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Experts disapprove diabetics getting to fad diets

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By **Manbeena Chawla** | August 19, 2020



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ASSOCHAM concludes third edition of ‘Illness to Wellness’ series

The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), one of the apex trade associations of India concluded the third edition of the ‘Illness to Wellness’ series themed ‘Diabetes Management During COVID-19’ with an eminent panel of diabetes experts invited to hold dialogue on the illness recently.

The galaxy of experts highlighted that patients with poorly controlled diabetes with comorbidities are more vulnerable to developing severe symptoms for COVID-19.

Supported by the hygiene brand SAVLON, the programme which promotes healthy living with focus on wellness and preventive health through healthy habits, diet, exercise, and holistic health saw the speakers deliberate on how diabetics in India can best undertake preventive measures at home during COVID-19.

Padma Shri Prof. (Dr.) Anoop Misra, Executive Chairman, Fortis C-DOC, laid focus on regulating and monitoring sugar levels for diabetics during COVID-19. “Stick to your medication, do not leave your medication and check your sugar level constantly. Get your home monitoring kit and use it to monitor your levels. It is not advisable to go to a lab to get tests done right now. Sugar management and control is of utmost importance as this itself will indicate what will be your state if you were to contract COVID, whether it will be mild or severe. This applies to non-diabetics too as many people are gaining weight this time and are inclined to pick-up diabetes,” he said.

Stressing the importance of maintaining a healthy diet that consists of ample supply of proteins, fibres and micro-nutrients, Dr. Misra added, “Do not get into fad diets like intermittent fasting or keto diets. A usual balanced meal with 3-4 servings of fruits and vegetables and green leafy veggies should be enough. People need to also take in plenty of nuts and seeds and to get a good amount of fibres and micronutrients nutrients in their diets.”

He then went on to list out food items to be consumed through the day like for breakfast — milk, egg, fruit, oats or dalia, almonds, chia seeds and for lunch and dinner — chapatti, dal, roti,

dahi, green leafy vegetables, soya, paneer, chicken or fish.

Commenting on how diabetes can be controlled by pregnant women during COVID-19, Dr Hema Divakar, Consultant ObGyn and Medical Director of Divakars Specialty Hospital said, “All pregnancies in India need to be tested for sugar on third and sixth months. What is happening is that their sugar test is being done very late and their level has already gone up which means we are forced to use insulin. As long as you are in control of your sugar level through dietary exercise or other means you are fine. We want to keep the insulin usage to minimal as it adds to the daily trauma and frustration of monitoring that happens in pregnancies. So early detection and using simpler means to control it rather than insulin is the best way to go even in COVID-19 era.”

She further elaborated that COVID positive mothers need not stop breastfeeding. “First step is to always opt for breastfeeding unless the woman is seriously ill. Most pregnant woman who are COVID positive are asymptomatic so same precautions of masking, handwashing, hygiene etc should be maintained and she is allowed to breastfeed which is the best feeding. Unnecessary skin contact like cuddling etc should not be allowed by either the mother or relatives. We allow breast feeding because this virus has not yet been detected in breastmilk,” she said.

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