

Mohawk Native Americans Travel to Cuba for Diabetes Treatment



Havana, May 19 (RHC-teleSUR) -- A U.S. delegation of the Mohawk tribe of Saint-Régis has travelled to Havana to be treated with Heberprot-P, a Cuban medicine used to treat diabetic foot ulcers.

According to Prensa Latina news agency, the tribe was receiving treatment for diabetes in Akwesasne, but they decided to be treated by Cuban doctors and to try Heberprot-P, said the tribe's Chief Beverly Cook.

"The treatment will be of great help. We have already seen evidence of serious diabetic foot ulcers - of grade 4 and 5 - from which patients have recovered in 45 days," she said.

According to patients, the medicine is still not legally available in the United States, although it is used in more than two dozen nations in the rest of the world. Nevertheless, the medicine is currently being tested in U.S. clinics.

Cook said that she hoped, with this visit, to pressure the federal government to approve the medicine, and provide the tribes financial support so they can buy it.

According to federal statistics, 17 percent of native North Americans have diabetes, which represents more than twice among the white population. On the Mohawk reservation, next to Massena, half of the population over 65 years old suffers from this condition.

Diabetes is a serious, chronic illness that starts when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin - a hormone that regulates the level of sugar or glucose in the blood.

According to the World Health Organization, more than 422 million adults in the world suffer from this condition.

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