

DIABETES AND COVID

Diabetes has been increasingly common in past 30 to 35 years. There are now more than 400 million people living with diabetes in the world.

India is capital of diabetes, having 77 million diabetics. Unfortunately, about half of them do not know that they have diabetes. And so many are pre diabetics. So many do not have access to medicines nor health services.

COVID-19 pandemic has shown that people with diabetes are at higher risk than people without diabetes of having severe illness off Covid 19 and also dying of COVID-19.

There are two types of diabetics, type 1 and type 2. Type 2 is much more common. Type 1 has higher risk than type 2 diabetes Of severe covid illness and death.

Cause: Why is it so that people with diabetes suffer more than nondiabetics? There appears to be two reasons for this

Firstly the immune system is compromised, making it harder to fight the virus and likely leading to longer recovery period.

Secondly the virus may thrive in an environment of elevated blood glucose.

Other reasons being use of steroids leading to more increase of blood glucose level and so does allowing to have more opportunistic infections like mucormycosis (Black fungus), Aspergillosis(Yellow fungus).

New normal

New normal lifestyle during COVID-19, work from home leading too long hours of sitting at one place. Due to lockdown lack of exercise leading to weight gain which leads to diabetes.

Staying at home leading to ordering outside food, leading to high calorie intake and more weight gain. Also gyms and other sports facilities are closed during this period complicating the matter further.

What should people with diabetes know and do?

For people with diabetes it is important to take precautions to avoid the virus if possible.

- Wash hands regularly and thoroughly
- Try to avoid touching your face, nose and eyes before you have washed and dried your hands.
- Clean and disinfect any object and surface those are touched frequently.
- Do not share food, glasses, towels etc.
- Try to avoid contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory system.

- Try to avoid unnecessary travel, large gatherings and weddings.
- Try to avoid public transport if you can.
- If you have flu like symptoms stay at home.

If you have diabetes

- Prepare in case you get ill.
- Pay extra attention do your glucose levels
- Avoid complications caused by high or low sugars.
- If you show flu like symptoms you should seek medical help
- Healthy Nutrition is essential component. Keep your blood glucose levels stable.
- Avoid excessive consumption of fried food.
- Limit consumption of foods high in sugars, carbohydrates and fats
- Choose lean proteins e.g. Fish, eggs, chicken, milk, beans.
- Eat green leafy vegetables.
- Eat fruits two to three servings.

Vaccination

There is also vaccination, which is recommended for people with diabetes as a priority group for vaccination.

Vaccinations are encouraged and they have been proven to be safe and effective and proven to reduce mortality.

Patient should take vaccine of any available company. They are almost equally potent and safe. Patient should not stop any ongoing medicine during vaccination without asking your doctor. Specially if you are on any blood thinners, you must consult your doctor.

Ultimately if you take precautions of sanitization, wearing mask, social distancing, vaccination plus good control of sugars, diabetics should not fear of COVID-19.