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Severity of COVID-19 infection higher with diabetes

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Consequences of delay in preventive care in diabetes may increase risk and progression of complications impacting almost all organs of the body and making one more susceptible to infectious diseases and viruses



As we enter the tenth month of fighting the COVID 19 pandemic, Doctors at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital have observed that a majority patients who suffered from severe complications of COVID 19, were chronic patients of type II diabetes. While majority of these diabetic patients were between the age group of 28-60 years (and onwards), the percentage of men was higher. While a majority of diabetic patients are between the age group of 28-60 years (and onwards), the past few years have recorded a rise in infants/children who are either born diabetic or develop this disease early in their lives.

Dr Richa Chaturvedi, Senior Consultant, Endocrinology, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, states that, “While people across all age groups have been affected by COVID-19, its prevalence and severity in patients with type II diabetes has been higher. The main reason here is that viral infections tend to increase inflammation and internal swelling in diabetic patients. Inflammation caused by the virus may aggravate the chances of someone with underlying diabetes, to experience mild to severe symptoms ranging from fatigue, muscle pain, extreme thirst, and frequent urination to trouble breathing, nausea, and confusion that would require emergency care.”

Dr Nikhil Modi, Senior Consultant, Pulmonology and Respiratory Medicine, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, New Delhi, “Out of all patients admitted/treated at Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals for severe complications of COVID 19, 20-30 per cent had diabetes as an underlying health condition. These patients have been chronic cases of diabetes who had been on strict medications and daily doses of insulin. This metabolic disease impacts multiple organs and when coupled with the inflammation caused by COVID-19, the consequences can be life threatening.”

Consequences of delay in preventive care in diabetes may increase risk and progression of complications impacting almost all organs of the body and making one more susceptible to infectious diseases and viruses. Diabetic patients need to keep their sugar levels in control with regular check-ups followed by correct diet and medications as prescribed by the experts.