

# Breach candy



RUDRA RAKSHIT

**Meter gauge** Diabetics at last year's medical camp at Sagar Center

A doctor from America will present Bangaloreans with a whole new way to control diabetes, says **Arati Rao**.

No more sugar and no more fried stuff. A diagnosis of diabetes mellitus by the doctor bodes ill for all those people who revel in food that's good for the soul, but is unfortunately not so good for the body. A new diet, in fact, suggests cutting out even animal produce from the meal. Go vegan, it demands. The creator of that diet, an American physician named Neal D Barnard, will be in the city this fortnight for a seminar on the subject. "A vegan diet elicits weight loss without the need to think about calories or portion sizes," he said in an email from Washington DC. "Because a vegan diet is low in fat, it automatically tends to be lower in calories. At the same time, it has plenty of fibre, which fills you up. So weight loss comes easily."

While the diet recommended by the American Diabetes Association encourages people to limit carbohydrate-rich foods, such as rice, potatoes and beans, the vegan one imposes no such prohibitions. "The diet we have used allows

unlimited amounts of carbohydrate, although we encourage people to choose the healthiest sources. So, for example, we would encourage people to skip sugar, but to have fruit," said the doctor. "Also, instead of white potatoes, we favour yams and

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sweet potatoes. Beans, peas, and lentils are excellent choices. The idea is to choose foods that cause only a very gradual increase in blood sugar after meals, rather than an abrupt spike." Barnard said he was aware that many Indians already follow a vegetarian lifestyle. "The problems come in with dairy products and added oils. Getting them out of the diet is a really good idea," he contended. "People will find that their tastes go through an adjustment over the first week or two, and soon they come to really prefer the lighter

taste of healthier foods."

Mohan K Rao, a consultant in diabetes, obesity and endocrinology at the Sagar Center for Diabetes in Bangalore, agreed that a vegetarian diet is better for diabetics, though chicken and fish are considered alright. "The diet we recommend, that is rich in vegetables and cuts out red meat, butter and ghee, is a healthy diet for everyone, specially considering that Asians are more prone [than Americans] to metabolic problems," he said. The doctor's also observed an increasing incidence of the affliction among young people some as young as 22 years. "With their stressful lifestyle and unhealthy eating habits, they come in with blood sugar levels of 300-350, sometimes without having a family history of the problem," he revealed. Vijay Krishna, a 36-year-old who was a part of the senior management team at Mu Sigma, found out he had diabetes four years ago. While he is a vegetarian, Krishna believes going vegan would be difficult, with so much of the food made in India being dairy-based. "The biggest difficulty I've faced is getting low-calorie food outside of home. So many restaurants and office cafeterias are diabetic-unfriendly. Even coffee from the vending machine is often pre-mixed with sugar," he said.

Rao had a suggestion for Krishna's predicament. "At restaurants, what we normally suggest is that diabetics start with a salad, which will help fill the stomach a bit, and then make healthy choices for the rest of the order," he advised. "For example, rotis are healthier than naans and non-fried starters or gravies without butter are wiser options. At the workplace, many MNCs do have a dietician on board who can start the system of serving coffee or tea without added sugar. Also, lemon or sweet lime juice without sugar is a better choice as a beverage, versus mango, pineapple or grape." See Register now. Sagar Center for Diabetes, 44/54, 30th Cross, Tilaknagar, Jayanagar Extension (2244-2800). Mon-Sat 8am-8pm, Sun 8am-noon. Packages for tests start at Rs 900.

## Events & talks

Sat Dec 5

**Krav maga 2nd anniversary**  
To celebrate the second anniversary of the Israeli military self-defence system in Bangalore, there will be a four-hour workshop where students can learn basic knife training session and how to deal with attackers. *Cubbon Park, near the aquarium. Call Frank at 98867-69281 for more details. 8.30am onwards. Rs 1,000.*

**Walkathon**  
Organised by The Samarthanam Trust for the Disabled to commemorate International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the walk will start at Kanteerava Stadium at 3pm. It will then move on to Cubbon Park and Vidhana Soudha. *Registration forms are available at 11, Villa Suchita, 1st Cross, 17th A Main, behind Giri Apartments, JP Nagar 2nd Phase (2659-1488). Daily 9.30am-8pm. Registration fee Rs 150 for students and Rs 500, Rs 1,000, Rs 3,000, Rs 5,000 and Rs 10,000 for working executives; it is tax deductible.*

## Classes

**Kalaripayattu & capoeira**

A fitness programme which combines the ancient Indian martial art with the popular Brazilian martial dance form capoeira. *Body Count Gym, Mahesh Complex, Second Floor, Thippasandra Main Road, above Hema Stores, HAL 3rd Stage. Call 97319-47451 for details. Mon, Wed & Fri 7.30-9am. Rs 1,800.*

**Kriya yoga**

The classes by the Dhyana Foundation will introduce the participants to Sanatan Kriya which encapsulates various facets of yoga and dhyana, and is based on ashtanga yoga. *Asian Woman, 374, 3rd Block, Koramangala, near Greenwood High School. Call 98867-14558 to register. www.dhyanafoundation.com. Sat & Sun 8-9.30am. Free.*

## Register now

**Reversing diabetes**

The goal of this seminar by Neal Barnard is to help people with diabetes reverse the condition by going vegan. The talk will be followed by cooking classes by Nandita Shah, who will demonstrate how to prepare healthful plant-based meals. *Sampurnah, Evoma, 14, Bhattarahalli, Old Madras Road, KR Puram. Contact Shekhar at 4190-3077 or shekhar@evoma.com to register. Fri Dec 4-Sun Dec 6, 9am-7pm on first two days and 9am-3pm on the last day. Rs 5,250 for the three-day event with all meals included, Rs 2,500 for an accompanying spouse.*