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## African traditional medicine practices: Diabetes care from a resource-limited perspective

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Healthcare in Africa remains a challenging entity, especially concerning the management of metabolic disorders such as diabetes mellitus. This disorder that affects almost all body systems has shown a steady increase in developed and developing countries. However, indications are that more than 80% of diabetes-related deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries. It is furthermore estimated that the number of people worldwide with DM is likely to more than double by 2030. If appropriate interventions are not implemented by this time it is projected that DM will be the 7<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death. Healthcare providers such as traditional healers (TH) can play a pivotal role in the care of diabetic patients in resource-limited settings. In Africa, socio-demographic and cultural constraints within a predominantly pluralistic approach to disease management, emphasizes the social status and importance of TH; in tight-knit rural communities these individuals are perfectly suited to provide healthcare. This is based on the presumption that they have background knowledge of patients in their care that healthcare practitioners in cities and towns are unlikely to ever acquire. Research findings, throughout Africa, indicate that most TH has a clear understanding of this disorder as well as the various remedies that can be employed in its management. Therefore, the role and status of traditional medicine practices should be considered as an important resource in preventative measures aimed at reducing diabetes-related morbidity and mortality.

### Biography

Lourens J C Erasmus has completed his PhD from the University of Limpopo. In his very short research career he has published nine papers in reputed journals and has reviewed papers for numerous journals. As human physiologist, his research focus is on the human-medicinal plant interface, with specific emphasis on matters related to reproductive health and chronic diseases of life style.

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