



## Sanofi and RSSDI's 'Mega Walkathon' triggers zest for diabetes control in Lucknow City

- *Bollywood personality Neha Dhupia flags off the 'Mega Walkathon'*
- *More than 1000 doctors **Walk the Talk** of adopting a more active lifestyle for better diabetes management*

**Lucknow, November 1, 2015:** In a run-up to World Diabetes Day 2015, Sanofi (leading global healthcare company in Diabetes) and RSSDI (Research Society for the Study of Diabetes in India) led the way for a diabetes awareness initiative in the city. **More than 1000 doctors from across India, diabetes patients and well-wishers participated in a 3 km 'Mega Walkathon' in Lucknow to spread the message of leading an active lifestyle for diabetes prevention, management and control.**

The Walkathon was flagged off by RSSDI 2015 Organizing Secretary, Dr. Anuj Maheshwari along with other Office Bearers; Dr. Shailesh Ayyangar (Vice President - South Asia, Sanofi); and Bollywood personality Neha Dhupia. Joining them on the frontline were two Type 1 diabetes Patient Champions - Eshaan Shevate from Pune and Maitry Pancholi from Ahmedabad\*.

Through this Walkathon, Sanofi and RSSDI (the largest organization of diabetes healthcare professionals and researchers in Asia) shared the message that a physically active lifestyle contributes significantly to more effective management of diabetes. The partners also emphasized that the growing incidence of diabetes in India could be slowed if people understood more clearly how a change in lifestyle and the inclusion of daily exercise could help in diabetes prevention.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Shailesh Ayyangar, Vice President – South Asia, Sanofi said, *"Our message today is simple - physical activity is extremely important for diabetes management. Sanofi is delighted to partner with RSSDI for this Mega Walkathon as this initiative also illustrates how collaboration amongst*

- India has the second highest number of people with diabetes, more than half of which are undiagnosed.
- **Prevalence:** 66.84 million diabetes cases (8.6% prevalence) (1 in 12 adults have diabetes) <sup>[i]</sup>
- **Diagnosed:** ~32 million (47%) <sup>[i]</sup>
- Out of the ~32 million diagnosed, **~25 million take treatment** of which **~14 million are uncontrolled** (50 to 60% of diabetic patients do not achieve the glycemic target of HbA1c below 7%).
- **Physical activity** is one of the main pillars in the prevention of diabetes. Increased physical activity is important in maintaining weight loss and is linked to reduced blood pressure, reduced resting heart rate, increased insulin sensitivity, improved body composition and psychological well-being <sup>[ii]</sup>
- **RSSDI recommends moderate physical activity (like walking) for at least 150 minutes per week**

*\*Eshaan and Maitry are the only Indian participants in international teams of diabetics to have trekked the Machu Picchu Mountain (Peru) in 2014 and White Mountains (Greece) in 2015 respectively, as part of Sanofi's Type 1 Diabetes Youth Challenge.*

*diverse stakeholders - physicians, patients, corporates, NGOs and general public - is the need of the hour and can positively contribute towards curbing diabetes from becoming a potential epidemic in India.”*

Diabetes is a scourge and a national challenge, which is increasing in gravity year on year. Research has established lifestyle change as a critical and proven intervention tool to prevent the spread of diabetes.

**Dr. Anuj Maheshwari, Organizing Secretary, RSSDI 2015 explained,** *“RSSDI is actively involved in diabetes awareness programs for patients and their families and the population at large. The presence of a high genetic predisposition to diabetes, and our increasingly sedentary lifestyles, make Indians highly susceptible to developing diabetes. There is a need to make people aware of this fact, encourage them to modify their lifestyle and lower the burden of diabetes, on patients, their families and our nation. Our aim through this Walkathon is to spread the message that an active lifestyle and regular physical activity is an important aspect of diabetes prevention, management and control.”*

RSSDI's 2015 recommendations for diabetes management emphasize that people with pre-diabetes should modify their lifestyle by trying to lose at least 5% to 10% weight if they are overweight and they should walk for at least 150 minutes every week. RSSDI guidelines highlight the positive impact of walking on how the body utilizes insulin and helps to control blood sugar.

**While flagging off the Walkathon, Bollywood Actress Neha Dhupia shared,** *“I have come to Lucknow, especially to tell everyone that diabetes can be prevented, controlled and managed. This ‘Mega Walkathon’ has been organised by RSSDI and Sanofi because diabetes is a rapidly growing concern in India. I am very inspired to meet the patient champions - Eshaan and Maitry, and call on people to follow their example of making walking and physical activity their daily routine.”*

## **About RSSDI**

RSSDI is the largest organization of diabetes health care professionals and researchers in Asia. It was founded by Prof. MMS Ahuja and currently has 6444 life members represented from 29 Indian States and Union Territories across the country. RSSDI celebrates World Diabetes Day every year at multiple locations across the country. A number of activities are conducted on World Diabetes Day including public awareness programs, diabetes health talks and symbolic walks to fight against diabetes, diabetes detection camps, release of balloons, blue lighting of monuments etc. IJDDC- the International Journal of Diabetes in Developing Countries is a prestigious indexed publication of RSSDI and is an important resource for research work done in the field of diabetes in India.

RSSDI also runs a one year Certificate Course in Diabetes through its accredited centres to enable participants with skills necessary to provide appropriate diabetes care to patients with Diabetes Mellitus. RSSDI funds research proposals from Indian Scientists interested in conducting research in the field of Diabetes Mellitus. Furthermore, limited grants are also available for the students of medical colleges for smaller projects. Annual conferences of RSSDI have been a regular feature for last 40 years and are very well attended. For more information, visit [www.rssdi.in](http://www.rssdi.in)

## **About Sanofi**

Sanofi, a global healthcare leader, discovers, develops and distributes therapeutic solutions focused on patients' needs. Sanofi has core strengths in the field of healthcare with seven growth platforms: diabetes solutions, human vaccines, innovative drugs, consumer healthcare, emerging markets, animal health and the new Genzyme. Sanofi is listed in Paris (EURONEXT: SAN) and in New York (NYSE: SNY).

In India, Sanofi is present since 1956.

*\*Eshaan and Maitry are the only Indian participants in international teams of diabetics to have trekked the Machu Picchu Mountain (Peru) in 2014 and White Mountains (Greece) in 2015 respectively, as part of Sanofi's Type 1 Diabetes Youth Challenge.*

## About Sanofi Diabetes

Sanofi strives to help people manage the complex challenge of diabetes by delivering innovative, integrated and personalized solutions. Driven by valuable insights that come from listening to and engaging with people living with diabetes, the Company is forming partnerships to offer diagnostics, therapies, services and devices, including blood glucose monitoring systems. Sanofi markets both injectable and oral medications for people with Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes.

Aligned to the Sanofi Group's commitment to diabetes, Sanofi Diabetes India strives to become a true 360-degree partner for patients and healthcare professionals. Through an integrated approach to diabetes management - comprehensive portfolio, patient support program 'Saath 7'; 'Made in India' reusable insulin pen AllStar™, public awareness drives and ongoing scientific initiatives - Sanofi endeavors to make a sustainable difference to the diabetes ecosystem in India-- centered on patient needs.

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## References:

[i] <http://www.idf.org/prevention>

[ii] International Diabetes Federation. IDF Diabetes Atlas, 6th edn. Brussels, Belgium: International Diabetes Federation, 2014. <http://www.idf.org/diabetesatlas/update-2014>

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