

DIABETES.....ARE YOU AT RISK

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A Science of Medicine
The Art of Care

We are all aware of the challenges that face our country regarding healthcare. With diseases such as TB, malaria and HIV & AIDS claiming thousands of lives daily, the responsibility rests with us to empower ourselves in the management of other, less newsworthy but equally deadly illnesses which more often than not can be prevented. One such condition is Type II Diabetes.

Type II Diabetes which differs from Type I Diabetes in that it is not necessarily an inherited illness but rather a lifestyle disease, features among the top 10 causes of death in South Africa. In fact, globally, it is considered one of the major medical challenges of the 21st century.

With over 1.7 million people affected in our country alone, Type II diabetes is not to be taken lightly and certainly requires active measures of control. The prevalence of this type of diabetes varies among the population groups with clear evidence that it is directly linked to the diet and lifestyle of patients.

What is Type II diabetes?

Diabetes is a syndrome characterised by abnormally high levels of glucose in the blood due to impairment in insulin production or action. Symptoms include weight loss, increased thirst and urination, blurred vision, abdominal pains, inability to concentrate, exhaustion and increased susceptibility to infection.

Diabetes is a chronic condition that carries a tremendous burden to both the sufferer and the country's economy. It is a major cause of blindness, foot ulceration, deteriorating vision and impotence leaving sufferers at greater risk of heart attacks, strokes, circulatory disorders and making them more prone to infection.

Certain people are predisposed to developing diabetes due to a variety of reasons, the most leading of these factors being obesity, a family history of diabetes, and lack of exercise

The Tibb Approach

Tibb is unique in that it approaches chronic illnesses from every angle. With regards to Diabetes, consideration is taken of a patient's environment, lifestyle, emotions, exercise and rest patterns, adequate medication and especially diet. These treatment protocols are further enhanced by taking into account the disposition of each individual so that managing the illness is tailored to that person's needs. Furthermore, though Tibb medicine is practiced successfully as a stand-alone therapy, it can also be used most beneficially in conjunction with conventional treatment too.

Tibb is a total system of healthcare that has been practised for centuries and draws on the original principles of medicine. The Tibb approach differs from the conventional one by looking firstly at the fact that we are all unique individuals with different temperaments. A person's temperament is a combination of physical characteristics, psychological, emotional, and spiritual attributes. Whilst each person is unique, Tibb has come to categorise people into four different temperamental types. Even though each of us may have some or other characteristics of all four types, there will always be a dominance of one temperament with a sub-dominance of another.

How to Identify your temperament

1. Sanguinous

Physical: well built, more muscular tissue than fat, medium to large frame, reddish/shiny complexion

Behaviour: good appetite, enjoy cold drinks, prefer cold and dry weather

Personality: persuasive, sociable, outgoing, talkative

2. Phlegmatic

Physical: medium to large frame, more fat than muscle, pale complexion, put on weight easily

Behaviour: prefer hot foods and drinks, prefer hot weather

Personality: calm, accommodating, good listener

3. Melancholic

Physical: slender, bony frame, dry skin

Behaviour: prefer hot, moist food; prefer warm weather; light sleepers

Personality: thoughtful, logical, analytical, perfectionist

4. Bilious

Physical: lean to medium built, sharp eyes, prominent veins, flushed complexion

Behaviour: strong digestion, prefer cold, moist foods; uncomfortable in hot weather

Personality: resourceful, outspoken, dominant, short tempered

Depending on your temperament you will be predisposed to certain illness conditions. In the case of Type II diabetes, Tibb predicts that persons having a dominant or subdominant sanguinous temperament will be predisposed to developing the illness. In addition those with a sanguinous/phlegmatic combination will be at an even risk.

Prevention

As with most lifestyle illnesses, it is often only once we are diagnosed with an illness that we try to make appropriate adjustments. If you are aware of your temperament, you can take adequate measures and adopt suitable lifestyle habits to prevent illnesses well before they present with symptoms. In the case of Type II diabetes, you can take the following preventative measures to keep your health in check: Eat correctly i.e. following a diet that is low in complex carbohydrates and saturated fats as well as eating foods with a low glycaemic index, avoid smoking and drinking alcohol, exercise regularly, check your emotional state and fast regularly.

Management of Type II diabetes using the Tibb Lifestyle Factors

If you have been diagnosed with Type II diabetes, there are many effective ways of managing your condition so that you can lead a healthy, quality-filled life.

1. Environmental air and breathing – get plenty of fresh air, and avoid where possible, cold, or excessively humid conditions.
2. Food and drink – Tibb recommends a diet with a low carbohydrate intake and a higher protein intake. E.g. brown rice with fish instead of white rice, potatoes and pies.
3. Movement and rest – regular light exercise is essential. Exercise helps the person to control the blood glucose level and reduces general body weight.
4. Sleep and wakefulness – you should not sleep more than 7-8 hours nightly and avoid daytime naps.
5. Emotions – Tibb advises breathing methods and meditation as methods to avoid negative emotions.
6. Elimination - a high fibre diet will ensure correct elimination of toxins from the colon.

Tibb now runs Total Wellness Training Workshops on a variety of Chronic Illnesses. The 'Tibb Approach to Living with Diabetes' workshop is especially designed to empower you with all the necessary information that you need to manage your illness naturally and effectively, thereby preventing the complications of heart disease, stroke, kidney failure and amputation often associated with Type II Diabetes. Enquire about our workshops today and take control of your Diabetes. Your body will thank you!

Information supplied by the Ibn Sina Institute of Tibb.
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