- Diabetes / Virus

Why diabetic kids should be wary of pandemic surge

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People with diabetes who have health issues related to diabetes are more likely to have negative outcomes if they contract COVID-19, regardless of the kind of diabetes they have. The vulnerable population, which includes the elderly and children, is at severe risk of catching the virus. COVID-19 may raise the risk of severe disease in persons with type 1 or gestational diabetes. While young children and teens have lesser symptoms than adults, those with chronic diseases and disorders may be at risk of being admitted to the hospital. Dr Ashwin Karuppan, Founder, Tambaram Medical Centre & General Physician and Diabetologist, says that Type 1 diabetes mellitus, also known as juvenile diabetes, is an autoimmune disease that primarily affects children and teenagers. It is believed that 97,700 youngsters in India suffer from this ailment. These children may experience more severe consequences if affected with COVID-19. While vaccination camps for children aged 15 to 18 years have begun, youngsters with diabetes must take the necessary precautions to control their blood sugar levels. Doctors recommend that parents keep an oximeter available for children with Type 1 diabetes to monitor the oxygen levels twice a day in addition to blood sugar levels. Diabetics must check their blood oxygen levels at least two times a day. To prevent a spike in blood sugar levels, it's also critical to take recommended drugs regularly. Dr Ashwin added that a child's natural immunity can be boosted with a healthy diet and proper immunisation, making them less susceptible to COVID-19. Meals on time and homemade food can also assist in protection as nutritional health improves disease resistance. "To sustain energy and control blood glucose, diabetics must eat a low-carb, low-fat diet. In addition, protein intake should be kept to moderate levels," he added.

As the number of COVID-19 cases rises, children with chronic illnesses should be encouraged to establish proper hygiene practices such as handwashing and sanitisation, as well as to use protective masks when going outside. Experts advise people to get fully vaccinated as soon as possible and to boost their natural resistance by exercising regularly and consuming an antioxidant-rich diet, given the fast-increasing incidence of Omicron around the world.

Doctors advise that they should watch their weight and exercise regularly. In the case of COVID-19 infection, obesity can raise the risk of severe illness. "Diabetes care generally includes maintaining good glycemic control, eye care and foot care, and in some cases renal care. Since diabetes affects other organs in the body it is important to have regular health checkups," says Dr K Baraneedharan, Senior Consultant, Diabetologist, Kauvery Hospital Chennai.