconds to one every minute.

How did it all start?

"As podiatrists, we are probably all aware of the scale of the problem and yet, until recently, I myself was content with focusing on just those people with diabetes that turned up having chosen my clinic," says Peter. Peter's life took a turn when about 5 years ago he was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. "I soon became aware of how difficult diabetes is to manage and of the problems that people face once diagnosed," he explains.

Then, with no warning, their then 11-year-old daughter Jasmine was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes after a holiday where she was tired, thirsty and getting up in the night to go to the toilet a lot. As parents, sometimes even when the warning signs are present, it can be hard to imagine that something serious can affect your own children. Suffice to say, on 1 September 2011, 4 days before Jasmine was due to start secondary school, what had begun as an ordinary day soon turned into a day that really rocked the family, as she was rushed into intensive care and intravenous insulin therapy was initiated in order to save her life.

"It was an exceptionally difficult day for me personally, especially as the magnitude of the potential problems my daughter and myself could face was highlighted by my realisation of the shocking and unacceptable fact that one person every 20 seconds has a lower-limb amputation and that 85% of these could be avoided," said Peter.

"I became aware there was not much advice readily available in the public domain to help Jasmine. She was lucky in that she had me to teach her how to care for herself and her feet, but what about everyone else?"

"Realising that probably I was in the unique position of being the only podiatrist in the world with type 2 diabetes and a daughter with type 1 diabetes (please let me know if any of you are in a similar position), I decided it was my calling to leave my comfort zone and launch a global awareness campaign which we have named 'Undefeeted' (credit to my wife for the name)."

Undefeeted's mission

The organisation's mission is to help people with diabetes (and their families) understand and prevent complications with their lower limbs that can lead to ulceration and, ultimately, amputation. It believes they need three things to stay safe:

- Knowledge of how diabetes can affect their feet (via the book *"Undefeeted" by Diabetes*)
- An awareness of their own personal risk (via self-testing and comprehensive podiatric diabetic foot assessments)
- An action plan to prevent complications developing (via online resources).

As a profession, we do a fantastic job caring for those presenting to us with problems, but Peter and Tina believe that we are not so good at educating people to prevent complications from developing. The organisation is supported by a number of professionals. "Any movement or crusade to reduce the number of amputations in diabetic patients needs our full praise and support, so I heartily endorse this crusade," said Professor Mike Edmonds, Consultant Diabetologist at Kings College Hospital, UK.

The general public are not on the radar when it comes to effectively caring for their feet. Of over 6,000 people Circle Podiatry surveyed, only 20%

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had ever had their feet looked at professionally. The question posed by *Undefeated* is: is it their fault or ours? It is time we ask ourselves: 'Are we preventing sparks or fighting fires?'

"If diabetes was a country, it would be the fourth largest country in the world! And the cost of diabetic foot ulcers is greater than that of the five most costly forms of cancer!"
Dr Petra Wilson, CEO of the International Diabetes Federation

According to Professor Andrew Boulton from Manchester University, UK: "With the number of amputations due to diabetes at an all-time high and with the number of people living with diabetes rapidly increasing from the 360 million currently to an estimated 600 million by 2035, there has never been a greater need than now for campaigns, such as 'Undefeated.'" Peter points out that: "If we are going to achieve anywhere near 85% of preventable amputations being prevented then we have to raise awareness and educate. If the present rate of amputation remains the same, we can extrapolate and realise that by 2035 there will be one every 10 seconds."

Since the global launch of *Undefeated* in Los Angeles last year, the campaign has been very lucky to have secured international support from companies such as Orpyx Inc and EnVizit (working with IBM Watson) and Diabetes UK. It has recently partnered with JDRF UK and is also aiming to work closely with the International Diabetes Federation. *Undefeated* has received support from some exciting household names, such as Jermaine Jackson and Michelle Mone. On a professional level, many of the giants in diabetic foot care have given their support, such as David Armstrong, Gerry Rayman, Duncan Stang, Mike Edmonds, Karel Bakker and Andrew Boulton. But now, it is your turn to lend your support. *Undefeated* needs you!

