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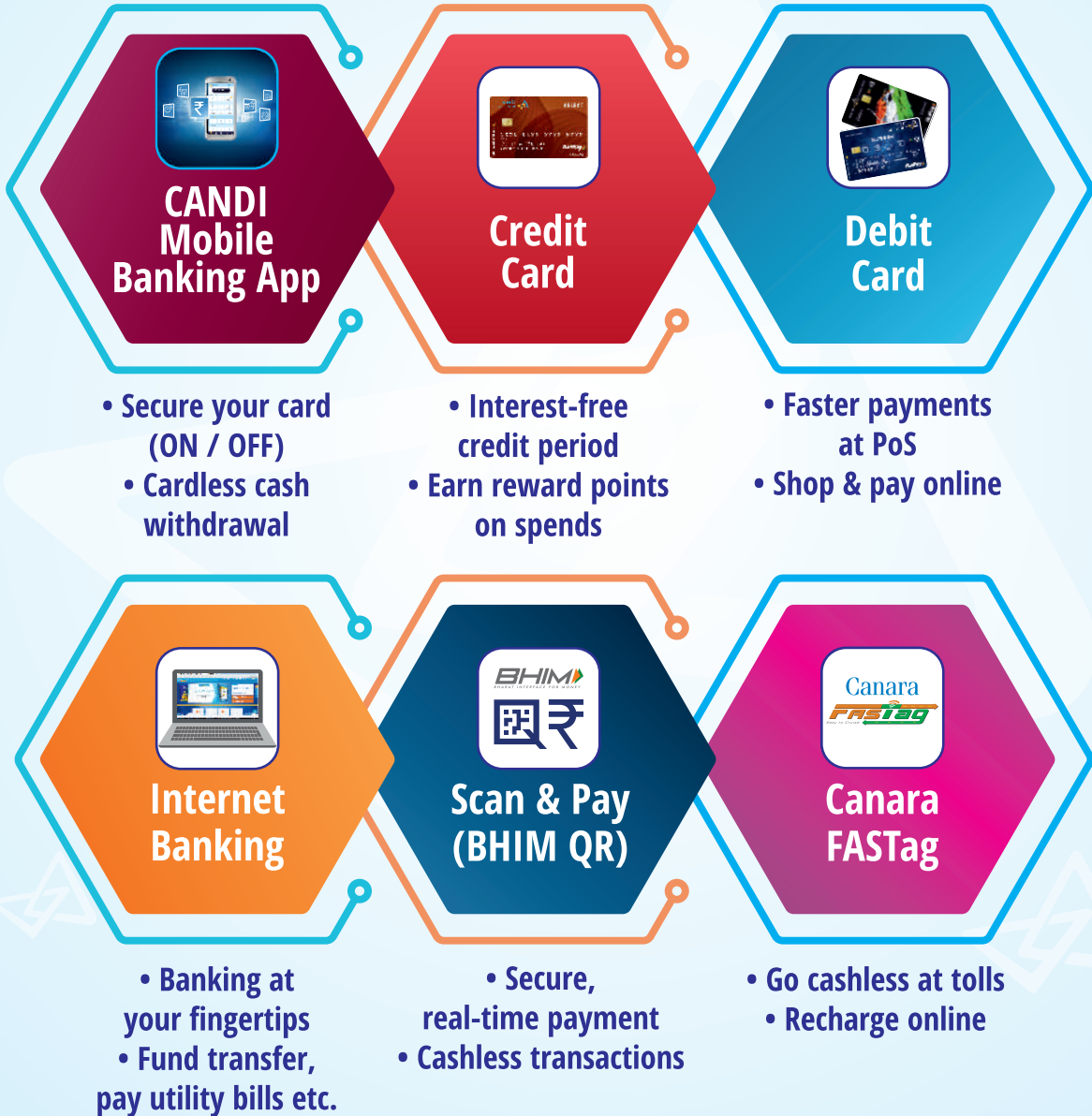
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E_ditorial



Dear Readers,

We would like to start off by wishing you all a very happy, prosperous new year. Hope you could fulfil all the things left unattended last year.

We know that the previous year was hard on us. All we need right now is a bit of motivation and lots of love. Despite the unfavourable circumstances in the last year, we are here with latest edition to embark this new journey, a new beginning from this 2021.

On the cover we have the dynamic father-daughter duo of Dr. Ishari K. Ganesh, the Chairman and Ms. Preethaa Ganesh, the Vice President of Vels Group of Institutions.

They share their take on the impact of COVID on the education system and Ms. Preethaa Ganesh's thoughts on taking over the establishment as its heir.

The "new-normal" - maintain social distancing and wear masks has become more of a lifestyle. As much it is important for us to stay clean, it is important for us to stay healthy as well. A good diet and workout can do wonders. This pandemic has made it mandatory for us to stay healthy despite the lockdown scenario. This edition is tribute for the healthcare workers who were our strongest pillar of support during our hardest times.

With that being said, coming to most important part of this note The Seventh Edition of Mayan Awards to be held in Chennai this February. Registrations are open for Doctors, Hospitals, Entrepreneurs and Social Service - With a special tribute to COVID 19 Warriors.

Let's join together in making this new a grand success.

Wishing you a very happy new year!

Wish us luck!



Narendra B. Davey
Editor



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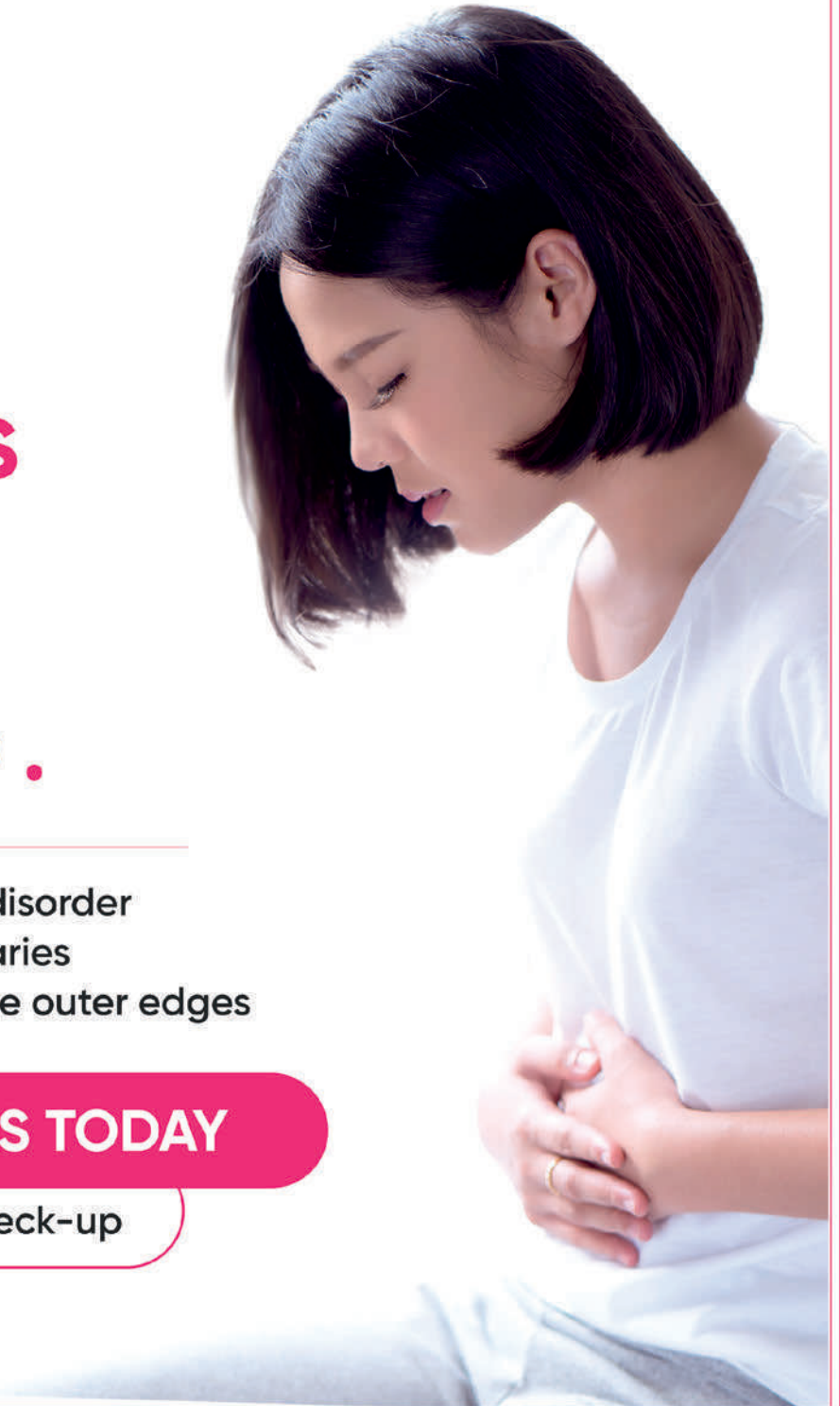


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21 *Resolutions* for 2021

2020 had given us enough baggage to put an entire year in vain. But, there's no room in the next year to carry it forward. "The sun will shine and we will rise again". Living the life by this motto, here are 21 new year resolutions for 2021 that will help you get through life and hardships and make this year one hell of a ride.

1. Stay organized Write down your tasks on paper, break them into chunks and achieve small goals. Staying organised, mentally and physically, helps one to clear the clutter of the mind and to focus more on the work rather than figuring out the amount of work and dealing with the stress that it would produce.

2. 10 by 1 rule For every hour that you work, stretch for 10 minutes to rejuvenate and re-energize your body and to get away with the feeling of lethargy and stress.

3. Alter your habits Habits decide what we will be in the coming next month or the next year. It is important to alter your habits and keep a check on what might be detrimental to your health in the long run.

4. Quality sleep 7-8 hours of Uninterrupted sleep is an essential factor for a human body. However, these days it gets neglected due to the pressure of time and work. A good sleep fosters a healthy mind and help clear out all unnecessary things which could be feeding upon the important things in your brain.

5. Sit less, walk more Even while working from home, one should take some out to walk in their home and the corridors. Walking helps to refresh the mind and helps one to be more productive in such times of social isolation.

6. Choosing your battles Battles are a part of life, but to choose amongst them is our will. Choose the challenges which are worth fighting, and outcomes that make it worth fighting for.

7. One physical activity that makes you happy Stick on to one physical activity such as cycling, swimming, sports, etc. to maintain the fitness of the body if you can't gain the focus and strength for daily workouts.

8. Self-care Make it a routine to pamper or reward yourself after every achievement or even after a rigorous schedule. Take a long hot bath, get some extra sleep, etc.

9. Limit screen time Prolonged exposure to screen can be detrimental to one's health. Although it is difficult to reduce screen time in this digital era, one should try to cut down on their non-work screen time, eat meals without using phones, etc.

10. Meditation Don't perceive meditation as an activity performed with closed eyes, in an enclosed and quiet place. Meditation means trying to focus on one thing at a time and feeling closer to the energy that makes you feel better. Reading books, listening to podcasts or just sitting in the balcony with a cup of chai can bring your heart and mind at peace.

11. Be more present (and less worried) Try to take advantage of every moment, and live it to the fullest. We've all cribbed about 2020 all year long, let's make 2021, a hell of a ride without any baggage of the past and future.

12. Hydrate This is the most underrated resolution but staying hydrated is The most important thing to keep your mind, heart and body healthy without making extra efforts on diet and exercise.

13. Keeping a planner

Keeping things stacked up in your mind may reduce your productivity. Thus, making a planner will help one to focus on particular tasks in a better way.

14. New hobbies Apart from doing more of what makes you happy, try your hand at different things to explore and find your true potential and talent.

15. Love and acceptance While we see every second person getting ahead of us in some or the other way, it is crucial to love and accept your own path of life and trusting the process with full heart and being grateful for the little things that you have.

16. Vision board Having a goal that can be manifested and envisioned is most likely to get fulfilled. The best way to achieve such goals is to lay your hands on creating a vision board and placing it in the place you see most often. Manifest your goals and believe in the universe.

17. Health journaling (finding a health mantra) We often lose track of our eating patterns and consume more than what is required by our body, included the consumption of junk and other harmful eatables. Find a health mantra and noting down your triggers and craving can help you reach your fitness goal sooner.

18. Eat meals at home When at midnight, your cravings are soaring high, try to find home alternatives of street food and curate your own recipes to make it healthier and more nutritious, thus satisfying your taste buds and body nourishments.

19. Changing perceptions and outlooks Numerous things bother us at all times, but if it starts interrupting your work and



puts you in dilemma very often, you must try changing your perceptions and outlook to look at problems with a different aspect and find better solutions and uproot the cause of complications.

20. Treat people with kindness.

Compliment people, say thank yous, perform random acts of kindness and be more polite every day. Don't hate, forgive and forget. Not for others, for yourselves.

21. Stop multitasking More than half of the people all across the globe, invest time in multitasking, while it is noted that more than 75% of them end up being less productive at all the tasks they did at once. Hence, live life, one task at a time.



C
R

Food to avoid before bedtime

Sometimes you just need a late night snack, but there are so many things that, if you eat them too close to bedtime, can really hold you back from getting a good night's sleep.

When it comes to foods which we can or cannot have before bedtime, there is a whole lot of confusion in people.

So, here are some foods you should absolutely never eat before going to bed.

The quality of your sleep is greatly affected by what you eat at night. As well as how soon before bed you eat your food.

Here is the list of foods which should be avoided before bedtime

1. Cruciferous vegetables

Cruciferous vegetables are broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage. They all are very good for health in general but they are probably not the best thing to load up before you head to bed. These veggies can interfere with your ability to sleep soundly because you're likely still digesting all that fiber while trying to fall asleep, which leads to being less than comfortable.

Eat those good for you veggies earlier in the day, so your body has time to digest them before you lay down for the night.

It has insoluble fibers which cannot let your digestive system stay at peace during the night

Photo by Daria Shevtsova

2. Ice creams & high sugar

Eating a bowl of ice cream before bed isn't the absolute end of the world, but it won't make for the best night of sleep you've ever had. Like fatty cheese, ice cream can take a while to digest and your body really isn't able to rest well while you're still working on digesting.

Sugar can also cause your energy to spike, keeping you from easily falling asleep.

That one-two punch of sugar and fat makes ice cream a sleep disruptor, rather than supporter.

Candy bars, ice creams, cakes, etc, are all a big no when it comes to eating before bed. Yes it may sound very comforting to have these after dinner but because of high sugar content, the calories from them cannot be used immediately so it can get stored as fat.

