

DIABETES MELLITUS – Misconception Vs. Reality

There are a number of myths about diabetes that are all too commonly reported as facts. These misrepresentations of diabetes can sometimes be harmful and lead to an unfair stigma around the condition. It's hard to know what is accurate. It is important to get the real facts, so you can make informed decisions to manage your diabetes better.



Here are the common misconceptions –

- 1) MISCONCEPTION: Diabetes not to be taken too seriously.

REALITY: Diabetes is chronic medical disease which causes more deaths in 1 year than other serious diseases like breast cancer and AIDS together. An individual with diabetes has double the chances of having a heart attack than a person without diabetes. However controlling your diabetes can reduce this risk.

- 2) MISCONCEPTION: Diabetes occurs in those who consume too much sugar.

REALITY: Type 1 diabetes is related to genes and is caused by genetic mutation which can be triggered by environmental factors. Type 2 diabetes is dependent on both genes and lifestyle of person ie: obesity (overweight) increases chances for developing diabetes mellitus similarly a diet with very high calories from any source contributes to obesity.

- 3) MISCONCEPTION- Diabetic patients are more prone to have cough, cold and other diseases.

REALITY: People with diabetes are no more prone to diseases than non- diabetic people. Any illness can make diabetes worse and hence more difficult to treat.

- 4) MISCONCEPTION: People with type 1 diabetes should not participate in sports ventures .

REALITY: They can play any sports from mountain climbing to cricket and can enjoy similar lifestyles as anyone else.

- 5) MISCONCEPTION: Women with diabetes can not have a normal pregnancy.

REALITY: Women with well managed diabetes can have a normal pregnancy and can give birth to a healthy child.

- 6) MISCONCEPTION: Diabetic patients can sense when his/her blood sugar level is low.

REALITY: Many patients do not sense/recognize the symptoms of low blood sugar levels, which can prove fatal at times.



- 7) MISCONCEPTION: People with type 2 diabetes should not use insulin as they will become dependent on it or those who do use insulin are very sick.

REALITY: Type 2 diabetes is a chronic disease which is progressive in nature and eventually patients will require using insulin later on in life. However patients using insulin can keep their diabetes under check and can avoid complications occurring later in life.

- 8) MISCONCEPTION - I don't have diabetes because I don't have symptoms.

REALITY: Type 2 diabetes very often goes undiagnosed as we don't expect it to happen to us. Many times we fail to recognize the symptoms as there might not be any symptoms during the earlier stages.