



23 young people with 'type 1 diabetes' scaled Maharashtra's highest peak in India's first T1D Challenge

Mumbai, October 11, 2017: Twenty-three young Indians with type 1 diabetes (T1D) shattered myths about their disease when they successfully scaled Maharashtra's highest peak with the 'OneUp' trek, **India's first T1D Challenge**. Sanofi India, Diabetes India and Aurangabad-based NGO 'Udaan' (NGO for people with T1D) took this initiative to bring type 1 diabetes under the spotlight. Starting off from Igatpuri, these young trekkers (ages 14 to 22 years) from 13 cities across India, climbed to Kalsubai Maharashtra's highest peak (5400 ft.).

The trek was flagged off by Dr. S. Sadikot, President, International Diabetes Federation and a T1D person himself who shared interesting anecdotes to encourage the 23 T1D participants at the inauguration ceremony.

India's first trek for type 1 diabetes - 'OneUp' - has demonstrated how people with T1D can take on *any challenge* if they regularly monitor their blood sugar, have carefully regulated meals and scheduled insulin administration.

N. Rajaram, Country Head and General Manager - Pharmaceutical Operations, Sanofi India, said, *"Type 1 diabetes is a serious problem in our country. Children with diabetes should have the opportunity to thrive in a safe and supportive environment, for which they need our care and support. By partnering with Diabetes India and Udaan, to conceptualise 'OneUp' - India's first T1D Challenge, we are together making a real difference in the lives of young people in India. I am confident that this trekking activity is only the first of a wave of many more positive, encouraging initiatives for people with type 1 diabetes".*

The 'OneUp' trekkers included a participant from Mumbai; two each from Ahmedabad, Belgaum, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, Jammu, Kanpur and Vadodara; and four participants each from Aurangabad and Kolkata.

Leading Diabetologist and Founder of Udaan, Dr. Archana Sarma accompanied the trekkers and closely supervised them throughout the journey. **She said** *"Most young people live a carefree life. They go where they please, eat what they like and hardly worry about a thing. For those with type 1 diabetes, the situation is different. Food, water and insulin are their lifeline. A disciplined life is key to their freedom. Of course, they can take on any challenge – but only if they plan in advance and are careful about their blood sugar and insulin. The 23 young people on this trek were simply fantastic! They came fully prepared and even on the steep climb and challenging parts of this trek, they were excited, responsible, disciplined and kept the momentum going. They embody the spirit of 'OneUp' – that type 1 diabetes need not hold you back from reaching your potential."*



An essential part of each participant's trekking gear was a diabetes kit containing a glucometer, insulin and syringes or an insulin pen. During the trek, they had to monitor their blood sugar at least 7 times a day to make sure it was properly controlled. All meals were planned in advance to ensure that there was a balanced mix of protein, carbohydrates and fat.

Dr. Banshi Saboo, Diabetologist and Executive Secretary, Diabetes India added, *"All 23 participants, completed the 'OneUp' trek and are a testament to the fact that with the right kind of awareness, preparedness and motivation, anyone with type 1 diabetes can pursue challenges that would have otherwise seemed impossible. Inadequate awareness and an unsupportive environment often hinder these children from doing what other children their age do. We must encourage many more activities, like 'OneUp' trek to motivate young people with T1D to come together and support each other's journeys."*

Living with type 1 diabetes presents a unique set of challenges and young people who are diagnosed with it must learn to adapt to a new lifestyle where regular monitoring of blood sugar, carefully regulated meals and scheduled administration of insulin are a part of everyday life.

Manjusha Barve (17 years old), one of the 23 participants, was diagnosed with T1D about 5 years ago, and has a sibling who also has type 1 diabetes. **Nakul Tiwari**, who was diagnosed when he was just 8 years old, is now 17 and a district level cricketer. **Julee Pilay**, now 22 years old, was diagnosed when she was just 10. She is a dancer studying to be a food nutritionist specialising in diabetes-friendly diets. **Shailesh Kale**, who lives in Jhalna, is 18 years old and pursuing his B.Com. He dreams of completing his C.A. and also moonlight as a voice-over-artist someday.

Through this trek, these courageous young people wanted to set a powerful example for all the people who suffer from the disease that with well-controlled lifestyle and management, it is possible to take on any challenge and achieve every dream.

About type 1 diabetes (T1D)

Type 1 diabetes is a lifelong (chronic) disease where the beta cells in the pancreas produce little or no insulin which leads to high blood sugar levels. Although the disease can occur at any age, it is often diagnosed in children, adolescents or young people. Home to 70,200 children (0 to 14 years) with type 1 diabetes, India has the second highest number of children living with the disease¹.

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¹ International Diabetes Federation. IDF Diabetes Atlas - Seventh Edition. 2015. <http://www.diabetesatlas.org/>