3. Citric fruits and tomatoes

Tomatoes are good for your skin. It is sad that eating tomatoes can have a negative impact on your sleep. This is mainly because of tyramine, which is a type of amino acid. This chemical increases the activity of your brain and delays sleep. This

No one ever said that citrus fruits can ever be unhealthy but due to the high vit C content, it is not a good choice as a bedtime food as it may cause acidity and heartburn if not digested properly.

It will not only disturb your sleep cycle

but also spoil the next day with all the burning sensations.

4. Alcohol

While you might think you're getting drowsy after that glass of wine, drinking alcohol right before bed can make your quality of sleep seriously suffer. Alcohol might sound soothing before bed, but is actually very disruptive for your sleep cycle and causes negative effects on the rapid eye movement. You may fall asleep faster after a glass of wine, but you're probably going to wake up tomorrow still feeling pretty tired.

5. Red meat, cured meat and cheese.

Cheese might be the worst offender of all the high-fat foods you could eat before attempting to go to sleep.

Red meat contains high protein and cured meat and cheeses have an amino acid TYRAMINE which makes you alert. These makes it obvious why it should not be had before sleeping.

6. Caffeinated drinks and chocolate

We all know why high caffeine drinks should be avoided before bed as it can lead to sleeplessness but the same goes for chocolate.

Chocolate also has caffeine in it. It is not as high as coffee but it is a SNEAKY DEVIL because along with caffeine it has an amino acid that makes you alert.

Chocolate can be a good energy booster in the afternoon but it is not a good energy booster.



Bathing can save hearts!

If you are a heart patient and skip a day or two and not bathe, now is the time you shouldn't because as per a new study, published by the Journal Heart, a hot bath is associated with a 28 per cent lower risk of heart disease and a 26 per cent lower risk of stroke. This is likely because bathing is associated with lowering your blood pressure.

This had been discovered through tracking the bathing habits and risk of cardiovascular diseases of more than 61,000 Japanese adults for about 20 years. In a press release, regarding the same, the researchers stated that, frequent tub bathing was linked to lower risk of hypertension and has proved to be beneficial in reducing the levels of risk related to cardiovascular diseases.

The participants that were needed to fulfil the study, aged from 40 – 59, with no history of heart disease and were constantly followed from 1990 – 2009. They were separated into groups and judged on the basis of how often one took a bath, results of which stated – less than once a week, one to two times per week, almost daily or every day.

Other influential factors, such as smoking habits, weight, job status, alcohol intake, sleep patterns, mental stress and fitness schedule were also taken into record. At the end of the

study, it was found that, out of the 30,000 participants, there were about 2,097 cases related to cardiovascular diseases, which included 275 heart attacks, 53 sudden cardiac deaths and 1,769 strokes.

Moreover, the temperature at which the participants normally bathed was also taken into consideration. With relation to warm water, there was a 26 per cent lower risk for heart disease and a 35 per cent lower risk of cardiovascular disease with hot water.

The report also stated a term called, 'hemodynamic function,' which caters to the fact that tub bathing has a preventative effect against heart disease. Dr Eric Brandt, a cardiologist and lipidologist at the Yale School of Medicine's Yale New Haven Hospital, stated that, the term describes the way in which blood is pumped efficiently through the body.

If the level of hemodynamic function in your body is good, that would mean that the heart is able to pump blood efficiently, without having to fight against conditions, catering to blood pressure. Good hemodynamic function relates to a low or normal blood pressure, where the heart is able to function in a proper state. On the other hand, bad hemodynamic function relates to extreme high or low blood

pressure, which expects the heart to work harder, Brandt added on.

The report also acknowledged the fact that tub bathing may lead to sudden deaths, particularly amongst the elderly, due to accidental drowning or heart attack triggered by a rapid change in temperature, or due to heat stroke, where an increase in the body temperature cannot be controlled by sweating.

In a country like Japan, sudden deaths are quite common, but as far as the study is concerned, the frequency in bathing wasn't associated with sudden deaths. But, researchers found that those who took fewer baths were also less likely to engage in other healthy behaviours, which would reduce their risk of heart disease. So, it is questionable if lack of bathing is the reason for a higher risk of heart disease.

In the case of which, Brandt isn't convinced of the fact that bathing is the only reason, as per the study's findings. It is more likely that regularly bathing with warm or hot water can have a temporary physiological change, similar to exercise.

While bathing and lower levels of risk related to heart diseases are linked, there is no harm that is caused, if you bathe safely.

Get inside your beauty routine



Dr Priyanka Reddy

The skincare market is flooded with products that promise a host of benefits from acne treatment to reduction in the appearance of wrinkles and fine lines. But how do these products work? To be able to choose the products that are best suited for the treatment of your specific skin issues, it is important to understand the composition of these products. With the advancement of science and technology, skin specialists have discovered many ingredients that can work wonders for particular skin ailments. Let's understand what they are and how they work.

Retinol

Retinol is the most popular skincare ingredient for reducing and preventing lines and wrinkles. Retinol is nothing but Vitamin A that works by boosting the production of collagen in the body which is essential to maintain the firmness of the skin. The natural production of collagen decreases by 1% every year after the age of 21, so using creams with retinoid can help in reducing the visibility of fine lines and wrinkles and increase skin firmness.

Glycolic Acid

Glycolic acid, typically derived from sugarcane, is a common ingredient in many skincare products. It works really well for acne-prone skin by exfoliating the skin and loosening the dead cells from each other. Glycolic acid also helps in getting rid of pigmentation. It has also been shown to stimulate the production of collagen which will help reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.

Salicylic Acid

Salicylic acid helps in acne treatment by exfoliating the skin and removing dead skin cells that can clog pores.

Hyaluronic acids

Hyaluronic acid is naturally produced by the body and can be found in our skin, connective tissue and eyes. It helps with water retention to keep our tissues well.



lubricated and moist. The natural ageing process and exposure to UV rays and pollution can decrease the amount of hyaluronic acid in the skin, making it dry and dull. Hyaluronic acid can either be taken as supplements or used in serums and injections.

Benzoyl peroxide

Benzoyl peroxide works by destroying the acne causing bacteria in our pores. It exfoliates the skin by removing dead skin cells from the pores. This is one powerful ingredient that is effective against pimples as well as blackheads and whitehead. Its ability to kill the bacteria quickly makes it effective against pimples and the results show within a few days after starting the treatment.

Vitamin C

Vitamin C is one of the most recommended treatments for a vast variety of skin issues such as uneven skin tones, fine lines, acne scars and dullness. Vitamin C has antioxidant properties that neutralizes free radicals. This in turn aids in skin's natural regeneration process. In other words, Vitamin C can keep the skin healthy by fighting off external aggressors such as UV rays and air pollution. Not only this, Vitamin C can also prevent premature aging of skin. Because of its acidic nature, Vitamin C triggers the skin to heal itself by accelerating the production of collagen and elastin.

While these ingredients can do wonders to the skin, it is important to keep in mind that if not used properly, they may cause side effects. It is always better to consult with a dermatologist before you start using new ingredients on your skin.

All-Natural Ayurvedic Herbs For PCOS & PCOD

By: Ms. Honey Thaker,
Head Nutritionist - Fitness Science & Nutrition, Purenutrition.me.

PCOS (Polycystic Ovary Syndrome) and PCOD (Polycystic Ovary Disease) are on a rise and have affected a significant number of women in recent years. The causes of these conditions are often hormone-related and can be managed with a few lifestyle modifications or medications. However, for those who are looking for natural ways to get some relief from either of the conditions can opt for Ayurveda. There are several herbs and remedies in this field that can easily and effectively help you manage your condition. Listed below are a few of them, but before we jump into the remedies, let's first take a look at how Ayurveda classifies PCOS and PCOD

PCOS And PCOD According To Ayurveda

Ayurveda says that both men and women have Shukra Dhatu (semen), which is essential for reproductive health. It consists of androgen (male hormones) and estrogen (female hormones). Any imbalance in the levels of these hormones can cause infertility and other conditions related to reproductive health.

Usually, an imbalance of hormones in women causes excessive secretion of the male hormone, androgen which leads to the formation of cysts in the ovaries. This condition is known as PCOS.

PCOD, on the other hand, is classified as Kapha and Vata disorder that leads to an imbalance in the functioning of ovulation.

Useful Ayurvedic Herbs To Treat PCOS And PCOD

1. Shilajit (Purified Asphaltum)

Shilajit is a herb that is known for its anti-inflammatory properties and helps in rejuvenating the reproductive system in women. It is also a rich source of iron which can prevent iron deficiency in women who suffer from heavy bleeding due to PCOS.

2. Turmeric (Curcuma Longa)

Turmeric is known as a wonder spice as it has several uses and qualities. It is used in cooking, in beauty products, and even for medicinal purposes. Its anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties offer relief to women suffering from PCOS or PCOD.

3. Cinnamon (Cinnamomum Zeylanicum)

Cinnamon boosts fertility in women, and it efficiently deals with uterine fibroids, PCOS symptoms, and even helps regulate normal menstrual flow.

4. Guduchi (Tinospora Cordifolia)

Guduchi is a powerful Ayurvedic herb that is known for its anti-



inflammatory properties. It helps soothe chronic inflammation in tissues that often cause cyst formation in the ovaries. Apart from that, this herb also helps regulate blood sugar levels, boosts sex drive, and enhances immunity.

5. Neem (Azadirachta Indica)

Neem leaves are full of anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, anti-diabetic, and sedative properties. They can be a great addition to your diet if you're suffering from PCOS or PCOD as they may help you soothe or get rid of some symptoms related to the conditions. Neem leaves can also help you get cleaner, acne-free skin and may prevent hair-fall.

6. Amala (Emblica Officinalis)

Amla or Indian gooseberry is a highly potent medicinal plant that is rich in vitamin C and antioxidants. It improves fertility in women, flushes out toxins, regulates the menstrual cycle, and maintains hormonal balance. It also fights against the negative effects of PCOS and PCOD like obesity, inflammation, excessive hair growth, etc.

7. Ashwagandha (Withania Somnifera)

Ashwagandha or Indian Ginseng can help women suffering from PCOS/PCOD in many ways. It helps manage irregular periods and may treat infertility. It provides better insulin resistance, which in turn, helps in better management of the condition. Ashwagandha also helps manage stress, controls mood swings, and

keeps a check on other causes and symptoms related to the conditions.

8. Devadaru (Cedrus Deodara)

Devadaru has unparalleled anti-inflammatory and muscle-relaxing qualities. It helps in reducing cramps during menstruation and managing obesity. It is also effective against diabetes and certain symptoms of PCOS.

9. Ashoka (Saraca Indica)

Ashoka is enriched with anti-inflammatory properties which aid in repairing the endometrium. It heals the damages inflicted in the sensitive linings of the endometrium due to inflammation. The herb is also effective in regulating estrogen levels and has antimicrobial and anti-fungal properties which help in protecting the urinary tract from bacterial and fungal infections.

10. Vibhitaki (Terminalia Belerica)

This herbal plant has several health benefits to offer women who suffer from PCOS. From improving sugar metabolism to curing digestive complexities, Vibhitaki can do it all.

11. Karavellaka (Momordica Charantia)

Karavellaka or bitter melon holds a very reputed place in Ayurveda for its anti-diabetic properties. Other benefits of consuming this fruit include better digestion, reduced inflammation, and enhanced immunity.

This herbal fruit can also regulate your periods and help you manage PCOS better.

12. Lodhra (Symplocos Racemosa)

Lodhra can be extremely beneficial when it comes to managing PCOS or PCOD as it helps in the regulation of ovarian hormone and improves fertility. It also aids in reducing uterine disorders as the herb is enriched with a compound called flavonol glycosides.

You may opt for these natural herbs to help manage ovarian issues.

However, before starting any Ayurvedic medication or medicated herb it is advisable to get a doctor's opinion to avoid any side effects.

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Sleep deprivation- Signs and ways to help your little ones get enough sleep



*by Dr. Atish Laddad, Leading Pediatrician,
Founder & Director at Docterz*

Children do need sleep just like adults. Without adequate sleep, they tend to get irritable and, with time, unhealthy. The impact of sleep denial in children can contribute to lifelong problems. While children do sleep a lot, toddlers have a strange ability to resist sleep, particularly the times when they need it the most. The sooner parents are able to crack the toddler code of being sleep deprived, the faster you can aid your night owl to get the healing rest he or she requires.

Signs of lack of proper sleep in children:

For restored well-being, children must get about eleven to fourteen hours of sleep per 24-hour period, but getting them down to sleep can at times be an epic battle for parents. Sleep deprivation in children can occur in various forms, the most common sign being clinginess or throwing a tantrum. Food rejection, being hyperactive tears, pumping fists, or frequent falls in the house or outside because of lack of sleep makes them giddy and prone to tumbles are also signs that your kid is not getting enough sleep. Some of the reasons for children battling sleep tend to be physical. For instance, the teething process, grasping new skills, and growth spurts can lead to restless nights. Other reasons causing a toddler's sleep to get hindered are emotional. For example, loneliness, scared of scary dreams or any other anxiety can make it difficult to get a good night sleep or even make a naptime difficult. Additionally, when kids are starved for slumber, they usually fail to express their tiredness and being kids they might perhaps choose not to share with you anyway. This can make toddler sleep deprivation hard to identify for parents.

Tips to ensure your toddler is getting plenty of sleep and is well-rested:

Primarily parents must try to figure out an ideal sleep schedule for their child. Some kids are down to one extensive nap per day, while others may tend to take two shorter naps like one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Always go with what works best for your child's schedule. The final aim is to ensure that your little munchkin is getting the rest they need, hence if adding a nap makes him happy all afternoon till bedtime, parents must consider doing so.

Secondly, always ensure you are sticking to the schedule that you have made. It may seem challenging initially particularly if you and your kid are both accustomed to going with the flow but an organized bedtime, naptime and even wake-up time approach is vital for toddler sleep. Hence whatever may be the schedule you choose, you must be steady, no matter how many bedtimes conflicts your toddler tries to involve you in.

Limiting screen time can majorly help with regulating child sleep patterns. The blue light that is released from screens like phones or tablets can wake up the brain making it difficult to fall asleep. Hence parents must shut them off an hour before you put your child to bed.

Learning to understand your child's weary signs will also make it effortless to regulate just how much sleep they require. Always be patient while dealing with them. It may take a couple of weeks of controlling your schedule to understand what works, and then it may take some more time for your child to fine-tune to the new routine. But you must never give up.

If these efforts still fail to improve the amount and quality of sleep your child gets you must consider consulting your healthcare provider to help ease the child.

