

OUR EXPERIENCE: CAMP MM 88 (PATIENTS AND PARENTS)

N. Chandra, 17 years, patient

"There were some deficits also. We were told everything about diabetes right from zero point and I and many others found it to be too elementary. But then such a thing was essential as there were many children who did not have even that much knowledge. Few discussions were not done at the proper time; like there was a class about adjusting insulin dosage which was held at eleven in the evening, that also when we came back from an outing and were all tried."

"The food provided was okay, but not very good. There was variation in the food and I personally came to know of a few things which I should be eating, but had not been eating.....The food had things which we should try to avoid like cake, rice, potato etc."

"There were all the facilities for blood tests for any hypoglycemic reactions etc., and these were well looked after. However the infirmary at the Camp was too badly lit and not very clean. There was always rush to get blood tests done which sometimes resulted in hot exchanges."

"We should have more outings. Still more outings. Still still more outings."

"The camp was a great success. It helped all of us to make new friends and to know each other better. We came to know the doctors better and they to know us. Now when I go to AIIMS I feel it is my own as I know everybody well. A major deficit was that it was of too short a duration. The next camp should be of at least two weeks and the journey preferably by train as a bus is too tiring. The camp was enjoyed by everybody and everyone of us would like to go again and for a longer duration."

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Ms. L, Khosla, 15 years, patient

"It was for the very first time that I was to stay away from my home ever since I became an insulin dependent diabetic. I was greatly anxious."

"The dining part of the camp was the best as we ate together, except that we should have got wide ranging varieties of food as to tell us that this ail we can eat. Although we were advised to take animal protein, that was hardly served. There was no check on the amount of food one ate. The food should

have been served in paper boxes depending upon one's requirement and sugar level. I think that it was not required to eat food 6 times a day. I may be wrong from the nutrition point of view; but I am writing what I felt.

"The medical care imparted to us was excellent. Medical service was quick and that was what we needed. I was very much pre-privileged to get the Insuject pen, but what about my other friends? Delhi children probably did not even know about it. If possible, make them available to all. They are to the true sense very convenient. As blood tests were done, children should have been told to plot a graph of the same.

"We were imparted by the best doctors the basics of health education. This was I think important, but they should have been imparted at proper times; for e.g., the most important lesson on the adjustment of insulin dosage was conducted at 11.30 pm. It was too late and many of us were not interested or awake to listen; so we are still ignorant in this matter.

"One of the major advantages I felt after attending the camp was that I accepted diabetes as a way of my life and insulin as a prime part of my food. As many people cannot live without sugar, I cannot live without insulin."

"After attending Camp MM 88s my outlook towards life has greatly changed. Now I can inject myself, but before I used to shudder from doing so. Before I used to shirk from telling people that I am a diabetic, but now I do not feel the same embarrassment at all.

"The staff and the faculty had taken great pains to provide us the best of all and taken great care of us. I would like that they should treat the patients in the same way in their outdoors (Editor: "hospital out patient departments") too."

"There was no effort on the part of doctors to induce hypoglycemia to the children so as to make them experience it. Although we were taught what hypoglycemia is, but actual experience about it would have given us more in-depth knowledge about its management. Moreover the fear of hypoglycemia in our minds would have been vanished."

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Mr. S.R. Sharma, parent

"I was deeply impressed, how well Ms. Harmeet has been managing her diabetes for the last fourteen years. As revealed, her diabetes was detected in her infancy at the age of 1 year and 9 months. I would like to congratulate her parent for such a magnificent management without any complications in 14 years."

"The diabetic education to both the children and the parents was praiseworthy; through visual aids complete education was imparted. Story of "Mannu" the elephant, related so well that it covered all aspects of this disease."

"The trip to Naldhera on 27th, May was really interesting I being Himachali had been to Shimla a number of the times but never been to this picnic spot. The children and parents all enjoyed this trip equally."

"Concluding, the Camp turned out all success. Organising such camps frequently, would certainly benefit these children to lead a hopeful life. I wish all success for the dedicated research programme of "Great Doctors", Diabetic children have high hopes for their future researches."

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Ms. U. Arora, parent

"The Camp was rightly described as "The Teachable Moments" anytime and anywhere. Every moment was a blend of fun and knowledge."

"The teaching was excellent. The child became conscious of controlling the disease himself/herself by proper and timely exercise and diet. This consciousness inculcated in him/her the urge to know more about the disease, discuss effectively the problems and monitor the same on their own. Undoubtedly the Camp made them self sufficient and disciplined."

"The other accomplishment was the liquidation of the complex burgeoning in their minds. This owed to their complete knowledge of handling of the disease, clarification of the misconceptions, and the interaction with their fellow friends. Their ambitions rose high when they thought that they were also capable of doing things that other children could do."

"The Camp developed closeness between the campers. It was like a close knit family, sharing the daily routines. Taking meals as a group with their respective counsellors was wonderful. This brought more understanding and close rapport between the child with diabetes and the doctor."

"I would say that the Camp was a great success. As nothing is perfect and there is always scope for improvement, as a parent I would like to suggest some points which may be considered for subsequent camps:

1. It would be better if the teaching programme is split into two groups one group consisting of children who do not have elementary knowledge about the

diabetes and the other group consisting of elderly youth and this latter group could be entrusted to each their younger brothers and sisters.

2. The active participation of children in organising the various activities of the camp should be encouraged. They should form various committees to chalk out the plan for various competitions to be organised at the camp.

3. The coverage of the camp should be enlarged so that children and youth not connected with AIIMS and PGIMER are also also able to share this wonderful experience.

"In this end, on behalf of the campers I thank the organisers who have taken this initiative of organising such a Camp."

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Ms. A. Arora, 13 years patient

"My Camp"

"The thought of the Camp was enthusiastic, and the results simply fantastic;

loud laughters, sweetest smiles, hilarious moods, galore, filled me, my wants no more;

for I have the most precious git, the love enfolded in every bit."
27 May 1988, Camp MM 88s, Naldhera, Simla, HP.