

“Diabetes complications are preventable”

Special Correspondent

By the time the people of Madurai wake up this morning (Monday, November 14), the city would have got off with two varied events carrying special significance with celebration and introspection going together.

The day begins with two different types of programmes. If schools, teachers and parents get ready to greet children on the Children's Day, on the other side there will be hospitals/ doctors cautioning about diabetes and its related complications for the World Diabetes Day.

If the increasing prevalence of diabetes is a common worry, what is causing more concern for the doctors is the fact that more and more children too are becoming diabetic or close on the borderline.

“We are getting more cases of childhood diabetes. In several cases this is happening because of gestational diabetes where pregnant women become diabetic and end up delivering a child with diabetes at birth. We treat them as special cases in the Government Rajaji Hospital,” V. Palani Kumaran, diabetologist, GRH, says. On the overall diabetes scenario, he said that according to the statistics one out of four persons who are above 30 years of age are testing positive for diabetes. “There is no longer distinction between urban and rural people in the case of diabetes. Everyone everywhere is prone to that and hence it is important for general public not to ignore diabetes because it gradually leads to other complications either kidney, foot or cardiac,” the GRH diabetologist explains.

Diabetes is in fact leading to foot amputation or retinopathy (eyesight problem) at its severity. There are many other complications also that go along with diabetes. Obesity is another major cause for diabetes and parents were cautioned to see that their children do not become obese.

“All complications caused by diabetes are preventable and what is important for people is to go for ‘sugar’ test once they are above 30 years. It is advisable to go for diabetes screening once in a year,” the diabetologist suggested.

According to him, any person can become diabetic even without having risk factors such as family history or obesity. “When you are nearing 40, diet control assumes significance. High

calorie items like direct sweets, oily and fried foods, snacks and taking more sugar must be under check,” experts said in various awareness meetings held on Sunday.

In connection with the World Diabetes Day, a screening-cum-awareness camp was organised in the Gandhi Museum premises by Lions Clubs International District 324-B3, Meenakshi Mission Hospital and Research Centre and Aravind Eye Hospital. Similarly, on Monday, the city will witness activities on diabetes and its management.

Regular physical exercises and disciplined diet hold the key for both prevention and management of diabetes- the awareness messages for World Diabetes Day say.