MENSTRUAL CUPS- A GYNAECOLOGIST'S OPINION

By: Dr. Manu Lakshmi

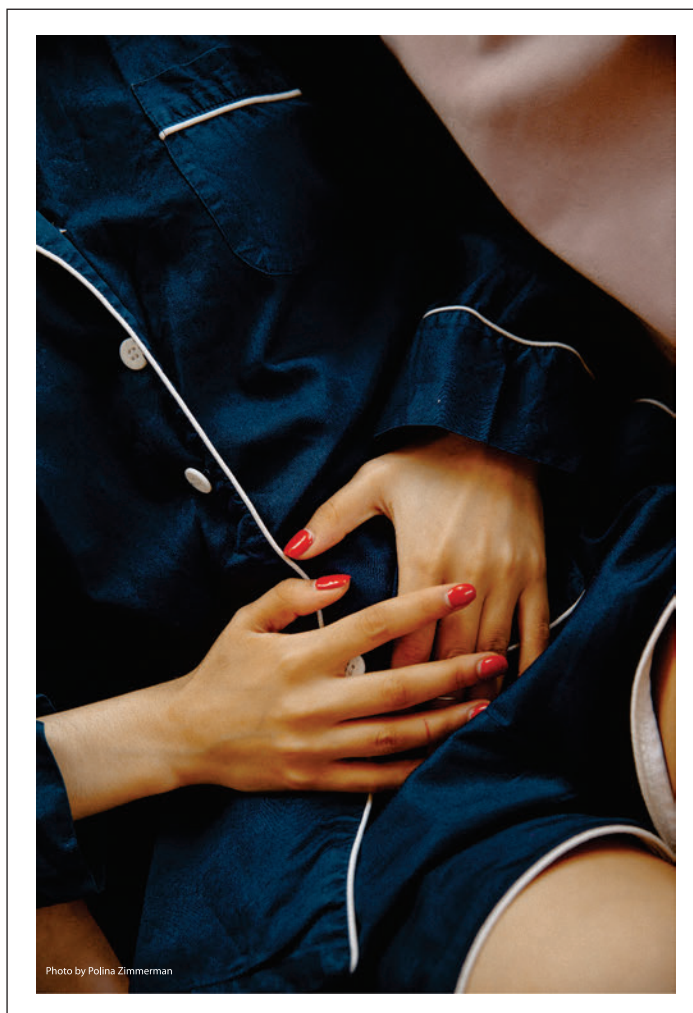
There is growing awareness about sustainable menstruation or "Green Menstruation" - considering the huge environmental impact caused by sanitary waste. Girls are looking at eco friendly options- and a new product available is menstrual cups. Menstrual cups are a reusable, sustainable and convenient period care option, suitable for women who are comfortable using an intravaginal method. The menstrual cup is a device that is inserted into the vagina to collect blood and prevent it from leaking out during a menstrual period. When the cup is full, it can be removed and emptied into a toilet before being cleansed and reinserted. Menstrual cups are usually made out of silicone, with some being made of rubber. People with latex allergies should use silicon versions. There are a few facts that need to be considered when deciding if the cup is the right product to use.

The pluses Effective Studies comparing menstrual cups and usual products used for leakage - found that leakage when using cups was less compared to when using pads or tampons. Though it takes a few menstrual cycles to become familiar and comfortable with the use, most women who have tried it - are happy to continue using it.

Eco friendly. Switching to the menstrual cup is definitely an environmentally friendly choice- since this reduces the landfill waste of used pads and tampons. When maintained carefully - a single cup can be reused for many years and this makes it a cost effective option.

Longer wearability The menstrual cup is often able to hold more blood than a pad or tampon can absorb, which means it needs to be emptied less often than other products need to be changed. Once women find a suitable cup, and a convenient way of wearing it - things become simpler and easier during menstrual days. Worrying about the cup getting displaced or falling out when walking is unwarranted.

The cons Needs practice to get used to inserting The most common complaint about the menstrual cup is that it is hard to figure out the way to insert it. Because there is a learning curve- some women get frustrated and give up after a few attempts. However, with practice, most women can get the hang of proper



insertion. Once past the initial hurdle - menstrual cups are manageable and worth the effort.

Fit issues The menstrual cup comes in different sizes, and it may be a challenge to find the appropriate size. The vagina is a flexible muscular organ that can expand and securely hold the menstrual cup. Women who have an intrauterine device inserted must be very careful when using a cup - since it may pull on the IUD's string and dislodge it.

More mess For some women - dealing with menstrual blood can be difficult. Used tampons and pads are usually thrown away, and it may take some time to get used to cleaning the menstrual cup.

Issues with cup removal Removing the menstrual cup can have as much of a learning curve as inserting. And removing it improperly can cause a lot more mess than inserting it incorrectly.

Risk of infection Since the menstrual cups are reusable, they have to be taken care of properly. There have been reports of pain, urinary infection etc. If hygienic maintenance is neglected, there is a risk of bacterial infection in the vagina. After every menstrual cycle, the cups need to be sterilised.

Are there any situations where using the cup may not be suitable for someone? Cups are not recommended in any situation where a risk of infection is present, such as immediately post surgery or immediately after giving birth. Also - cups may not be suitable for women with a severe uterine prolapse.

According to Dr Manu Lakshmi, of Dr Manu's Gynaecology Clinic - menstrual cups are a safe and environmentally friendly alternative to pads and tampons. She says that she has been receiving a lot of enquiries - especially from young girls who are keen to reduce the impact of disposable sanitary pads on the environment. It is estimated that one sanitary pad could take 500 to 800 years to decompose since it is made of non biodegradable plastic. Considering that women menstruate monthly between ages of 14 and 45 - billions of disposable sanitary pads are generated every year.

Menstrual cups are generally regarded as safe, and are definitely a revolution in menstrual hygiene and women's health, besides being

Dr Manu's Gynaecology Clinic 988404341



Photo by Nataliya Vaitkevich

PILGRIM, A VEGAN-FRIENDLY, CRUELTY-FREE, AND FDA APPROVED BEAUTY BRAND LAUNCHED IN INDIA

With several brands being launched into the world of beauty and self-care, many feel that the industry has begun to compromise on quality. However, there are instances where a brand or product seems to attract attention for all the right reasons.

A good example of this is the newly launched 'Pilgrim'. With its cruelty-free and vegan friendly design, this FDA-approved brand has entered the Indian market by introducing its first range of products called 'Secrets of Jeju Island'.

Some of the products available in this range are Shea and Cocoa Body Butter with White Lotus, Volcanic Lava Ash Body Scrub with Yugdugu and White Lotus, Argan Oil Hair Mask with White Lotus and Camellia.

By shedding light on the lesser-discussed aspects of skin and hair health, Pilgrim aims to help people achieve a complete and well-rounded skincare and haircare regime. All products being released are Sulphate-free and Paraben-free.

The brand also believes in being inclusive and takes into account different skin-types, cultures and ethnicities by using a unique blend of ingredients from all around the world.

Pilgrim and its new range of skincare and haircare products, Secrets of Jeju Island, is now available on Amazon, Flipkart and Nykaa as well as their official website: <https://www.discoverpilgrim.com/>



Photos by Darsh Chatterjee
Health and Fashion

CHOCOLATE TART

By: Amrita Chatterjee



Ingredients:

Flour – 300gms
Caster Sugar – 35 gms
Salt – 1 tsp
Unsalted Butter – 220gms
Ice Cold Water – 3-4 Tbsp

For Filling

Dark Chocolate – 200gms
Butter – 50gms(at room temp.)
Heavy Cream – 170 ml
Vanilla Essence – 1 tsp(optional)

For Serving

Coconut flakes – ½ cup Caster
Sugar – 28 gms

Equipment

7" round pie/tart mould – 1
Weighing scale
Measuring Cups
Measuring Spoons
Parchment paper Rice/Dried Beans/Dried lentils

Note:

All the ingredients should be at room temperature unless advised otherwise.

Method:

1. Start by cutting your chilled block of butter into small cubes. Put it back in the fridge to chill and harden further.

2. In the meantime, in a food processor, combine flour, salt and sugar and pulse 2-3 times. Use salt if using unsalted butter. Add in the chilled butter cubes and mix on medium speed. It should result in coarse texture and most of the flour should be coated with the butter. At this point, start by adding a Tbsp of ice-cold water at a time until the mixture just holds.

3. Again, DON'T BE TEMPTED TO KNEAD. Kneading will result in a tough biscuit-y crust as opposed to a flaky crust that is ideal.

4. Bring the dough together, flatten it in a disk shape and wrap it in a plastic wrap or a zip-lock bag. Let it chill and rest in the refrigerator for about 1 hour to 24 hours. The more it rests the better the results as the flour will be fully hydrated.

5. Roll out your pie dough between two, 9 "square parchment paper. Roll it out to about 9" diameter and ¼" thickness. Place your dough onto the mold and trim off the excess. With a fork prick holes gently all over the crust. This will help the steam escape and will also prevent the crust from puffing up.

6. Put it back in the fridge to chill for another 30 minutes.

7. Preheat your oven to 220 C (usually my oven preheats for about 15-20 minutes depending on your oven)

8. And get started on the filling. In a separate clean bowl, chop the chocolate into small chunks and set aside.

9. In a saucepan over medium-low heat, bring the cream to a boil. Turn off the heat as soon as it comes to a boil. Pour the cream and let it sit for a minute. Then add the room temperature butter and stir gently with a whisk. Add in the vanilla and mix well. Set aside to cool.

10. Bring out the pie crust and place it on a baking sheet before prebaking the crust. Place a parchment paper filled with baking beans/rice/lentils on the pie crust. This will prevent the pie dough to puff up while baking. This process is known as Blind Baking. Bake for about 20-25 minutes or when the edges become brown. Once baked take it out, let it cool for 5 minutes and remove the parchment. Let it cool completely after that before unmolding it.

11. Once the crust is cooled, pour the chocolate mixture in it and let it set in the fridge for a couple of hours at least. Serve with a dusting of cocoa powder over it or chocolate shavings, or whipped cream – the choice is unending. Enjoy!

Photo by Daria Shevtsova

Dangerous Myths About Depression



***ModMonk Anshul**, founder SoulSchool,
Business Psychologist | Spiritual Coach |
Mystic*

The name of depression has changed over the centuries where people once called it melancholy and now it's called depression, but it remains what it is. It is one of the most common and emotional and psychological problems that a large number of individuals face across the globe today.

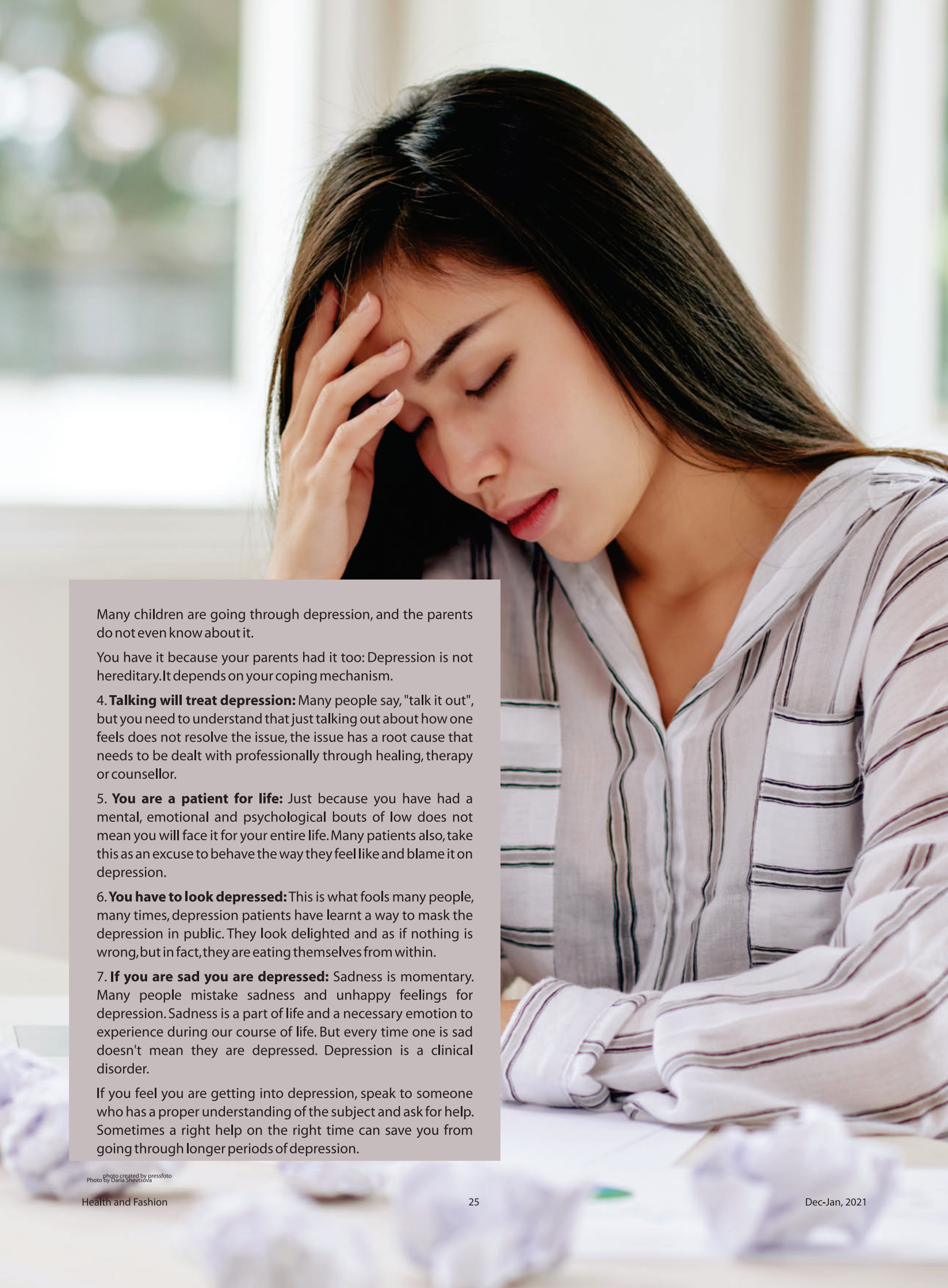
Depression is bouts of low between two high waves in our emotional frequency waves, and they disturb the mental and emotional rhythm of existence. It is a chemical imbalance in our mind that causes mental unhappiness and long duration of sadness. 70% of people who come for therapy or counselling for various things have faced depression in some form or the other, it is a widespread phenomenon, and many people go through it at some point in life.

There are some myths about depression that we need to understand to deal with depression and people who have it:

1. Depression is only mental: As a spiritual coach, this is one of the biggest myths I come across, depression is not just mental it is also caused due to spiritual shifts in consciousness of a person. When we move our needle of existence from material to more eternal needs, we feel unfit in the world we live in, and our being feels out of place, and sad. Many times on the spiritual journey, we do face spiritual depression which is caused due to lack of understanding of spiritual guidance we receive.