Why you should join *Undefeated*

So how can *Undefeated* achieve its goal? The answer is simple: it can't. One voice alone is but that of a mouse squeaking in this vast world, but if we all get together then we can have a united voice like that of a roaring lion, which will reverberate around the globe. It is policy in the UK for all patients



Peter Allton and his daughter Jasmine.

with diabetes to have an annual foot screening by a trained healthcare professional. Sadly, only half of patients report that they have had their feet examined, only a third of those are aware of whether they are at high, moderate or low risk of running into a serious foot problem and most do not know what to do if a problem arises. The preventative message is clearly not getting out to healthcare professionals or to patients, according to Dr Gerry Rayman, Ipswich Hospital and medical advisor to Diabetes UK.

"Peter Allton in this inspiring book [*Undefeated by Diabetes*] turns the tables. He puts the person with diabetes in the driving seat. He enthusiastically tutors and encourages the reader to take control by understanding the condition, knowing what care to expect and what to ask for from their healthcare professionals, and most importantly he kindly reminds them that their responsibility is not only to themselves but also to their loved ones," says Dr Rayman. He goes on to point out: "This passion is clearly driven by his personal experience of people with diabetes in whom early prevention would have made a difference."

Eighty-seven podiatrists from around the UK have joined forces with *Undefeated*. This is simply not enough, however! You can be a part of the amazing group of practitioners making a difference to



Tina Allton with Jermaine Jackson

the lives of people with diabetes around the UK and:

- Together we will raise the profile of the profession as a whole
- Together we can make a huge difference and have a bigger impact on people's lives
- Together we can deliver better patient education and raise awareness
- Together we can reduce the levels of unnecessary lower-limb amputations related to diabetes.

Undefeated is already making a huge difference to the quality of people's lives it touches and will ultimately help reduce the amputation rate, but only with your help. It is time to give back to the world, either just in your little patch or more globally. On behalf of the organisation, Peter and Tina are calling on like-minded individuals who want to make a difference to sign up to be an Undefeated registered practitioner.

What does this mean?

As an Undefeated registered practitioner your practice details will be put on www.undefeated.org, which the public will be able to search by location. People living with diabetes, or who are at risk of

developing the condition, will be able to easily find you when searching for their nearest practitioner. They are encouraged in the book and through Undefeated's partners at JDRF to access a thorough diabetic foot assessment.

In return, you will agree to make a minimum of one free diabetic foot assessment per day available in your clinic. Our experience is that once you have wowed them, a large percentage of those people having free initial introductions and assessments will convert into regular routine clients, often with family members coming along too.

Undefeated has been working closely with people such as David Armstrong and Duncan Stang (responsible for developing the diabetic traffic light system and foot screening) and it is putting together a simple but comprehensive diabetic foot SATNAV assessment, which will be shared with you once you join.

What benefits can you expect?

Other benefits to you the practitioner are:


- Reduced-rate Diaped products and everyday clinical products from Algeos UK, courtesy of Undefeated
- Free orthotic Undefeated top covers from LBG Medical, one of our sponsor partners
- Free online resources and webinars to help you gain more CPD credits, from your office or the comfort of your own home
- Opportunities to run Undefeated workshops in collaboration with our partners, such as JDRF UK
- An excellent profit margin on sales of "Undefeated" by Diabetes to help increase your bottom line
- National and local media coverage of the campaign.

So what next?

Get involved by doing one of the following:

- Visit www.undefeated.org/professionalportal
- Download the Undefeated app from the Google Play store and Apple App store and select: 'Practitioners Only'.
- Text your name and email address to 07846 550380 and we will contact you
- Send an email to ceo@undefeated.org with the subject line 'Join'.

Every 20 seconds, somebody in the world has a lower limb amputated because of diabetes. Did you know, 85% could have been avoided?



**"Undefeated"™
by Diabetes**

A Step-by-Step guide to keep your feet healthy for life

Peter Allton
www.undefeated.org