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MEDIA RELEASE

CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE RESOURCES NEEDED FOR MANAGEMENT OF GESTATIONAL DIABETES IN SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN

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MORE culturally appropriate resources are needed to assist with recommended lifestyle modifications to reduce risks for future development of gestational diabetes or type 2 diabetes in Australia's South Asian communities, according to the authors of a letter published online today by the *Medical Journal of Australia*.

"Gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) is being diagnosed with increasing frequency in Australia, with the greatest prevalence reported in South Asian women," wrote the authors, led by Dr Asvini Subasinghe, a Research Fellow at Monash University.

"South Asian women – Indians, Sri Lankans, Bangladeshis, Afghanis and Pakistanis – are more likely to have GDM and develop type 2 diabetes than Caucasian women.

"Although studies have been conducted to evaluate the implementation of post partum guidelines generally in women with a history of GDM, there is no information about the implementation and uptake of guidelines in high risk ethnic populations," they wrote.

"Additionally, there is evidence to suggest that culturally specific GDM follow-up care would increase adherence to diet and lifestyle modifications during the interconception period in high risk ethnic women.

"Therefore, as a high risk group for progression to type 2 diabetes following GDM, South Asian women in Australia should be targeted for testing, and culturally appropriate lifestyle interventions, before conception."

GPs have a critical role in the post partum, interconception and pre-pregnancy care of women with previous GDM, and this was "even more pronounced in high risk populations such as South Asians", Subasinghe and colleagues concluded.

"More culturally appropriate resources are therefore required to assist with recommended lifestyle modifications to reduce risks for future development of GDM or type 2 diabetes."

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