2. Depression gender-specific: Many times, depression, is connected to women which is untrue; we all have emotional and mental beings and face ups and downs. Men face depression equally as women.

3. There is an 'Age' for depression: There is no age for a person to slip into depression; it can happen at any point of a person's life.



Many children are going through depression, and the parents do not even know about it.

You have it because your parents had it too: Depression is not hereditary. It depends on your coping mechanism.

4. Talking will treat depression: Many people say, "talk it out", but you need to understand that just talking out about how one feels does not resolve the issue, the issue has a root cause that needs to be dealt with professionally through healing, therapy or counsellor.

5. You are a patient for life: Just because you have had a mental, emotional and psychological bouts of low does not mean you will face it for your entire life. Many patients also, take this as an excuse to behave the way they feel like and blame it on depression.

6. You have to look depressed: This is what fools many people, many times, depression patients have learnt a way to mask the depression in public. They look delighted and as if nothing is wrong, but in fact, they are eating themselves from within.

7. If you are sad you are depressed: Sadness is momentary. Many people mistake sadness and unhappy feelings for depression. Sadness is a part of life and a necessary emotion to experience during our course of life. But every time one is sad doesn't mean they are depressed. Depression is a clinical disorder.

If you feel you are getting into depression, speak to someone who has a proper understanding of the subject and ask for help. Sometimes a right help on the right time can save you from going through longer periods of depression.

Self

Exfoliating Acids-

Vanity Wagon

CTM(cleansing, toning & moisturizing) is what everyone does frequently, to maintain their skin. Even when you are tired, you collect all the strength from inside & start stroking your skin with the scrubbing beads. But, this process of physical exfoliation could turn out to be harmful sometimes as it leaves redness, patchy skin, inflammation & much more!

Switching to an easy exfoliation process is needed to slough those dead skin cells off.

Here comes the grand story of the exfoliator trio(AHAs,BHAs,PHAs).

These trios are skin superheroes, as they actively enforce the skin to self-exfoliate to unleash a rejuvenated & brighter skin. Although, there's not much difference between the trios, for initials use them depending on the skin type.

So let's dig out information to help you choose one.

AHAs(Alpha Hydroxy Acids)

AHAs are water-soluble acids which are made from sugary fruits. They peel away the surface of your skin so that new cells could generate on the skin's surface. This skin-enhancing acid reduces pigmentation, evens the skin tone, deeply hydrates & forces the skin to boost collagen, fight wrinkles & fine lines. Due to the small molecules of AHAs, they penetrate inside the skin layers at a greater level. It exfoliates the oily skin well, due to its ability to move inside the follicles and control the

production of excess sebum.

According to the dermatologists, AHAs are marked safe for all skin types but the exceptions are for extremely dry skin & sensitive skin people.

Natural source of AHAs- lactic acid(found in curd), citric acid (lemons, oranges, tomatoes, etc), malic acid(apples), & tartaric acid(grapes, red wine, berries, passion fruit).

Products you will adore that are filled with AHAs & what Vanity Wagon recommends- Tuscany Lemon & Green Tea Lip Scrub- Juicy Chemistry

BHAs(Beta-Hydroxy Acids)

BHAs are considered the most suitable exfoliating acids for acne-prone skin.

It has anti-inflammatory properties & reduces excess sebum. With this acid, get rid of whiteheads, blackheads & pigmentation spots easily. The most common source of BHAs is salicylic acid, generally found in sweet potatoes, coffee, olive oil, cucumbers, etc. Hence the juices from these fruits will change your skin for good.

Products you must try that are enriched with BHAs & what Vanity Wagon recommends- Fresh Cucumber Mint Toner- Greenberry Organics

PHAs(Poly Hydroxy Acids)

Perfect for hydration, It works best for dry & sensitive skin people. PHAs has large molecule size, which makes them ideal for any skin type in terms of topical hydration. These acids attract water and therefore are super moisturizing. Also, they work exclusively on the upper layer of the skin without disturbing the deeper delicate layers. According to some dermatologists, PHAs also fight glycation, a process that occurs when the digested sugar clings to the collagen in your skin and makes them weak, degrading the elasticity of the skin.

PHAs are found in Gluconic acid (honey) & Lactobionic acid (extracted from milk).

Products fortified with PHAs & what Vanity Wagon recommends

Honeyfix Facewash – Vilvah Store

These acids can make your skin photo-sensitive hence regular application of sunscreen is important before incorporating them in your beauty care regime.

Shop all your skin saviors (natural, vegan & organic) exclusively at www.vanitywagon.in. We at Vanity Wagon make sure that our customers are well informed about the benefits of switching to organics. The USP of Vanity Wagon is that we are the only trending market place for clean beauty products in India.

YOUR GUIDE TO GIFTING: THE FITNESS EDITION

With gifting season coming up, you may be looking for innovative ideas on the subject. However, finding a meaningful and tasteful gift can be a struggle. Therefore, Boldfit has offered a solution with its wide range of fitness and exercise gear.

This Bangalore-based brand has the perfect fitness equipment for all kinds of workout regimes and is an excellent gift for fitness experts as well as beginners. The products available are suitable for all intensity levels and can be used according to your preference.

Boldfit Yoga Mat (Unisex) –

Priced at Rs.1990, this firm yet soft yoga mat is perfect for carrying out various forms of exercise. Its sturdy material helps maintain a steady base while also providing a comfortable surface.

Gallon Water Bottle –

With its classy and convenient design, this water bottle is a simple yet effective

gift. Whether you want to carry it to the gym or keep it around your house, the Gallon Water Bottle is a gift that many will appreciate. Priced at Rs.1090, this device is the perfect gift for this holiday season.

Boldfit Gym Shaker –

The perfect device for blending your protein shakes is finally here! The Boldfit Gym Shaker is leakproof and is easy to maintain. With its sleek and stylish appearance, this Rs.499 device is perfect for mixing up protein shakes, juices and supplements.

Boldfit N95 Mask –

Priced at Rs.699, these medically approved masks are a useful gift to give. These masks are made of soft yet breathable fabric and provide 5 layers of protection.

Super Women Whey Protein –

This protein shake is packed with a mixture of flaxseeds, biotin, curcumin, cinnamon extract, iron and zinc. It stimulates hair-growth and nail-growth and assists in weight loss. At Rs.1390, this supplement is a healthy and thoughtful gift option.

Boldfit Immunity Multi Greens Effervescent tablets –

Consisting of a concoction of Moringa, Kale, Blueberry, Raspberry and other super greens, these tablets improve your overall health flushing out bodily toxins and boosting immunity and are currently priced at Rs.250.

Boldfit Vitamin C with Zinc chewable tablets –

These Rs.188 chewable tablets can act as your daily dose of Vitamin C and also possess a pleasant taste.

With Boldfit at your side, gifting can become an easier process!



Health and Fashion



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V

A father-daughter bond like no other

*Meet the dynamic father-daughter duo of **Dr. Ishari K. Ganesh**, the **Chairman** and **Ms. Preethaa Ganesh**, the **Vice President** of **Vels Group** of Institutions. Read on to know more about the university and their vibrant bond enabling the next generation to take over the university.*

Dr. Ishari K Ganesh is a dynamic and a multi-faceted personality. From being the Founder and Chancellor of the prestigious **Vels University** (VISTAS) in Chennai and the Chairman of **Vels group** of Institutions in India, Singapore and United Kingdom, to being an ardent sports enthusiast , social activist and a film producer, Dr. Ishari K. Ganesh has contributed immensely to society. During an exclusive interview, he opened up about his personal life and





childhood, alongside the development of his university and other foundations. He also opened up about the next generation taking over the Vels group of Institutions after 28 years and what plans he has in store for the future. His daughter, Ms. Preethaa Ganesh is a vibrant management professional and the Vice President of the group is possibly the youngest Vice President among the institutional fraternities in the world. She too opened up about her education, plans for the institution, and her goals of redefining the Indian education system based on her knowledge abroad. Edited excerpts follow.

It has been 28 years of success from what began as an institution with just 36 students. How has the journey been so far?

(Smiles) There is a quote that says, time slows when you commissioned and time flies if you are committed, not sure who said it but, it is so true. These 28 years of my journey has been challenging, tasking, sometimes filled with agony, but satisfying. Running institutions is not easy. My first institution was in a rented building with 36 students and 10 staff. I still remember the time when we were not able to pay the rent for the premises. After several struggles, with hard-work, dedication and honesty as the principles in life, I have expanded to an extent where we are now with 37 institutions, 35,000 students and 6000 staff in 3 countries. So yes.. the journey was tough but... for the happiness we feel during our convocations, graduation days, passing out parades, annual days, sports days... trust me, it is worth another lifetime of struggles too.

Till date, my thirst for knowledge hasn't wavered and I am still pursuing my Masters in Law at the Dr. Ambedkar Law University in Chennai. My biggest wish is to continue to be a student all my life.

You mentioned that you are interested in sports and are part of several sports-oriented foundations. Can you talk a bit more about that facet of your life?

In my school and college days, I was a 100 meters' athlete and a Kabaddi

player. Go on.. and play a game of Kabaddi when you get a chance. It teaches you a lot. When you raid into an opponent's territory and come back, the whole team will be on you to bring you down, you will struggle your way to touch the line, and when you do, you score. When an opponent raids into your territory you catch him so tight that he does not escape your grasp, so you can score.

Since my childhood, the competitive spirit that run in my veins during a tournament, bred the "never-say-die attitude" in me. The game taught me a lot too. When struggles try to bring me down, I somehow tough the line to score and when an opportunity raids into my territory, I will grab it so hard.

I wanted the youngsters to groom that kind of an attitude in them. I've supported the education of nearly 500 sport talents so they can focus on their game. Recognizing my service, several sports bodies approached me to lead them. Today, I am the Senior Vice President of the Tamil Nadu Olympic Association, President of the Taekwondo Federation of India and President of the Tamil Nadu Taekwondo Association. I am also appointed as an honourable advisor and member of Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu (SDAT), Government of Tamil Nadu. I run my own swim school that trains swimmers in India for international competitions.

On the whole, sports and extra-curricular activities are something that I hold very dear to me and I have given my best to inculcate this trait in my students as well!

Your contributions as a philanthropist are indeed unmatched! You have contributed immensely to the environment and healthcare; and have involved young children as well in your endeavours. Do share some insights on those initiatives.

Rising from the depths of a financially challenged childhood, I know the pain when a student is likely to be deprived of basic education. Hence, in my lives journey, I have transformed the lives of tens of thousands of individuals and

families by elevating them from a socially deprived standard to a self-sustainable level, where they can lead a healthy life with abundant opportunities and contribute to the development of our nation.

By extending financial support by sponsoring the education of 8,164 students from the economically backward section of our society, at Undergraduate Level / college / university education and thus helping them secure a job/career after graduation, I feel proud that I was able to transform the lives of nearly 40,820 individuals and their families by elevating them from low/no income segment to lead a clean, healthy and a self-sufficient life, contributing to the development of our nation with their skills.

Through conducting more than 24 free computer literacy programs for rural youth, 41 National level empowerment programmes, I had the opportunity to empower nearly 75,000 rural youth with the education that they require to seek employment by acquiring basic computer skills. An evident support towards nation building in the direction pointed by the government of India.

By organizing one day markets annually for women entrepreneurs, especially from rural areas, I am glad that I was able to promote the businesses of women entrepreneurs emerging from self-help groups and support the empowerment initiatives of the Ministry of Rural development and Ministry of Women and Child Development that are the backbone of poverty alleviation programmes.

I am providing financial assistance every month to nearly 500 aged and poor drama artists, a service for over a decade now that provides livelihood, hope and support to individuals who dedicated their lives to promote art and culture. I do this in fond memory of my father Shri Isari Velan, who was himself a drama artist.

Remember, when a small act of kindness can change someone's life, do it. Kindness will circle back when you need it someday.

I organise tree planting sessions during all my celebrations, be it at the university or any other occasion. We plant one sapling a day, totalling 365 saplings a year! By taking these small yet impactful steps, I do my best to leave a positive footprint behind. I have opened an exclusive palliative care hospital, Shri Isari Velan Mission Hospital in memory of my father. It houses a hundred beds and offers affordable services and Free treatment to the needy.

Your ventures go well beyond educational institutions! You have various resorts and food chains, various foundations named after your children and Your production company has produced many blockbuster hits over the last couple of years. What do you aim to achieve by expanding your fields of expertise?

I try to inculcate value-based concepts to various audiences of diverse age groups through whatever venture I embark on. I am heading quite a few production companies including GV Films, Prabhu Deva Studios, and Vels Film International. I aim to combine entertainment and educational values through my productions and impact varied streams of audiences from different sections of society. Apart from this, I hold a variety of business ventures across the world through which I try to positively impact several lives.

What are the challenges you are facing in incorporating education during and after COVID?

Providing uninterrupted education during the pandemic was the toughest phase so far in our journey. For the kindergarteners, we had to ensure that there is a physical emphasis that turned totally impossible, hence we decided to send the school essentials to them straight to their homes, contactless of course. We cannot engage the tiny tots a lot on online classes and we were concerned about their screen time. So we had to deliberately slow down our interaction hours, this is where the support of parents and guardians was a huge blessing.

For high schoolers, we were one of the first in the industry to ensure continuity through online. Our teachers are frequently trained in ITL tools, so the migration from physical to online classrooms was not difficult. The assessment though was challenging.

Proctoring assessments for school and college students was a gradual learning. It puts a lot of unavoidable stress on student, their posture during exams and more. It is difficult, but we are almost close to perfecting that too.

At Vels, we take challenges as an opportunity to grow. Lockdown or not, education will continue here.

How do you think this will affect education? Especially the medical sector?

Imparting practical skills to students at higher education is a challenging task. Not only medical, but students of science and technology overall also cannot excel in the respective fields without proper practical exposure. Practical knowledge is extremely important, but we cannot impart practical knowledge online. As a solution, students can possibly be allowed into institution's facilities in small groups to attend practical classes. We have to wait for further instructions from the government, as staying safe is the priority than being Sorry at this hour, isn't it?

You have contributed a lot towards the welfare of the poor and benefit of society. Is this something that was always on your mind?

Yes, I realise the suffering that I had to undergo during my educational journey. I mention during all my interviews that I was a below average student and my father passed away when I was just 18. I struggled a lot to complete B.Com in Pachaiyappa's College, so I have been through the struggle. I do not want the younger generation to suffer like that, so I help how much ever I can. I am sure you would have heard about Vels University extending full financial support for the education of frontline corona warriors such as policemen, nurses and sanitary workers. They can take any course in our University and its completely FREE for the full duration of their course. I

initiated that movement towards social equality, mutual respect during the pandemic. When I was told that it had inspired several other educationists to come forward and honor the front line warriors, my trust in humanity had doubled.

