

LETTER TO EDITOR

Diabetes Awareness & Its Challenges- A Hammering IssueKajal Srivastava¹, Chaitali Borgaonkar², Subhash Johnson³, Anil Mahajan⁴

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**Citation**

Srivastava K, Borgaonkar C, Johnson S, Mahajan A. Diabetes Awareness & Its Challenges- A Hammering Issue. Indian J Comm Health. 2022;34(3):452. <https://doi.org/10.47203/IJCH.2022.v34i03.027>

Source of Funding: Nil Conflict of Interest: None declared

Article Cycle

Received: 26/08/2022; Revision: 05/09/2022; Accepted: 13/09/2022; Published:30/09/2022

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Dear Sir,

Diabetes is one of the most common non communicable diseases affecting many people of our country. India being a diabetic capital of world is facing a major epidemic of same. After Covid -19 pandemic its become more evident that person who were having deranged blood sugar level were more at risk of getting infections. So its very important to create awareness of same. According to National Family Health Survey -5 (NFHS-5) men & women with high or very high blood sugar level (>140mg/dl) who are taking medicines were 15.6 % & 13.5% respectively. Females 15 years & above whose blood sugar levels were high or very high were 6.1 & 6.3 % and men with same were 7.3 & 7.2 %(1). These findings were added first time in NFHS survey as more and more population are getting this silent but killer disease. The main risk factors for this disease are very well known like modifiable risk factors are obesity specially central obesity, gestational diabetes, sedentary life style, a highly saturated fat diet, reduced intake of dietary fibers, malnutrition related diabetes, excessive alcohol consumption etc (2).

As name suggests modifiable means they can be modified and risk can be eliminated of getting a disease. Study by AK Singh et al. in slum area of Delhi showed one third of participants were aware about this disease and its nature (3). According to ICMR, India diabetes study (phase-1) 58.4% urban residents were aware about diabetes compared to 36.4% rural counterparts (4). A study done in Mexico city presents the challenges faced by people with limited resources to deal with this disease. Challenges which was found in this study was cultural beliefs, resource lacking, challenges to lifestyle modification, lack of family support and mental health issues. System level

challenges mentioned were lack of resources, perceived quality of care, and patient engagement barriers (5).

To conclude with few implications its very important to make people understand about this disease and its complications which ranges from heart attack, brain attack, diabetic foot ulcer which may sometimes lead to foot amputation as well and many other. At the same time attention should also be given to challenges which are faced by poor people suffering from this disease as they are busy in earning their bread and butter and not having time for lifestyle modifications which sometimes are known to them as well. It looks like slum people are more inclined towards treatment rather than prevention of disease. As treatment in the form of medicines is easier to take compared to lifestyle modification which is long term and dedicated task. But as old saying prevention is better than cure so people from low resource country like India should be provided with better education, better living conditions and better choice so that they become more empowered to tackle their own health in better way.

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