

## Frequently asked questions about Type 2 diabetes and obesity and their answers

Q 1 - Diabetes is a hereditary disease . So is it a lifelong and progressive disease ?. Once you have it , you have it for life .

Answer - Heredity plays a very minor role in diabetes .

Diabetes is of two types

Type 1 diabetes - It is an autoimmune in nature . It requires life long insulin injection for survival . It is uncommon - 2 - 5% of total patients of diabetes .

Type 2 diabetes - It is a life style disorder . It can easily be reversed by proper lifestyle changes especially food . It is a common variety of diabetes . About 90 to 95 % diabetics are type 2 DM . All type 2 diabetics are potentially reversible . But unfortunately enough attention is not paid to the dietary advice . The conventional advise of

- small frequent meals
- low fat and high carb diet
- processed food / carbs and
- high sucrose consumption

makes it life long and progressive disease .

But unprocessed food , diet low in carbs with fewer meals can reverse the disease process in most cases .

Q 2 - Can I eat anything if my blood sugar and weight is normal ?

Answer - No .

You should eat healthy whole food . Today your body/ reports may appear to be normal , tomorrow it may not be so . Healthy eating habits are essential for lifetime . Processed foods and carbs are bad for everyone . By eating them you are inviting a problem for your health . So everyone should eat only whole healthy

unprocessed food .

Q 3 - I heard that , one should not eat egg yellow as it increases blood cholesterol and leads to heart attack .

Answer - This concept is deeply rooted in the minds of public and medical professionals . There is absolutely nothing wrong with cholesterol in diet .The cholesterol hypothesis is an old understanding . The recent research concludes that cholesterol in food is not the issue of concern for blood cholesterol and heart attack . The high levels of serum insulin due to highly unprocessed carbs , physical inactivity , refined vegetable oils , life stress and smoking environmental pollution are the important determinants for heart diseases. The same is reflected in 2015 Dietary Guidelines .

Q 4 - Is it true that Diabetes / Hypertension are life long problems ? Once you start with drugs you will have to go with it for life .

Answer - It is not true . Diabetes type 2 and Hypertension are mainly related to unhealthy lifestyles. Both hypertension and diabetes are components of metabolic syndrome . As diabetes is reversible, so also hypertension is also reversible in most patients . With proper changes in lifestyle / diet both the conditions are reversible . Medicines may be required for very few peoples.

Q 5 - Can a diabetic person have jaggery instead of sugar ?

Answer - Chemically there is minimal difference between sugar and jaggery . Sugar involves many chemical processes for colour and removing impurities. Jaggery involves minimal processing . But both are equally bad for a diabetic . Both should be completely avoided. For a diabetic or obese jaggery is equally bad as sugar .

Q 6 - Can a diabetic eat the salty or non sweet biscuits ?

Answer - All the processed foods are unhealthy for everyone more so for diabetic . The biscuits are made from maida . Maida has a very high glycemic index ( increase blood glucose ) even when some biscuits do not taste sweet . So all the food products made of maida must be avoided by everyone. Especially Diabetics should not have any variety of biscuits at all . I have not found any biscuit in the market which i can have it for myself or i can advise the same to my patient . Stop eating all and every biscuit and you will find improvement in your blood sugar reports .

Q7 - Does eating eggs , paneer , peanut will add to your weight ?

Answer - No . Calories will not make you put on weight . It is insulin that makes you obese . All the nuts , paneer and eggs stimulate insulin secretion for a very low level . So these foods will not make you obese . Moreover all these foods have high satiety index . You will find it difficult to over eat . Actually these food items will help you to reduce weight if other constituents of meal are selected wisely.

Q 8 - How the honey helps in weight loss .?

Answer - Honey can never help in weight loss . Actually it will lead to weight gain . Honey mainly contains mono and disaccharides . The glucose will stimulate insulin secretion and fructose will be converted to fats by gluconeogenesis in liver . Fructose is absolutely non essential nutrient for human beings and all other living species . There is no metabolic process in body which requires fructose in food . All obese and diabetics should avoid honey in any form .

Q 9 - Can Yoga / pranayam as an exercise will help me to reduce weight ?

Answer - Yoga and pranayam are an useful and essential activities . It helps to maintain flexibility and joint health . It will also help to have better mental health . But for weight loss , it will be of no use . You need an exercise of higher intensity like surya namaskar, running , skipping , jumping etc .

Q 10 - Should I do more of abdominal exercises to reduce my tummy fat ?

Answer - Crunches / planks are good to tone up the abdominal muscles . But tummy fat is different entity . The subcutaneous fat will respond as generalised fat . Any diet and exercise schedule will reduce overall body fat . There is no exercise which can reduce fat from any specific area . So abdominal exercises can never help in selectively reducing the fat from the tummy . It will help to tone up the muscles . For tummy fat , over all body fat loss is a must . Keep away from all advertisements which promise tummy fat loss . There is no magic pill .

Q 11 -Whether Sleep and stress are related to weight and diabetes ?

Answer - Yes . Stress management and sleep are extremely important in both diabetes and obesity . You can not loose your weight if you are stressed . Mental Stress and sleep deprivation will lead to increase in hormone called Cortisol which increases body weight and blood sugar . More so cortisol increases fat in abdominal area , which is more unhealthy . Correct your mind and sleep for controlled weight and blood glucose .

Q 12 - Whether All diabetics / obese should eat something every 2 to 3 hours ?

Answer - Not at all . Nature has designed and installed an intelligent system of hunger , satiety , thirst , sleep in every human

being . It is always advisable to respect the same .

Simple things to practice -

- 1 - Eat only when you are hungry .
- 2 - Do not eat if you are not hungry .
- 3 - Eat till you are full .
- 4 - Stop once you are full .
- 5 - Do not eat anything in-between .
- 6 - Ask your doctor to adjust the medications to suit your needs.
- 7 - Eat for yourself, not for the drugs.
- 8 - You may skip the breakfast , if you are not hungry . Nothing great about breakfast .You can break the fast at 12 noon .
- 9 - Most peoples with sedentary life style should be ok with two meals a day . We as a society are too much obsessed with meal timings , so we feel hungry at particular time of the day . You will require some time to get used to eating and hunger schedule . For a while you can try limbu pani to get over hunger feelings .

Q13 - Why a diabetic / obese patient should not fast ?

Answer - This is an unscientific advice . Fasting is healthy lifestyle change . Actually Every T 2 DM and obese person should practice fasting regularly . Both T2 DM and obesity are due to increase insulin levels in body . Best solution for this condition is fasting . The schedule of fasting may be individualized - time restricted eating , intermittent fast , extended fast etc .

Q 14 - Whether every person need to eat some quantity of sugar daily ? Otherwise how can you maintain blood sugar level in normal range ?

Ans - No . No one needs any sugar in food to maintain sugar in blood . Any one can maintain blood glucose in normal range even without having even a gram of sugar in the food .

There are essential fatty acids and essential amino acids , so

everyone must have those elements from food . They are labelled essential because human body can NOT manufacture these fatty acids and amino acids in the body .

There are certain tissues - blood cells - in the body who needs only glucose for function . But our body is provided with the machinery to produce the required glucose within the body itself . In short body needs glucose but not essentially from the food . So carbohydrates are not essential in the food . It is absolutely unfortunate that we have been advised to eat 60 % calories from the non essential group - carbohydrates . Sugar / glucose is a carbohydrate . Many practitioners continue with the similar advise to their diabetic and obese patients .

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