What are your plans for the future of the university?

I am already running a Marine Engineering and Nautical Sciences course. Now I want to start an aeronautical and aviation course. I want these courses to be affordable even for poor children. I started Vels University when I realised the severe shortage in skilled manpower in our country. I want to keep developing our courses to produce students equipped to face the challenges of the real world.

You have your next generation working with you for the development of your institution.

How do you see your daughter when you both do business together? How do you envision the next generation to take over your prestigious institution?

This is my 28th year. I started the Vels college of Pharmacy as soon as I finished my college. Now, as soon as my daughter finished her college education, I have made her manage the Vels Group. I feel very happy and have worked very hard for the past 28 years for my children. It gives me pride to see them take over now. I want my children to be equipped before I give them positions of leadership. They should be able to run the management and they should know what they are expected to do. It is very important to give your children the right exposure and education to make them capable enough to take over after you.

In conversation with his daughter, Preethaa Ganesh we delve into various aspects of what is in store for the university when the next generation takes over. Read on for an exclusive interview.

How do you feel taking over such a prestigious institution and entering such an important role of leadership?

It is challenging as well as rewarding.





Instead of getting scared that I have to match the standards my father has set by achieving so much, I find it comforting that I have someone to back me up. He has gone through so many ups and downs, so it doesn't necessarily mean I have to go through the same as he can take me through the right path and guide me appropriately. I see that as the bright side about this, as being an engineering student and learning management abroad has taught me what the real world is like. I feel I have that international exposure to bring in new technologies, courses, trends, and so on. I feel those are two of my biggest strengths while taking over this pivotal role.

You mentioned learning a lot about management abroad and that you have various new ideas you wish to implement. How would you say learning abroad has helped you frame ideas to implement to shape the institute?

Education abroad is more practical in

real life. I feel education here is missing out on that aspect, as it is still very traditional and based on rote learning. We don't have a lot of projects and internships to do here. I think that is where the difference lies between someone who is employable and someone who is just a graduate of a particular degree. Companies are looking for qualities and experience like that, along with networking and soft skills. Things like that are just starting to gain importance here, while these are the basic skills we are taught abroad.

Are there any changes you want to bring around to the institution and how it works?

I feel things are very rigid here and lots of importance is given to trivial things such as dress code, writing assignments/ records that do not contribute to actual learning outcomes. Most students in India still do not have the flexibility to choose their own modules, listen to recorded lectures, etc.

India's higher education system is the world's third-largest in terms of student numbers, next to China and the US. India's Higher Education sector has witnessed a tremendous increase in the number of Universities/University level Institutions & Colleges since independence yet, only three Indian Universities- IIT-Bombay, IIT-Delhi and IISc (Bangalore)- have been included in the top 200 institutes in QS World University Rankings 2020.

When it comes to result, the lack of skills to be employed in any sector after graduation due to rote learning, outdated curriculum, lack of infra to impart practical skills has left our human capita ineffective for good nation building

The 4 Cs — creativity, communication, collaboration and critical thinking are the skills that are going to be game changers in the future. I would want all students graduating out of our institutions to be adept at these skills.

In my view we have a good quantity of institutions to grow talents but sadly

we do not seem to have the quality when compared to the UK and USA. The only way to counteract is by believing in the new education policy (NEP) announced by our central government. It seems to take care of many concerns. Time will tell.

How do you plan to face the COVID issue and develop the institute amidst the pandemic?

If you look at our schools, especially the international schools and CBSE schools, we began our online classes way back in March even before there was a complete lockdown. We went completely online for the safety of the students and our universities also followed suit. We were the first private university to conduct online examinations. It was a herculean task to conduct so many modules online , across so many courses and years. We had to figure out how to conduct practical exams online in a way that's robust and not biased. We have a very strong technical team who are constantly checking on new technologies that are available in the market, compares them, and conducts pilot tests. I would say that this tech group was instrumental in carrying out these online exams successfully.

Are you facing any difficulties in terms of style or any difference of opinion while taking over the institution?

My answer to this will be an emphatic NO.

My induction at this juncture is primarily to ring in the changes and in being more professional. My father has toiled all these years to build this empire and with more expansion plans and diversity at the top of his business portfolio, the institutions are at a cross roads, looking to expand but at the same time also trying to consolidate.

So, I have all the liberty to function in my own inimitable style in bringing the institutions on par with global standards.

Through this interview, we discover the dynamics between the father-daughter duo and the tacit understanding they possess to make the university a success. Dr. Ishari Ganesh's profound experience in managing the institution for 28 years will indeed prove useful for Ms. Preethaa to manage the prestigious establishments. Their plans to make the university of international standards and further develop the courses offered are indeed of futuristic standards. Years of experience from the proud father coupled in harmonious coexistence with the international exposure of the dynamic daughter will truly shape the institution to become one of modern class.

Why parents should stop obsessing over their kid's academic learnings?

by Saru Mukherjee, Mom Blogger, Diaper and Lipsticks

Do you constantly find yourself running behind your child to make them sit and study? Is competition one of the fears that push you to obsess over your child's education? Is homework, classwork, projects, crafts, etc always on your mind? If yes, then you as a parent are obsessed over your kid's academic learnings.

The world of education is such that kid's academic grades have become a parameter for parents to weigh their child's worth and performance. It has become a scale based on which parents often dream of their child's future.

Saru Mukherjee, an acclaimed mom blogger celebrated for her parenting ideas through her Instagram blog @diaper_and_lipsticks throws light on why its high time parents should stop obsessing over their kid's academic learnings.

Create unnecessary peer pressure

Often parents boast about their kid's academic performances to their relatives and friends. It comes across as a way of saying how bright their child is. But when the child isn't performing well, it often comes as a taunt, shame, or pressure on the child to improve their grades. While the idea is to push the child to improve their academic learnings, it ends up

manifesting pressure on the child. This pressure often makes children insecure and lose out on their confidence.

Losing the value of education

Pressurizing kids for education doesn't always reap good results. Parents need to understand the extent to which pressure works positively and where it starts impacting the child's mental health. An ode to meet the high expectation of parents, while some children strive to work harder and push them off the limits too much, others resort to finding alternatives that help them fetch high grades. Both ways, make one lose out on the purpose of education i.e. to learn and not to score marks.

Losing interest in education

Parent's obsession over children's education often is the prime reason people lose out on their interests. Where parents start pushing children to study for hours, children start finding ways to run away from these rules. Moreover, children often resort to taking education objectively i.e. adapting to education with the sole purpose of securing grades. In the end, it is the child's education that suffers.

Harmful for child development

Parents often make systematic education the crux of their growth and development. Academic learnings are given such emphasis that all other skills and talents take a back seat. While some parents don't allow their kids to play with other children or indulge in sports, other design strict deadlines for these activities. Too much focus on academic learning often leaves children dull. While academic learning surely brings knowledge, it often misses out on factors that contribute to a child's growth, creativity, ability to connect with others, problem-solving skills, talents, etc. Parents need to give children the window to apply their cognitive and interpersonal skills for all-round development.

Indeed the education system is great to make kids grasp knowledge and enlighten minds, but obsessing over the grades makes parents lose out on the purpose of education. It's important to go gentle and allow your kids to adapt to learning.

Rather than obsessing, parents should inculcate the habit of understanding and adaptive to a healthy education for the child. Being more friendly and adaptive helps parents instill academic, cognitive, interpersonal, and creative skills in the child in a healthy way!



Getting braces?

What could be a better time than now under a mask?

Dr. Riddhi Rathi Shet, Managing Director at Orthosquare™ and Managing Director and CEO at Flexalign® Mumbai

It is no secret that a smiling face draws attention and positivity like a moth to a flame! A smile can do wonders, just brighten someone's day or even ooze a sense of confidence in yourself. A striking smile, flawless healthy teeth can do wonders to your social life and also aids multiple health advantages. But nothing in life comes easy, not even that picture perfect smile.

Did you know a straight smile can also impact your career for better? Attending client meetings, conferences, exhibitions, your broad smile can make a difference creating a long-lasting impression.

In today's competitive world, giving yourself an advantage of a beautiful smile seems okay. So, what's a better scenario than now for investing in a smile? As traditional braces are highly noticeable, many find it awkward to wear in public. I have always been a firm believer of, there is no disgust when you opt for a smile correction treatment.

With the pandemic showing no signs of ending soon, masks have become the new reality, which can be a silver lining and the right time for dental correction procedures.

Dental correction equipment is used to align or straighten the teeth and fix them to an ideal placement. Commonly molded with wires, brackets, and bands. Braces aid to rectify irregular teeth arrangement, jaw correction, improvement in chewing and smile aesthetics. There are various types of non-removable and removable braces, depending on one's requirement. It is imperative to take into consideration and decide the best treatment option for an individual.

Traditional Metal Braces: Traditional

braces have evolved since the early days to be much lighter and easy to use alternatives. These are one of the most affordable

yet effective variants most commonly used. Having the ability to handle almost any malalignment problem in record time, these sets are made of a superior quality stainless steel and have metal brackets that are attached to each tooth using a type of cement. Due to the superficial nature of our society today, these braces are losing their popularity to ceramic ones which are comparatively less visible than the metal one's; catering to the self-conscious consumer.

Ceramic Braces: Ceramic braces are very similar to the traditional braces in terms of size and shape, but they blend with the teeth more seamlessly. These braces are constructed with ceramic material which naturally blends with the color of the teeth making them less noticeable. Its concealing characteristics make it most popular, and preferred among teenagers and adults. Ceramic braces are as effective as the traditional braces, but are typically more expensive due to its superior composition.

Lingual Braces: Unlike traditional or ceramic braces, lingual braces are placed on the rear of the teeth giving them the undeniable edge of being out of sight. These customized braces demand a high degree of skill and specialized materials that are engineered through CAD-CAM / 3D designing.

Self-ligating Braces: These look similar to the traditional braces but eliminate the need for elastic bands to allow mobility to the teeth instead utilizes clips to hold onto the wire of the brace in place which makes them more comfortable enabling



Dr. Riddhi Rathi Shet

a precise tooth alignment process and are usually smaller in size.

Clear and Removable Aligners: One of the recent additions into the dentistry world gaining fast and wide popularity day by day are Clear aligners. For adults who wish for straightened teeth but hesitate to wear the traditional braces, clear braces are an excellent alternative. These types of aligners do not require any braces or wire but look like plastic trays i.e. the entire process works on thin plastic trays that won't prick or irritate your gums. They are more discreet allowing you to maintain your workplace image; even though placed inside of your mouth, they come with zero eating restrictions. Clear aligners have become a new scheme of straightening

teeth as there is no age restriction involved. An increase in awareness and new-age technology have made these braces a popular choice among the adults. Adding the advantage of teeth alignment along with zero visibility, the element of discretion appeals to everyone.

An orthodontic treatment can make a huge difference to you and your



personality. When you think of a smile correction process, you would probably imagine a mouth full of metal brackets and wires because getting beautiful smiles is not always an easy journey. However, new-age technologies have contributed in making these treatments hassle-free, convenient and more effective. If an individual is planning for a treatment then it is highly advisable to visit the dentist for precise diagnosis; as each braces type is associated with a unique set of advantages and disadvantages which may or may not suit your needs and requirements.

Hacks for Rigid Pimples to Keep Your Skin Safe

By Pooja Nagdev , (Founder) Inatur Ayurveda and Aromatherapy



Our skin comprises of three layers. The topmost layer is Epidermis, Dermis middle layer and Hypodermis is the last. Epidermis the topmost layer has small pores on surface it inhales oxygen and takes in all products that we apply to the bottom most layer. When the topmost layer gets clogged due to impurities and sebum excreted by the oil glands, it leads to acne and pimples. Rigid pimples are irritating hard pimples, can be on top or underneath the skin. These can be cystic, nodular & painful.

Most important thumb rule is that one should not touch the pimples. Our hands carry a lot of germs and bacteria and it leads to spreading the same and aggravating the situation.

These are some general daily tips that one must follow -

Clean your skin at least twice a day, with a mild sulphate free facewash. If the face wash is enriched with natural actives and essential oils such as tea tree oil, basil oil, clove oil, lemon extract, neem extract. They carry anti-bacterial properties and curtail the growth of bacteria.

Sometimes acne itches and one gets an urge to pick on it. Do not touch your face or rub your acne as this can lead to permanent scars. Say no to exfoliation. Those

with oily skin already have open pores and clogged pores, therefore one should avoid scrubbing with exfoliants with granules.

Drink lemon juice whenever possible. Lemon works on releasing the toxins from our system. Also avoid spicy and over cooked food.

Say no to chemical based products, go with natural skin care products that are preserved well.

Go for light mineral based make up and foundations that are powdery and silica based. Avoid make up and foundations that are oil based as they further clog the pores.

Acne is also a result of dryness of scalp. Apply hair oil to nourish scalp at least once in a week and shampoo twice in a week.

Going with natural products and maintaining good cleansing and toning ritual is all we need to say goodbye to rigid pimples.

Stay at home - Work at home and Meditate Your Mind through Essential Oils

Pooja Nagdev
Aromatherapist and Cosmetologist
(Founder) INATUR Ayurveda & Aromatherapy

There is no denying that this is a very stressful time and therefore anxiety is a normal occurrence. Meditation can calm the body, mind and soul. It helps us connect deeply with the world within us. Sometimes life's distractions can make a meditation session challenging and this is where Aromatherapy comes in and helps.

Aromatherapy/ Essential Oils have been important part of meditation for ages. Essential oils are the basic unit of Aromatherapy. Essential Oils, through different modes of administration or entering into the bloodstream, heal our body spiritually, mentally and physically.

Meditation helps one to create stillness and peace in the mind.

While we start doing meditation one need to pay attention the sensation of breathing, while we inhale and exhale. Make sure that one designate a time everyday day to practice meditation Consistency is the key. Here the most

important thing is not the duration for the meditation it can be for one or two minutes but one need to be calm and consistent to start meditation .

Like any other skill meditation also needs time and practice .

The changes meditation can bring to one's life may be subtle at first, but over the period it helps in increasing the inner wellbeing and happiness.

Meditation is a wonderful tool which everyone can avail and helps people in creating peace happiness and wellness.

Breathing is the foundation of meditation

The choices for the right essential oil can enhance the meditation experience.

Meditate your mind and body through essential oils.

Benefits of Meditation with Essential Oils

- Reduces Stress / Induces Calmness
- Controls Anxiety / Increases Productivity
- Promotes Focus of Mind
- Enhance your Personality
- Improves Blood Circulation and Boosts Immunity.

