

Point™ Stress is a driver of diabetes and makes diabetes control worse. Yoga, meditation, mindfulness, laughter and fun times with friends and family, sharing of concerns and helping each other cope is vital to good diabetes care.

- 9 **Improving the diabetes IQ of the family:** Families that have a person with diabetes will benefit greatly if they all spent time to learn about diabetes[the types of diabetes, dos and donts, how to trouble shoot, latest developments etc.

Point : Knowing the names of medications, how they act, side effects and dosages, how to manage low sugar and high sugar, what to do while flying , there is so much to learn together as a family

- 10 **Be the change:** One person with diabetes can help other members of the family get screened and get healthy. 75% of diabetes is preventable and it could be in the hands of the people with diabetes.

Point There are 70 million people with diabetes in India and each one helped 10 of their family members get screened for diabetes, that is 700 million! Half of India's population.

Family is a beautiful gift. The bond that links your true family is not just one of blood but of respect and joy in each other's life.

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The Family & Diabetes

The Family and Diabetes

November 14th is World diabetes day. It is to honour and celebrate the birthday of Sir Frederick Banting who discovered Insulin in 1921. What an important and landmark discovery! Several millions of lives have been saved and continue to be saved. The theme for this year is the Family and Diabetes. The International Diabetes Federation selects a theme each year to mark World Diabetes Day. The theme for 2017 was Women and Diabetes and for the next two years will be Family and Diabetes.

There are atleast 10 important ways in which the Family and Diabetes are related!

- 1 **It's the Family gene:** Diabetes runs in families. When parents and siblings have diabetes, it increases the chances of a person developing diabetes significantly. Both parents pass on the genes, but there is a greater chance of women getting diabetes and gestational diabetes if their mother has diabetes.

Point: Its not just the beautiful brown eyes or the lovely dimple that you can get from your mother. It can also be her diabetes. But it can be prevented!

- 2 **The family that eats together..** Eating out, food preferences, portion sizes, other healthy or unhealthy eating habits can begin at a very early age based on the family's food choices and eating patterns.. This could lead to obesity / overweight or nutritional deficiencies.

Point : Eat together. Share stories and laugh a lot. Eat healthy and eat at home. Encourage fruits, vegetables, seeds, nuts and healthy options from childhood.

- 3 **Staying fit together:** An active lifestyle is also a family trait. Active parents encourage their children to stay active and a family that watches TV together or plays board games are likely to encourage such activities in their children.

Point : Keep moving! Sitting is the new smoking! Take children to play, to the park or just outside your home. Limit screen time to under one hour a day. Make fun physical activities a family tradition.

- 4 **Proactive about health:** Parents and families that go for routine health check ups and taking precautions [flu vaccine, dental exams, pap smear, blood check ups, BP check up etc] build that culture in their children and do the same for their employees and extended family.

Point : Take your parents, spouse, in laws, children, employees for a physical and screening tests. Give them the gift of good health.

- 5 **The Diabetes coach:** Family members [spouse, parents, adult children, siblings and friends] are an amazing resource for people with diabetes. They can be motivating and nurturing and with positive reinforcement help the person cope with their diabetes. Instead of "nagging" or "blaming" it can be a "gentle nudge or coaxing"

Point : Be the "friend" who knows all about their health, the champion for them and someone who is not judgemental, but firm and positive.

- 6 **Diabetes and the family budget:** When a family member has diabetes it certainly strains the family budget. Doctor check ups, medications, tests, procedures, hospitalizations, work days lost etc add to the cost.

Point : Being proactive and paying attention to early signs and symptoms, learning how to manage sick days and how to manage diabetes related emergencies go a long way in cutting costs. Motivating patients to take their medications, go for health checks will keep their diabetes under tight control

- 7 **Not Eating for Two!**

Helping the pregnant woman eat healthy and be active will help them keep their blood sugars under control and have a healthy pregnancy and a healthy baby. Families tend to make pregnant women eat much more than they need to and also be over protective of them.

Point : Pregnancy is a precious time but gestational diabetes is on the rise [one out of 4 pregnancies in South east Asia is complicated by high blood sugar] Women should get fit and healthy before they get pregnant . Families should be supportive of this..

- 8 **Diabetes and the family stress:** Families tend to have stressful situations and in some families stress is a constant feature. It could be emotional, physical, financial, academic and work related stress etc. All this is transferred to all at home.