Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM) refers to diabetes during pregnancy, an undertreated condition impacting nearly 18 million women every year.\(^1\)

Untreated GDM has serious consequences for maternal and newborn health, and increases the risk of developing diabetes and other non-communicable diseases (NCDs) later in life.\(^2\) Timely diagnosis and treatment of diabetes in pregnancy offers an important window of opportunity—a chance to reduce short- and long-term health risks for women and children. Unfortunately, GDM has received relatively little attention as a public health priority.

### Impact of GDM on Maternal and Child Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short-Term Impact</th>
<th>Long-Term Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significantly increased risk of maternal morbidity and mortality due to complications such as excessive birth weight (macrosomia), hemorrhage, hypertensive disorders, obstructed labor and infection/sepsis(^2)</td>
<td>Highly increased risk of developing NCDs such as diabetes, obesity and hypertension(^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher likelihood of preterm birth, a leading cause of death in children under 5(^3)</td>
<td>About 50% of mothers with GDM develop type 2 diabetes within 5 years(^4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"The cost of inaction against NCDs outweighs the cost of action for any country in the world today."


A child is up to 8 times more likely to develop type 2 diabetes if its mother had undertreated GDM\(^5\)
ADDRESSING GDM IN COLOMBIA

Lessons can be learned from a locally-managed GDM project in Barranquilla, Colombia called “Vida Nueva” or “New Life.”

The project’s holistic NCD-awareness and capacity-building approach has unlocked vast resources, demonstrating that relatively small investments to integrate GDM care into existing prenatal services can significantly improve standards of care.

Vida Nueva worked with the government to:
1. mandate GDM treatment guidelines for all public providers (a first in Colombia)
2. raise awareness among pregnant women
3. build the capacity of health workers and increase quality of care
4. improve patient support for Barranquilla’s most vulnerable population

The rate of GDM screening for pregnant women went from 5% to 97% in three years

50-fold increase in GDM diagnosis

9 out of 10 women diagnosed with GDM received nutrition counseling

More than 1,250 local health workers were trained on the new GDM Guidelines

29% of women diagnosed had no risk factors for GDM, validating the need for universal screening

In recognition of Vida Nueva’s achievements, the Colombia Ministry of Health recognized Barranquilla as a national model city for diabetes care.

To access the full case study, visit:
http://www.worlddiabetesfoundation.org/what-we-do/pregnancy-and-diabetes-resources