Essential Oils are active and carry a natural fragrance extracted from plants. These natural oils carry medicinal properties anti-inflammatory, anti-biotic, antioxidants, anti-hypertensive. These oils enhance the effect of meditation.

Frankincense Oil- It has a stimulating aroma that is sweet, honey and woody. It promotes feeling of relaxation, tranquillity and makes skin appear healthy.

Sandalwood Oil- Sandalwood Oil is very helpful in healing emotional or spiritual wounds.

Vetiver Oil- Vetiver Oil is beneficial for those who have a tendency to wander and lose focus in meditation.

Lavender Oil- Lavender Oil is one of the most popular oil used in aromatherapy. It helps in relaxing and balancing mind.

YlangYlang Oil- This oil is very effective and good for meditation, relieves from stress, depression and reduces frustration.

To conclude, practice Self-care during Covid19

It is very much normal to be stressed during the uncertain times like these. Try and follow a routine in life. Here are a few tips

Eat light, nutritious healthy and a well-balanced diet.

Drinking plenty of water.

Meditation is the need of an hour.

Take deep breaths and stretch often.

Exercise regularly.

Set a routine for yourself while you are at home.

Lean on personal beliefs and faith for support.

Find a new favourite podcast.

Keep your mind active and agile ,play some brain game.

Try a hair mask and home facial.

Practice for the perfect winged eyeliner.

Much Love,

Pooja Nagdev

Aromatherapist and Cosmetologist

(Founder)INATUR Ayurveda & Aromatherapy

RE'EQUIL, A DERMATOLOGICALLY TESTED SKIN AND HAIR CARE BRAND LAUNCHED ITS NEW RANGE

The dermatologically approved skin and hair care brand known as Re'equil, recently launched its new range called 'Unveil'. This range consists of 2 individual products - Under Arm Lightener Cream and Neck, Knee and Elbow

Lightener Cream.

The Under Arm Lightener Cream is perfect for combating dark and sweaty armpits. With its unique formula of Mucor Miehei extracts and Daisy Flower, this cream is an excellent exfoliator and removes roughness and discoloration. Daily application also helps in improving body odor.

The Neck, Knee and Elbow Lightener Cream moisturizes the skin and also acts as a gentle exfoliator. This cream consists of Pentylene Glycol and Mucor Miehei extracts and helps in brightening and hydrating the skin. Another advantage of this product is that is suitable for skin types.

With Unveil's pair of multi-purpose products, Re'equil has managed to make an impressive contribution to the beauty and



DIY Hydroalcoholic gel - An alternative for hand sanitizers

Soap and water are the best ways to disinfect the hands and reduce the spread of the virus but sometimes it is not possible to wash hands. In a situation like this using a hydroalcoholic gel is very necessary. Antimicrobial compositions which are more effective than without causing irritation to the skin. Alcohol is a must ingredient to kill bacteria. Water and alcohol-based gel where the percentage of alcohol should be at least 70%.

One can make a Hydroalcoholic Gel at home with this simple composition containing alcohol, water, emollient or emulsifier such as glycerine or aloe vera gel. The skin-friendly Hydroalcoholic Gel composition enhances rapid and long term anti-microbial efficacy.

Hydro-alcoholic sprays and gels are among the simplest hygiene products to formulate. The ingredients needed to make your own disinfectant are listed below:

A bowl

Aloe vera gel or juice

Alcohol (isopropyl) at least 70%

Essential oil (any of lavender, tea tree, basil, eucalyptus or lemon oil),

Glycerine about 5% of formula as alcohol tends to make hands very dry.

Alcohol is an effective and inexpensive disinfectant. The alcohol used in hydro-alcoholic solutions is usually ethanol, isopropanol (also called isopropyl alcohol) or a mixture of the two. The volume concentration of alcohol must be greater than 60% for the disinfectant to be effective. In most cases, it is between 60 and 80%.

Glycerin (also known as glycerol) is an effective moisturizer, prevents skin dryness that is caused by rapid evaporation of alcohol.

Water will dilute the alcohol if necessary to reach alcohol concentrations between 60 and 80% in general. The added water reduces the cost of the formula and acts in association with glycerin against the drying of the skin by alcohol. One can make distilled water at home by boiling the water to 100 degrees and cooling it down subsequently.

Take Glycerine, alcohol and purified water and other ingredients mix all them together and pour them into a bottle with a spray pump.

Store it and keep handy to use every time.

Stay home and break the chain

*By Ms. Pooja Nagdev
Cosmetologist and Aromatherapist
(Founder) INATUR Ayurveda & Aromatherapy*



Here's a healthy meal plan to help the children stay hydrated & fit as they study from home

Saru Mukherjee, Mom Blogger, Diaper and Lipsticks

Eating healthy is essential for all but for children, the practice becomes all the more important for their all-round growth and development.

To nurture your child and give them the best of health, it is essential to teach them healthy eating habits. Drafting a healthy meal plan can help keep your child's nutritional needs in check, make them stay hydrated, and fit even when they study from home. Saru Mukherjee, a well-acclaimed mom-blogger famous for her guidance on child nutrition through her Instagram handle @diapers_and_lipsticks outlines a healthy meal plan to help children stay hydrated and fit as they study from home!

Design a daily meal plan

Right from the time your child wakes up to the time they go to bed, make sure you have a healthy meal plan designed for them. Select healthy breakfasts, well-proportioned lunch, and light dinners to keep their body weight in check. The child's meal plan should be divided into regular intervals so that children get something nutritious to eat every few hours and don't resort to snacking. A diet plan helps keep the child's nutritional and hunger needs in check.

Starting a Healthy Meal Plan

Kids don't eat well! And so it is important to look into the Food Pyramid to offer them a variety of elements in their food that keeps their meals interesting and nutritious.

Water: Make sure your child drinks at least 1-2 litres of water daily. You can do it in the form of fresh fruit juices, flavoured water, or straight drinking of water. Drinking enough water keeps their body well hydrated and functioning.

Fruits & Vegetables: Fruits and Vegetables play an essential role in keeping your child's nutritional needs in check. And it works best as breakfast. After sleeping for hours the children usually wake up with an empty stomach and giving them fruits/vegetables, porridge, milk or dry fruits is a great way to boost their digestion, aid their health and make their body stay full for longer.



Milk and Cheese: Infants are usually dependent on breastfeeding or formula milk alone. But for growing kids like toddlers up to the age of 5 or 6, milk can be a good way to include calcium and protein into their diet. However, it's best to not overdo it. Give your child milk twice a day and add in cheese, yogurts, ghee into their diet for healthy fats and probiotics that help them grow stronger.

One Whole grain Meal every day: Whole grains like wheat, oatmeal, bread, or cereals are high in nutrients and fiber. It is essential to give your child whole-grain food every day to nourish their body and aid the digestive system.

Cook Don't fry: Resort to serving only cooked, steamed, grilled, or roasted food. Avoid deep frying or sautéing food as a lot of nutrients are lost in the process lending no goodness to your child's health.

Avoid packaged food: Packaged and Processed food like ready-to-eat noodles, frozen vegetables & fruits, ready-to-eat meals, etc have a high-calorie content while losing out on essential nutrients.

When planning a healthy diet plan for your child, make sure you take their calorie needs in mind!

Families need to eat together and create a healthy environment around for the child to adapt to healthy meal plans and stick with it. When the family eats healthy and nutritious food, so does the child!



TIPSY CROW: THE GO-TO CITY HANGOUT SPOT

With Chennai being a hub for social entertainment, there is a constant wave of new establishments such as restaurants, bars, cafes, etc. However, the recent launch of the Topsy Crow has sparked a huge amount excitement and curiosity among the crowd.

The launch of this Velachery-located restobar was a huge success, with many people praising the ambiance and the well-crafted menu. Several celebrities and socialites were in attendance.

Attendees of the launch got to enjoy a versatile spread of food as well as cocktails created by expert bartenders.

This hangout-joint boasts three floors, with each floor having a different design-style and purpose. Its rooftop has become a popular attraction as it provides guests a great view of the open sky.

Guests have praised the various events that the restobar hosts on a daily-basis. The restobar is also conveniently located beside the Grand Mall and thus attracts a decent crowd of people.

With the pandemic in full swing, the establishment has taken many hygiene and safety measures, with every staff member required to wear masks and regularly given temperature checks.

With its unique aesthetic and reasonable pricing, the Topsy Crow has now become the go-to city hangout spot.

Contraception is not a woman's responsibility alone, involve men too



Author: Ms Amita Dhanu, Assistant Secretary General (Programme Implementation), FPA India

Co-Author: Dr Nilesh Patil, Technical Programme Manager and Project Lead, FPA India

Men have substantial sexual and reproductive health (SRH) needs such as services for contraception, prevention and treatment of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, sexual dysfunctions, infertility and male cancers. Yet these SRH needs are often unmet due to a combination of factors, which include lack of service availability, poor health seeking behaviour among men and SRH facilities often not being seen as "male friendly spaces".

There is a need for equal and shared responsibility to be taken by men and women in all areas of sexual and reproductive health. This requires working at different levels with varying partners to address the norms that undermine access and perpetuate gender inequality.

Increasing male participation is an integral part of family planning programme intervention. To increase male participation in family planning Government of India is moving forward in a more systematic and sustained efforts such as training of service providers in No Scalpel Vasectomy (NSV) to enhance the pool of service providers, substantial increase in the compensation for male sterilization under the enhanced compensation scheme for sterilization, observation of 'Vasectomy Fortnight' every year in all states, condom boxes set up in facilities to enable clients to access condoms in privacy and a 360-degree media campaign underlining the role of men

in family planning to encourage men to adopt family planning methods.

One of the challenges is lack of male involvement in family planning. The low levels of men's involvement are reflected, to an extent, in the very low use of male contraceptives. According to the latest data presented in Parliament by union health ministry in 2019, the national average for current use of male family planning methods i.e. male sterilization and condom) is only 5.9%. Male sterilization declined from 1% (NFHS-3) to 0.4 % (NFHS-4). Significant barriers remain towards increasing male involvement in family planning. One of the barriers is the perception that contraception is a women's issues. As per NFHS 4, three in eight men believe that contraception is women's business and that men should not have to worry about it. Secondly the acceptance of male methods of contraception is marred by number of myths and misconceptions. Perceived procedure related barriers are the most important cause for not accepting vasectomy. There have been concerns about possible negative health consequences resulting from vasectomy.



Reasons Vasectomy is unpopular:

Unmet need for family planning expressed by women is found to be more than that by men.

Socio cultural belief is that family planning is woman's responsibility.

Though awareness about vasectomy, not many know about less traumatic, simpler technique of NSV thus, fear of procedure and pain.

Misconceptions: fear of loss of libido, physical strength

Family Planning linked largely to Maternal Health and men are left out

Ground force of health workers mostly women (ASHAs, ANMs) find it easier to convince women for female sterilization

Shortage of NSV providers

Very few accredited private health facilities

Administrative level barriers and delays in the conditional cash transfer.

Several features of Vasectomy:

Less invasive with minimal tissue trauma,

Lower discomfort and complication rates,

No incision, no stitches,

Faster completion of procedure,

Minimal post procedure pain and bleeding

Speedier recovery as compared to recovery after the conventional procedure.

FPA India has long recognized the importance of working with men and boys as clients, partners and agents of change in efforts to promote gender sensitive and rights based sexual and reproductive health services, including Family Planning. Innovative strategies for demand generation and advocacy, quality assured service delivery and capacity building of service providers have been the key markers to improve the uptake of NSV in FPA India.

FPA India is one of the largest sexual and reproductive health organisations in the country. It works to empower all, to enjoy their sexual and reproductive health choices and rights in an India free from stigma and discrimination. FPA India pioneered the family planning programme in India in close collaboration with the government in the 1950s. Since then FPAI has been contributing to Government of India's national health programme with a pan India presence including West Bengal. Through its 45 branches and projects across the country, FPA India reaches out to over 30 million people every year.

SKINWORKS: THE NATURAL BRAND


The unisex brand known as SkinWorks recently launched their Magic Melt Cleansing Balm. As this brand is known for its natural and handmade products, the same was to be expected for their latest addition to their range.

The Magic Melt Cleansing Balm possesses moisturizing properties and provides nourishment to the skin. With its soft and buttery texture, this luxurious product melts into the skin when massaged properly.

Enriched with the goodness of Jojoba Oil, Shea Butter and Sweet Almond Oil, this product helps soothe and calm irritated skin and provides hydration. The balm is also an excellent makeup remover and guarantees a deep and thorough cleanse.

Aside from this product, SkinWorks also offer a wide range of Face and Lip Scrubs and Face Masks. They also release carefully curated products for each individual need.





KIDNEY DISEASES AND WHAT YOU NEED TO YOU – KVR KIDNEY AND DIABETIC CENTRE

*Having done his bachelors in Stanley College and his MD internal medicine from Tanjavur Medical College. He got his DM in Nephrology from Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, New Delhi. In 2013 **Dr.Venkataraman** got back to his hometown Vellore and joined Sri Narayani Hospital as a consulting Nephrologist. Received medal from honorable president of India, Mr.Pranab Mukherjee for meritorious performance in nephrology. Three years later he started **KVR Kidney and Diabetic Centre** to provide affordable treatment to the needy and poor due to the lack of nephrologists in his town. Here is a conversation with the man himself.*



Dr.Venkataraman

Q) Why did you upgrade yourself to be a specialist?

I wanted to become a nephrologist to serve the poor in my district because there weren't any nephrologist available apart from the ones in CMC and Sri Narayani Hospital Vellore. My main aim was to give free dialysis treatment to the poor as it is not possible for them to afford continuous dialysis treatment and give them renal transplant option if possible because the life expectancy increases after renal transplants

Q) Why did you choose this district in particular?

I want to serve my home town where I born and brought up. I wanted to become a nephrologist to serve the poor and those in dire need of affordable treatment in my district because there weren't any nephrologist available apart from the ones in CMC and Sri Narayani Hospital Vellore.

Q) How many patients per day have you found in hand?

We handle around 30-50 OPD's and 20-30 dialysis per day.

Q) What are the equipment's that you use in your hospital?

We have equipment's for dialysis for Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) and awaiting renal transplants. We also have a fully equipped dialysis room with pure water for Blood dialysis for CKD.

Q) As you said earlier, there is success rate. Can you make the success rate to be 95 percent?

Yes, the success rate for kidney transplant is 90-95%. Regardless, there might be rejection of the desired kidney by the body which accounts to about 5-10%.

But, with the technological advances today there is 95% success rate. Life expectancy after renal failure with dialysis is around 3-5 years, while kidney transplant increases life expectancy by more than 5-10 years.

