

Now, a marriage bureau for Diabetics



Diabetologist Dr. Mayur Patel

Youngsters among India's 70 million diabetics with high blood-sugar levels but longing for a life partner can now heave a sigh of relief.

Ahmedabad, Gujarat's largest city that is fast turning into a medical tourism hub, now has the country's first marriage bureau dedicated to diabetics.

Award-winning diabetologist Dr. Mayur Patel's help centre called 'Make My Life' will be a boon for thousands of youths down with diabetes.

Indeed, Dr. Patel, who is also the chairman of the All-India Institute of Diabetes and Research, has launched the novel marriage bureau with the help of well-known matchmaker Sangita Patel with the objective of changing the mindset of people towards the common disorder.

According to him, families in Gujarat, nicknamed India's diabetes capital, are opposed to marriage with a person who has to take multiple injections of insulin, be careful of the diet and lifestyle to manage fluctuating sugar levels, and run the risk of developing complications.

"Type 1 diabetic youngsters, especially girls, are severely discriminated against when it comes to marriage. But all the problems faced by them are easily manageable," says Dr. Patel, adding that the Type-2 diabetes or non-insulin dependent diabetes caused by lifestyle problems

has affected 20 per cent of the adult population.

The famed diabetologist, who has been doing a yeoman's service for hapless diabetics for the past 30 years having treated some 2.5 lakh patients, has started receiving countless inquiries from worried parents from all over the country.

Says golden-hearted Sangita, who offers her services gratis: "When Type 1 diabetics fail to find a bride or groom, they suffer from depression which again worsens their sugar levels. But we want to make their lives sweeter for the better."

Almost 90 per cent of inquiries received by 'Make My Life' from all over India are from girls. But whether the applicant is a bride or a groom, Sangita and Dr. Patel strain their every nerve to convince the youths as well as their worried parents

Dos and don'ts

Diabetes is a disease known to date back to thousands of years. Several years ago, diabetes was compared to the punishment of 'Kala Paani' or death.

Today, as a result of research carried out during the past few years, a patient of diabetes can live a healthy and active life with proper treatment.

According to Dr. Mayur Patel, a specialist doctor of diabetes can prove to be a good friend, advisor and guide but, he says, contribution from a patient is more significant.

Here are his tips for diabetics...

- Follow a regular, planned diet.
- Take proper dosage of medicines at proper time.
- Maintain regular schedule of performing Yoga, meditation, Pranayama and exercise.
- Do not change medication without advice.
- Whether there is any problem or not, get regular physical examination done by your doctor. In the beginning, examinations should be carried out every month. After that, when glucose in blood comes under control, tests should be carried out every three months.
- As advised by the doctor, get Plasma Glucose examined.
- Have Glycosylated Haemoglobin (HbA1c) test performed. With this, it is known whether diabetes was under control over the past three months.
- Have regular check of your blood pressure and the level of fats in your blood.
- Get your blood and urine tested every year to find out if there is any problem with the kidneys.
- Have the retina (Fundoscopy) and teeth checked.
- Examine your feet and skin every day. Contact the doctor immediately if you have sustained any injury, or notice pus formation in a wound.
- Stop smoking and chewing tobacco; avoid alcohol.



Office of marriage bureau for diabetics

Time to prevent foot amputation

The foot has always been the forgotten child of medicine. In India, 70 million people are diabetics and so 140 million feet are at risk.

Indeed, the country might soon earn the dubious distinction of witnessing the highest leg amputations in the world.

At the time of diagnosis, up to 50% of type 2 diabetic patients have significant neuropathy (a condition wherein the person's sensory system in foot becomes weak and eventually dead) and 'at-risk' feet.

Diabetic foot disease is known to be a major cause of morbidity and is a leading cause of non-traumatic amputation. If not detected and cured at an appropriate stage, a diabetic foot leads to amputation.

Says Dr. Sushil Patel, a Vadodara-based diabetologist, "Mortality rates after amputations are worse than those noted in most malignancies. This shows how dreadful a diabetic foot can be."

Diabetics are 40 times more likely to lose a leg as compared to non-diabetics. 75% of all leg amputations happen in people with diabetes. 25% diabetics develop foot ulcers in their life-time.

About 1 million people lose a leg every year due to diabetes. Every 30 seconds a leg is lost somewhere in the world due to diabetes. Nearly 30% of diabetics aged above 40 years are affected by foot problems.

In India, 40,000 legs are amputated every year and 80% of them are in the neuropathic-infected foot which is potentially preventable.

and relatives that diabetes is easily manageable with proper medicine and lifestyle.

Indeed, Dr. Patel, who also does not charge a rupee from the young, hard-pressed diabetics for his counselling and even medical check-up, further boosts the confidence of the youths and their families by conducting tests and submitting reports in black and white to drive home his point that the management of diabetes is simple after all.

"Well, since we get several inquiries from youngsters of marriageable age also from outside Gujarat, such special marriage bureaus for high-blood-sugar patients in other states would be a boon for hundreds of people," says Dr. Patel, Gujarat's first medico to earn a doctorate in diabetes.

He thought of launching 'Make My Life' after seeing scores of youths, especially girls, who fail to find a good match and even suffer depression which would only exacerbate their sugar levels.

According to Dr. Sushil Patel, a Vadodara-based diabetes expert, the economic cost of the disease is estimated to be 2.1% of India's GDP, adding that every 10 seconds, one person dies from diabetes-related causes.

Urban India has around 10-12 per cent of its population suffering from diabetes. Rural India, however, due to better food and lifestyle, has a much lower incidence of around 3-4 per cent.



Sangeetha Patel the match maker