



How to Take Care of Your Diabetes in This COVID-19 Era?: Simple Guidelines for Patients with Diabetes Mellitus

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In this time of unprecedented crisis of COVID-19 which is trying so hard to touch the peak in India, management of Diabetes mellitus, which is already in a compromised state in our country, is a hard nut to crack both for the doctors and the patients as well. Issues like lack of awareness, scarcity of healthcare specialists and poor access to healthcare facilities make management of diabetes and its complications a huge challenge for clinicians.

For the past four months, physical access to the treating doctors and healthcare setups have been restricted due to the nation-wide lockdown and even after “unlock phase-1”, movements are still not totally unrestricted and it should not be so either, as Corona virus pandemic is still at surge and chances of contracting the virus is much more for persons with low immunity levels like those having diabetes. And most of the patients of diabetes are above 50 years of age which adds to their vulnerability for catching COVID-19.

So in this so hugely compromised and restrained scenario, it is really tough job to keep your sugar levels under control. I myself being an endocrinologist and diabetologist understand this problem very well and am trying to make things easier and better for you by mentioning here some strong suggestions to follow and keep your diabetes under check.

First of all, never miss or stop your diabetes medications, either oral drugs or insulin, on your own. Do not increase or decrease the doses without consulting your doctor. Medical shops are open even in the hotspot and containment zones and these shops are readily making medicines available to you at your doorsteps. So, lockdown is never an excuse for discontinuing your medications. If need be, consult your doctor or any other concerned specialist online (a long list of online medical consultation apps are there). Take medicines for atleast a period of one month or so and avoid frequent visits to the medical stores.

Secondly, keep a glucometer handy at your home and make it a habit to check your blood sugar levels time to time (at a gap of two to three days, as per your feasibility and glycemic status) and maintain a record of this, which will be helpful for the doctor to regulate doses of your medicines.

Next most important thing which has always been a strong pillar of diabetes management is diet and lifestyle modification. Without proper dietary restriction, it is almost impossible to bring your sugar levels under control. Avoid refined sugar, soft drinks, any kind of juice, junk foods, deep fried items and full cream dairy items. Instead have cereals like millets, ragi and whole wheat, pulses, green leafy vegetables, fruits, toned/skimmed milk, curd or yogurt. And there must not be gross fluctuations in the meal timings as well as amount; this will make your sugar levels excur which is not at all good for your body. And most importantly, drink lots of water, at least three to four litres per day.

Make it a habit to exercise on a daily basis at least for 30 minutes. And in this COVID time, you can take a brisk walk in your lawn, terrace or even in your room. Try doing cardio exercises, yoga, meditation and whatever you can according to your endurance and stamina. Do not over exert your body but just do not be sedentary for the whole day.

Following these simple yet effective instructions explained above, you can very well keep your diabetes well managed, even in this perilous time of COVID-19 and lead a healthy and happy life.