Q) Would you like to give any message to any of our viewers?

Many people are unaware of the fact that they don't have any symptoms until the kidney damage is over 80%. This problem might arise due to inadequate intake of water. A normal healthy human should take a minimum of 1.5L of water a day. On summer days, a person needs to consume a minimum of 2 L per day. People with renal stones need to consume minimum of 3L a day. CKD patients are advised consume less water to prevent swelling of legs, face and respiratory problems. Diabetic people and hypertensive patient should check the kidney at least once in a year. People who consume pain-killers regularly for joint pains and men aged 20-50 with urinary tract infections, young hypertensive are more susceptible to kidney failure.

A healthy lifestyle and a healthy diet are some of the common ways to prevent kidney failure. Though kidney failure cannot be completely cured, it can certainly be treated if it is identified during its early stages. Hence, regular health check-ups are necessary to prevent the possible diseases, especially high risk for kidney disease patient and cure the ones present. Obesity and stress can also be trigger points for kidney failure. Therefore, it is mandatory to the recommended amount of salt and sugar. Stay fit and lead a happy and healthy life.

WHAT TO EAT DURING THE PRE- PREGNANCY PERIOD



Photo by Cleiton Ewerton

Family planning and conception can be a difficult to navigate as there are many factors to consider and certain circumstances may arise that cannot be prevented. However, there are some areas in which you can help improve your chances of conception and one such area is nutrition. When trying to conceive, your diet plays a crucial role and its importance is often overlooked.

Typically, those actively trying to conceive follow a 'fertility diet', which is a meal-plan carefully curated to boost their fertility and chances of conception. Such a diet usually consists of various nutrients as well as restrictions and, is unique to each person so as to cater to their individual needs. So, what are some aspects you should take into consideration when planning your fertility diet?

Folic acid -

A huge contributing factor to female fertility is the intake of folic acid. It is recommended that women take 400 mcg of folic acid tablets per day before conceiving, till the third month of pregnancy. The vitamin is also present in foods such as broccoli, spinach and asparagus. Folic acid helps in the formation of the neural tube and can also minimise the risk of any birth defects by 70%.

Iron -

A key requirement for producing blood and oxygen iron and thus, it is essential before and during pregnancy. Low levels of iron can lead to iron-deficiency anaemia and may cause ovulatory issues. Foods such as low-mercury fish, chicken and pulses are rich in iron and are also good sources of protein and it is suggested that women consume around 40mg to 80 mg of iron per day.

Calcium -

Calcium is needed to help develop and strengthen the bones of the foetus and so, it is imperative that you increase your calcium levels through foods such as milk, yoghurt and cheese. If there is a deficiency of calcium, your body will be forced to provide calcium from your own bones and this may lead to a condition called osteoporosis, also known as brittle bones. In order to prevent this, it is recommended that women have around 1000 mg of calcium per day.

Fibre -

Fibre plays a large role in female fertility as it maintains the hormonal balance by removing any excess oestrogen. It also regulates blood sugar levels, thereby lowering the risk of gestational diabetes, a condition that only appears during pregnancy. It is advised that women consume 25 g of fibre per day, through various foods such as beans, whole grains and high-fibre cereals.

Omega-3s -

Foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids promote fertility and also improves egg quality. Omega-3s are present in the form of multivitamins and supplements and can also be found in fish oil, flaxseed oil and various seafood items like salmon and tuna. A great alternative source of omega-3 for vegetarians would be walnuts, kidney beans and chia seeds. Women are advised to consume around 1500 mg of omega-3 fatty acids per day.

A well-planned fertility diet also comes with many restrictions and it is important to avoid certain food items that may negatively impact your chances of conception.

Refrain from alcohol -

When trying to conceive, any form of alcohol consumption must be stopped three months prior as alcohol can negatively impact your fertility and can increase the risk of congenital heart disease by 16%, a disease that infants suffer with as the result of parental alcohol consumption.

Cut back on caffeine -

While caffeine does not decrease your chances of conception, it does increase the risk of early miscarriages. Several studies show that women who consume 300 mg of caffeine may experience a spontaneous abortion and the probability is increased for those who consume 600 mg.

Limit trans fats -

According to a study conducted at the Harvard Medical School, women who regularly consume trans fats are 70% less likely to conceive than women who do not. Trans fats can be commonly found in fried foods and baked goods and such food items can affect your fertility and can cause ovulatory dysfunction.

Reduce your sugar intake -

Sodas and soft drinks possess excessive amounts of sugar which can lead to fluctuations in your blood sugar levels. Aspartame, an artificial sweetener, can cause hormonal imbalance and, in turn, can affect your fertility.

Due to its unpredictability, the road to conception can be rather long and difficult to navigate. Despite this, you can greatly improve your odds of conceiving by following a well-planned fertility diet and in doing so, you will be one step closer to expanding your family.



THE NEW WAY FOR A NEW LIFE — SAI FERTILITY CENTRE.

Having done her MS in obstetrics and gynaecology and is a consultant in reproductive medicine, Dr. Indira did her bachelors in tirunelveli medical college, her post-graduation in Ramachandra Medical College Chennai, with her diploma in reproductive medicine from Kiel University Germany, she did not stop there and also got her masters in reproductive medicine from Homerton University, London. Having her own fertility centre was her dream project. Given below is the conversation with the lady herself.

Q) Who is the back bone of the hospital?

My husband is the back-bone of this centre .Dr. A.R.Chakravarthy has been an integral part of the centre's journey to success.

Q) Why did you choose this district in particular?

It was difficult to transport patients from Chengalpattu to Chennai just for treatment. So the people there asked us to open a centre there for them to make the treatment easier.

Q) How many doctors and nurses are available at your hospital?

This is not only a consulting centre but also a hospital with 40 doctors including 5 obgyn's and gynaecologists and 70 nurses. This Centre has 45 beds to provide for its patients.

Q) How many patients per day have you found in hand?

We handle around 50-70 OBG cases and 50-70 fertility cases a day.

Q) What are the equipment's that you use in your hospital?

We have all the necessary equipment's for IVF, ICSI and TESE with an in-house embryologist and a consulting embryologist and a fully equipped embryology lab under the same roof.

Q) Would you like to give any message to our Readers?

The main problem with the couples who face infertility is that they are from jobs with high stress levels like the IT. Thus, I would like mention that getting adequate sleep and eating proper, timely and nutritious meals and leading a stress free life could do wonders.

They say food is medicine and yet we are here with complications. The problem arises when we don't take the calories required by the body per day and starve ourselves in the name of dieting or claiming to be "busy". It is necessary to be healthy today for a better tomorrow.



Dr. Indira

Hair Care ingredients from your kitchen

By Ms. Pooja Nagdev
Co - Founder , INATUR

Just like our face and body, the hair also need care and attention. There are several ingredients found in our kitchen that are excellent for our hair and scalp preparations. These preparations are wonderful for hair as they are right from the source and are free from chemicals and preservatives.

1) Cold Pressed Vegetable Oils

Cold pressed vegetable oils such as Olive Oil, Mustard Oil, Sesame Oil, Coconut Oil, Blackseed Oil are commonly found in our household and are excellent for nourishing our hair and scalp.

Coconut oil is well known for benefits to hair and scalp.

These oils can be used alone or as a blend also. You can add essential oils also to these. For example

Hair Oil Blend:

Olive Oil: 30ml

Sesame Oil: 30ml

Coconut : 30ml

Lavender Oil: 1ml

Rosemary Oil: 1ml

2) Grapefruit & Lemon

Grapefruit and Lemon Juice which have been strained may be used in preparations for oily hair. The juice can be applied to the roots or added to the oil for a head massage. It helps to remove scalp infections.

3) Avocado

Avocado is a rich conditioning oil. Ripe Avocado flesh mashed into a smooth creamy paste makes a wonderful hair conditioning mask. Leave it for 30 minutes and then Shampoo.

4) Eggs

Eggs are wonderful in giving hair extra protein. They give volume, soften and smoothen the hair. The yolk of an egg is best used for dry hair and the white for oily hair. Eggs can also be combined with oils to be applied to the hair. The only drawback is the smell which can put off many.

5) Bananas

Bananas are excellent for hair and scalp. It is most simple hair mask to make. Simply peel a banana and mash it well to form a paste. Add a few drops of milk to increase the spreading. They are rich in potassium, natural oils, carbohydrates and vitamins, which help soften the hair and protect the hair's natural elasticity, preventing split ends and breakage.

6) Henna

In India Henna plant is found abundantly. Using fresh henna leaves and grinding them to form a paste is best for our hair and scalp. Henna not only imparts colour to the hair but also cools scalp and brings volume to hair.

7) Herbs and Vinegar

Herbal extracts, including infusions, vinegars and oils are wonderful preparations to improve the condition of hair and scalp. These are especially beneficial for dandruff control. The herbal vinegars not only re-establish the acid pH of your scalp and hair but also infuse the beneficial therapeutic properties of the herbs in the vinegar. Herbal vinegars can be used regularly after shampooing and conditioning. They also help minimize the build-up of hair products in the hair.

These are the most common ingredients that are found in our kitchen that work miraculously on conditioning the hair.

ADVANCED PATIENT SAFETY MEASURES - WILL THE TREND CONTINUE

*By: Dr. Nanda Rajaneesh,
Surgical Oncologist, Laproscopic Surgeon
Apollo Spectra Hospital Koramangala, Bangalore*

Patient Safety has always been at the core of the healthcare industry. But the pandemic has created additional fears about infection, treatment protocols and more, requiring us to re-examine all of our practices and optimize them at a faster pace.

Medical personnel are faced with the biggest challenge of their lives. They are on the frontline. Their behaviour and their understanding of what is required dictates the commencement and standards of patient safety.

In the last few months, we have seen the rapid growth of telemedicine and virtual consultations. All elective surgeries were delayed and only those whose presence was required at the hospitals were allowed to come in.

A pandemic of this scale comes after a century. The world has changed considerably. Technology enables many conveniences and at the same time, can be a challenge.

There are a number of medical procedures that are categorized as semi emergencies like Hernia, kidney stones, ulcer diseases etc. These conditions may not require emergent attention but if left unattended for a long time, they can become fatal. Hence, it is time to move on at a slow but steady pace with proper safety measures in place as flattening the curve might take some time.

Patient Health and well-being are highest priorities at this time and a number of infection control measures have been adopted at hospitals. A few advanced measures that have come into light are:

Testing and Screening: This is a standard protocol everywhere. However, in a hospital, this becomes more critical as there could be other conditions that could throw up a flag. A few hospitals including Apollo Spectra Koramangala have initiated an Anosmia test along with temperature monitoring as Anosmia (loss of smell) is the first picked symptom for

COVID-19. It has helped the hospitals in segregating positive patients easily at the first point itself. The attendants accompanying the patients are also thoroughly screened.

Masks and Protective Equipment: The medical staff, being at the frontline, need to be protected. They could be a point of infection and spread the condition to those who are vulnerable. All medical personnel are currently wearing protective gear at all times within a facility.

Cleaning: The use of disinfectants has become more prominent and hospitals are using them to frequently clean the operating rooms, waiting rooms and even staff rooms. The accessible placement of hand sanitisers and hand wash facilities has also gained relevant importance in order to maintain hygiene. The process of fumigation has also come to light and has proven effective in killing germs and controlling infections.




Photo by Ketut Subiyanto

Physical Distancing: The hospitals have also re-designed their patient areas to ensure physical distancing. The health-care industry has also adapted to the virtual consultation in order to reduce physical contact as much as possible

Lokesh who suffered from Piles travelled all the way from Chittur to get his surgery done at Apollo Spectra Hospital in Koramangala said “ I was skeptical about the pandemic and about the prevalent infections associated with it. But the doctors helped me understand that procedure along with the necessary precautions being taken by the hospital. It helped me get over my paranoia and I decided to get the surgery done.”

Rupanjana Bhattacharya who brought his mother in law down from Kolkata for treatment of Breast Cancer said “Doctor Nanda did a video consultation for my mother in law and made her understand the treatment procedure. We were worried about Covid19 as my mother in law is 72

years old but the hospital did a proper screening and once the tests came negative her surgery was scheduled. The hospital has a protocol of letting only one attendant in with the patient and the attendant can only step out once the patient is discharged to make sure patients are not exposed and put at risk”

The question is how many of these will continue once the infection rate comes down. The pandemic has proved clearly that we are susceptible to many conditions beyond our control. A hospital is where people come to be treated. But without proper precautions, this could be the origin of the first vector.

Medical centers were always sanitised and followed strict protocols in several issues. The medical personnel, however, were not clothed in PPE kits at all times, unless they were aware that they were dealing with a hazardous condition. Perhaps these kits are here to stay because the hazard goes beyond the labs and certain restricted areas.

Telemedicine and teleconsultations were already being adopted by several hospitals and clinics across the country. The challenge here was the lack of trust, the discomfort and the detachment with the use of technology.

COVID-19 forced people to adapt this procedure for ongoing consultations. It also helped medical personnel adapt this technology format. This is a trend that is bound to grow, now that people have discovered the numerous advantages of telemedicine and teleconsultations.

As we live through this pandemic, we believe there would be several other measures that would be in place in the short-term and long-term, all focused towards ensuring patient safety.

Photo by Daria Shevtsova



Important Tips to Manage Curly Hair During the Monsoon Season

Curly hair is undoubtedly beautiful — but it can sometimes become a hassle to manage. And monsoon is one of those seasons when curly hair can be particularly troublesome. The humidity tends to add extra volume to the hair. At the same time, the hair can become dehydrated and frizzy very easily during this time — even resulting in hair loss.

If you're getting overwhelmed by your curly hair this rainy season, here are five simple yet effective tips to solve the problem.

Shampoo Your Hair 2-3 Times A Week

If excessive humidity starts making your hair frizzy, there might be a temptation to wash your hair every day. However, experts say that this is a big no. Stick to washing your hair 2-3 times a week, not more. At the same time, if you haven't already, switch to a shampoo that's designed for intense hair treatment, especially for curly hair. Mamaearth Argan Shampoo is a good option.

Be Liberal with Your Conditioner

Don't forget to condition your hair each time you shampoo. A liberal dose of conditioner is essential to maintain your curls and avoid that frizzy look — especially in the monsoon. If you're using the Argan Shampoo, then follow up with Mamaearth Argan Conditioner for better results.

Avoid Drastic Hair Treatments

Monsoon is the worst possible season for dramatic hair changes — especially if you have curly hair. Avoid straightening or bleaching your hair during this time. If you want to add some highlights or touch-up your hair color, that should be okay. But avoid any kind of major chemical treatments— keep them for before or after the monsoon.

Treat Yourself with A Hair Serum/Hair Mask

If hair serum or hair mask isn't part of your regular hair care routine, this is the time to add it in. This will keep your hair and scalp hydrated and help you steer clear of that extra frizz. In fact, a hair mask isn't something that you should keep for special occasions — or use just once a month. It needs to become a part of your routine — making sure that you use it at least twice a week. Mamaearth Argan Hair Mask is a great option, especially if you're struggling with monsoon frizz.

Be Careful with Hair Oil

While hair oil needs to be part of your hair care routine for sure, there are certain things you should keep in mind. Excessive oiling during monsoon may weigh your hair down, even more, so don't leave it on overnight. Apply it before you shampoo your hair and just leave it on for an hour or two before washing it off.

Curly hair can seem like a curse in the monsoon, but this doesn't have to be the case. All you need to do is maintain a monsoon-friendly hair care routine and avoid the temptation to do anything drastic with those curly tresses during this season.



NUTRITION STARTS YOUNG

Nutrition plays a key role in maintaining a healthy lifestyle and its influence begins at a young age. By following a healthy diet at an early age, several chronic illnesses and diseases can be prevented and, in conjunction with adequate exercise, a person can also maintain a healthy weight.

Thus, the importance of a healthy diet cannot be overstated.

With the ongoing pandemic, children are confined to their homes and, as a result, their eating patterns may vary. It is important to maintain structure in their diets and to avoid irregular or extra meals. Due to the nature of this lockdown, several families have resorted to buying processed or canned food as they are easy to store for long periods of time.

According to a study conducted on 41 overweight children under confinement, in the University at Buffalo Research, there has been a drastic increase in the intake of unhealthy snacks and has resulted in obesity among children and adolescents. Consequently, there has been a negative impact on children's eating habits. In order to prevent this, ensure that your child consumes freshly prepared food and avoid refrigerating and reheating.

A child's diet must consist of a variety of foods, while taking

into account any allergies or intolerances as this will allow them to consume a unique mix of nutrients and so, when formulating a meal-plan there are many factors to consider.

Fresh fruits over fruit juices -

Avoid store-bought fruit juices as they have large amounts of added sugars whereas fresh fruits possess natural sugar in moderate quantities. Solid fruits are also preferred over homemade fruit juices as while extracting a juice, most of the fibrous content is left behind and so, the sugar content is absorbed by the body quickly which can affect blood sugar levels.

Wide range of fruits & vegetables -

Different fruits and vegetables have different nutrients and benefits. Potatoes, peas and oranges are rich in carbohydrates and are essential in providing energy for young children. Fibrous fruits and vegetables such as apples, bananas, broccoli and beans help regulate the blood-glucose levels.

Adequate water -

From the ages of 7 and older, a child must consume around 8 glasses (2 litres) of water. Water is necessary for assimilating nutrients, flushing out toxins and regulating body temperature and so, dehydration can cause issues like fatigue, urinary infections or poor skin health.

Restrict red meat consumption -

Protein is an essential part of a child's diet as it is necessary of muscle growth and repair. Some healthy sources of protein are eggs, fish, poultry and legumes and these are preferred over red meat. Excessive consumption of red meat such as beef and pork can lead to increased risks of heart disease, diabetes and can also cause body odour issues.

Use healthy cooking oils -

Olive and coconut oil are anti-inflammatory and can minimise the risk of heart disease and are great alternatives to vegetable oils such as canola and sunflower oil, which are rich in trans fats and also increase unhealthy cholesterol.

Forego all forms of refined grains -

When refined grains are milled, they are stripped of their nutrients such as dietary fibre and iron and when consumed, it can lead to a rapid increase in blood sugar levels. Thus, a healthy alternative to refined grains like white rice and white flour, are whole grains such as brown rice and whole-wheat flour as they are rich in fibre, vitamin B and folic acid.

Formulating a meal-plan or a diet requires time and effort but is also difficult to carry out as children are notorious for being picky eaters. So, what can you do to convince your child to eat healthy?

Prioritize mealtimes -

Avoid skipping meals and insist on having meals as a family. By doing so, your child will develop a sense of safety and they will feel encouraged to finish their meals.

Be inclusive -

When preparing a meal, let your child observe and participate by picking out groceries or helping out in the kitchen. This will allow them to become aware of what they eat and inevitably develop responsibility towards their what they eat.

Make slow transitions -

When enforcing a healthier diet, do so in stages and follow a steady routine. This will help your child adapt to eating healthy foods, specifically fruits and vegetables.

Keep things interesting -

Try to make fruits and vegetables more appealing by creating new dishes or hiding them in other food items. As a result, your child will become more enthusiastic about meals.

People are more likely to sustain healthy dietary habits if they have been doing so from an early age. Hence, a balanced diet must be followed from a young age and when maintained, it can supply good and long-lasting health.

By: BRASHA



Tarot guidance/ Theme for the year

The zodiac could be your sun, moon, rising or the heavy house in your chart.

Aries: It is all about you this year. Stop depending on other people and external situations for your happiness. Focus your energies on what is working for you and in becoming self-reliant. It is essential to maintain your emotional equilibrium at all costs. This will heal you and others when they are in your presence.

Taurus: Time to follow your passion. Figure out what you really want from this year and pursue it relentlessly. In case you have already figured that out, then it is time to stop procrastinating and start sowing the seeds across. Time to work towards your goals with loads of passion and patience.

Gemini: Please let go of what does not work for you. Holding on to it can only bring more pain. Start enjoying the moments in everyday life. Look at the situation from a different perspective. It is time to take some life changing decisions. There is a lot of scope for your spiritual growth this year. You might land up spending a lot of time by yourself. Time to introspect and become more wise.

Cancer: It is a year to connect with yourself. There will be a loads of opportunities presented for you to initiate new projects and start-ups. You will create an environment or develop a lifestyle that helps find peace within. Meeting a person who is emotionally well balanced is also a possibility. When in question, make sure you consult with the most important expert—Yourself.

Leo: You might want to focus on a particular project, person or making the moolah. Remember to maintain the balance while to do that. You might want

to enjoy the process as much as the goal itself. Make sure you find positive ways to channel your passion and pent up energies. A good time to expand horizons and go global. A year to take risks, be adventurous and go with the flow.

Virgo: Completion of a cycle. Time to move on from the situation that is giving you a lot of grief. Try perceiving things differently, perhaps from the other person's shoes. Something will be offered to you. If not, initiate it yourself. A great time to come into your own dominion and focus on business/work and expansions. Seek for opportunities abroad.

Libra: You might receive communication on initiating a start-up or a project. Make sure you are calm and composed while taking a decision on the same. Stop investing your time and energy on people and situations that are not for your highest good. Work hard on finding stability and abundance on your own as compared to relying on others to give it to you.

Scorpio: A year to initiate loads of activities that involve creativity. Time for harvest. There is a dream project on your mind, legacy of sorts. Time to strategize and set the background for it. Networking is good to improve your business now. Take that long pending decision on the karmic relationship. Loads of travel – physical and metaphorical.

Sagittarius: Something that has not gone your way has created loads of tension. Meditate or sit in silence. You will receive the solution. There is a fear hovering around your business. Consider your experience and initiate that project or business that you have in your mind. Make sure you are conservative and choose being slow

and steady over aspiring for immediate results. There will be an important decision that you need to take on being patient or to cut cords with a person or a situation.

Capricorn: You are going to be amazingly abundant and creative. However, the environment you are in is not allowing you to operate at your fullest, subconsciously not allowing you to see the opportunities opening up for you. This is extremely karmic. You are shrouded with fear and unable to decide on how to cut cords and move forward. Time to show your valour and harness the creativity waiting to be unleashed. You also have resources at your disposal and waiting to be wielded.

Aquarius: Time for the big change. Focus on what is of high priority to you now cause if unattended can become a burden. Bringing out the hidden passion is supremely important. Reckoning with your power is important this year. Stability, expansion, creating a legacy and creating reserves are calling for your attention. Do that which kindles the fire in you.

Pieces: You have met people and none seem to fit your bill. There has been heat breaks with relationships or partnerships in the past. Clarity with what you really want is supreme. There are so many options available for you. However, slowing down and being patient will be helpful. Focus on being radiant and happy this year.

Chandrika UB

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Tantriklife



Healing ways to balance your chakras

The Chakras are energy whirlpools that exist within every living being. The energy from the universe around us is transported into our body and aura, as well as between the physical body and the layers of our aura. The chakra system comprises seven major chakras and each chakra serves a purpose.

Once we learn about the ways to open them for harmonizing our energy, we automatically tend to feel happier, calmer, healthier, and well balanced in life.

Mentioned below are five important ways to balance your chakras -

1. Meditate

Since eons, meditation has been a powerful way to connect with your higher spirit. You can meditate to stay in the present, get rid of negativity and create positive energy around you. While the most basic form of meditation can also help you heal your broken chakra, there are specific meditation techniques you can employ to activate your dormant chakras for bringing out the best in you.

2. Yoga

Practicing yoga can open up your body and help balance out your chakras. It can control your erroneous mood swings, cure basic bodily illnesses (such as body pain, digestive issues, common cold and cough, muscle pain, etc.), and

help you sleep peacefully. Each yoga posture accounts for a specific benefit to your body. Practicing yoga regularly can calm your body, mind and soul alike, along with balancing out your chakras.

3. Breathing Activities

When you breathe in and out intentionally, you can restore your chakras. Breathing in deeply and consciously has the power to direct energy to your chakra. Whereas exhaling your breath allows awareness to settle into your chakras. Perform this activity daily to open up your chakras and bring balance back to your mind, body, and emotions.

4. Nutrition and Diet

Each chakra governs and is directly linked to each organ system of our body. Nutritional foods or spices that are good for a specific chakra are also beneficial for the body organ it's connected to. A balanced meal and healthy diet benefits to bring a sense of balance within the entire body which also includes our chakras; that are sited in the spiritual body.

5. Crystals

Crystals and gemstones are an easy, natural way for opening your chakras and igniting the natural flow of energy within you. Crystal therapy can balance your mind, body, and soul, allowing you to keep your mood swings in check.



*Dr. Devanshi Wadhwa,
Healer & Life Coach, Founder - thewhitelight111*

You can use different gems to activate/heal different chakras in your body, such as:

- ✓ Selenite can be used for your crown chakra
- ✓ Amethyst can benefit your third eye
- ✓ Lapis Lazuli can help open your throat chakra
- ✓ Rose quartz can help with your heart chakra
- ✓ Citrine can be used for your solar plexus
- ✓ Carnelian is used for your sacral chakra,
- ✓ And hematite can benefit your root chakra

Striking the Perfect Balance

The first step to leading a balanced, joyful and peaceful life is opening up your chakras. I hope the above information has helped you understand a gist of your chakras and different ways to activate/heal them.



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PCOS MYTHS - BUSTED !

Poly cystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) is a common hormonal condition that affects 10% of reproductive age women. Women with PCOS have higher levels of male hormones called androgens, as well as elevated levels of insulin, a hormone that helps regulate blood sugar.

Irregular periods, weight gain, fertility issues, unwanted hair growth, acne - are some of the common symptoms that women with PCOS experience. But because the condition is not well understood — even by some doctors — misinformation can impact diagnosis and treatment, and ultimately prevent a woman from effectively living well with PCOS.

Here are some common myths about PCOS and the facts to clear them .

You did something to cause it

While the exact cause of PCOS is not known - one thing is certain - it is not caused by something we do. However, several factors - including genetics - are believed to play a role. Women whose mothers and sisters have PCOS are more likely to be affected by this condition.

If you lose weight, you can get rid of PCOS

For women with PCOS - further weight gain can make symptoms worse. The good news is that - losing weight , even just 5 % weight loss - can help improve PCOS symptoms. Unfortunately, there is no cure for PCOS and it is a lifelong condition. Treatment is aimed at managing symptoms. A wide range of treatment options can help prevent problems.

PCOS is a rare condition

It is estimated that between 5 and 10 % of women of childbearing age have PCOS - which makes the condition one of the most common endocrine disorders among women of reproductive age. Less than half of all women with PCOS are actually diagnosed correctly ,

meaning that many women are unaware of their condition.

PCOS is similar and predictable for every person who has it.

This is a huge myth. The fact is, PCOS symptoms are unique to every person who has the condition. Since PCOS is a syndrome, there's a wide spectrum of symptoms a person can experience. For example , some people with PCOS go months without having a period. Others have monthly periods that last for weeks on end. Hence - treatment has to be individualised for each person with regard to the problems they are facing , and what their treatment goals are.

You can't get pregnant if you have PCOS .

Though PCOS is a common cause of fertility problems for women, this is not true for everyone. If a woman has PCOS , and is not trying to get pregnant - it is important to use contraception since ovulation can happen intermittently. Women struggling with fertility issues have a lot of treatment options - including medication to stimulate ovulation and assisted reproductive technologies. Lifestyle changes and a healthier diet can improve the chances of conceiving .With the help of fertility treatments - women can, and do get pregnant.

PCOS only affects overweight women

It is true that many women who have PCOS are overweight or obese. And it is also true that obesity can make PCOS symptoms worse. However - PCOS does not discriminate - and can affect women of all shapes and sizes. The relationship between weight and PCOS has to do with the body's ability to use insulin properly . Getting into the habit of eating healthy and exercising regularly is recommended as part of the treatment plan.

If your menstrual cycle is irregular - you have PCOS

There are many causes for irregular menstrual cycles, and PCOS is only one of them. A normal cycle is anywhere between 21 to 35 days. A number of conditions - including - breastfeeding, extreme dieting or over exercising, thyroid disorders are potential causes of irregular cycles. Stress can also be a factor. Dr Manu Lakshmi - who runs a PCOS clinic , says that women with chaotic cycles should get themselves examined and tested , to identify the exact cause.

If you are not looking to get pregnant, you don't have to worry about PCOS

PCOS does not affect just a woman's fertility , it can impact her long term wellness. It has been linked to diabetes, high blood pressure, poor cholesterol levels and endometrial cancer. More than half the women with PCOS have a chance of becoming diabetic. Getting diagnosed and being on regular follow up is critical for future good health.

PCOS is definitely not a life sentence for feeling bad. While there is no cure for the condition - there is certainly a lot of hope that women can continually be in a healing process to bring the hormones in the body in balance. There is no magic pill that will make PCOS go away - but there is much that can be done to control the symptoms. Lifestyle adjustments and medical treatments can ensure a healthy and comfortable life in the long term . Healthy diet with a reduction in intake of simple carbohydrates , coupled with regular exercise is the best way to restore regular menstrual cycles.

By separating fact from myth , women can empower themselves to live a complete healthy life with PCOS.

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