

CALL FOR UNITY

Terrorism, in all its forms, is a dark stain on the fabric of humanity. It is the antithesis of everything that defines us as human beings—love, compassion, progress, and the boundless potential of unity. It thrives on fear, division, and destruction, aiming to rob us of our freedoms, our peace, and our very essence of being. To those who perpetrate acts of terror; to those who sow seeds of hatred and violence, this message is for you: You will not win. Humanity is stronger than your hate, and our resolve to stand united will always outshine the darkness you seek to spread. Terrorism is not born in a vacuum. It is often fueled by ignorance, hatred, and manipulation. It preys on the vulnerable, offering false promises of purpose and justice, while its true goal is chaos and ruin. But let it be known: the ideologies that support terrorism are fundamentally flawed and doomed to fail. History has shown us that movements rooted in violence and oppression crumble under the weight of their own inhumanity. No amount of bombs or bullets can extinguish the light of human resilience and hope.

To those who choose the path of terror; you are not fighting for a cause—you are fighting against humanity itself. You target the innocent, you destroy dreams, and you shatter lives. But for every life you take, a thousand voices rise in defiance. For every building you reduce to rubble, communities come together to rebuild, stronger than ever. You aim to instill fear, but all you succeed in doing is igniting the flames of courage and determination in the hearts of millions. We, the people of the world, refuse to bow to terror. We refuse to let fear dictate our lives. Terrorism seeks to divide us along lines of religion, ethnicity, nationality, and ideology, but we will not allow these divisions to take root. Instead, we will stand shoulder to shoulder, united by our shared humanity. No act of terror can erase the bonds that connect us, the love that sustains us, and the hope that propels us forward. The fight against terrorism is not just the responsibility of governments, law enforcement, or military forces. It is a collective effort that requires the participation of every individual, community, and nation. Education is our most powerful weapon in this battle. By promoting understanding, empathy, and critical thinking, we can dismantle the narratives that fuel extremism. By addressing the root causes of terrorism—poverty, inequality, and social injustice—we can create a world where no one feels compelled to turn to violence. We must also remember that our response to terrorism defines us. While it is crucial to confront and eliminate threats, we must do so without compromising the very values we seek to protect. Justice must prevail, but it must be tempered with fairness and respect for human rights. The war against terrorism must never become a war against humanity. To the victims of terrorism and their families, we offer our deepest condolences and unwavering support. Your pain is unimaginable, your loss irreparable. But know this: you are not alone. The world stands with you in solidarity, honoring the memories of those you have lost and vowing to work tirelessly to ensure that such tragedies are never repeated. To those who harbor thoughts of joining terrorist groups, reconsider the path you are about to take. Violence will not bring you fulfillment, justice, or peace. It will only lead to more suffering—yours and others'. There is a better way, a way that builds rather than destroys, that heals rather than wounds. Seek dialogue, seek understanding, and seek to make a positive impact in the world. You have the power to be a force for good, to contribute to the betterment of humanity, rather than its destruction. To the world, let us remember that the fight against terrorism is also a fight for our shared humanity. It is a call to build bridges, to foster understanding, and to create a world where every individual has the opportunity to live in peace and dignity. Let us not let fear guide us, but rather the belief that love, compassion, and unity are far more powerful than any weapon. In the face of terrorism, we must remain steadfast and resolute. We must reject the darkness of hate and embrace the light of hope.

Preventing bedsores "Essential Care for bedridden patients"

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Bedsores, commonly known as pressure ulcers or decubitus ulcers, are injuries to the skin and underlying tissue caused by prolonged pressure on the skin. These sores often affect individuals who are bedridden, use wheelchairs, or are unable to change their position frequently. Bedsores can quickly develop into serious wounds, leading to infection, prolonged hospital stays, and even life-threatening complications.

Who is most at risk of bedsores?

" Patients with prolonged immobility- Individuals unable to move due to illness, injury, or surgery are among the most vulnerable. Without regular movement, pressure builds up on specific areas of the body, cutting off blood flow and damaging the skin.

" Elderly Patients- Aging naturally leads to thinner, more fragile skin. Combined with reduced mobility, elderly individuals are at a heightened risk for pressure ulcers.

" People with Chronic Illnesses- Conditions such as diabetes, cancer, vascular diseases, or spinal cord injuries compromise circulation and healing, making bedsores more likely.

" Malnourished or Dehydrated Patients- Poor nutrition weakens skin integrity, while dehydration reduces the body's ability to maintain healthy tissues. Together, they significantly increase the risk of bedsores.

" Individuals with Sensory Impairments- Patients who have lost sensation due to nerve damage or conditions like multiple sclerosis, diabetic neuropathy, may not feel the early signs of pressure, allowing sores to develop unnoticed.

" Patients with Poor Circulation- heart disease and other conditions affecting blood flow reduce the body's ability to deliver nutrients to the skin, leaving it more prone to skin damage.

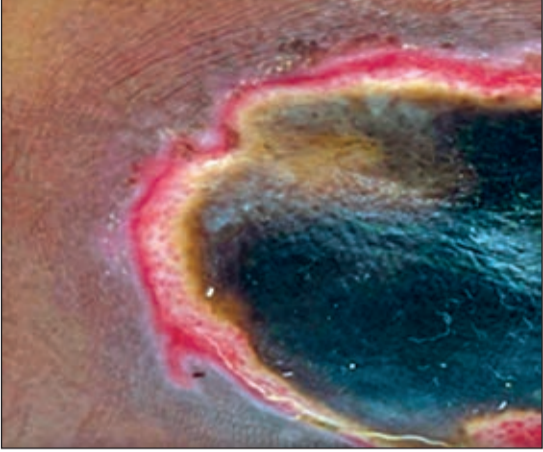
" Patients with cancer- Cancer patients, particularly those undergoing treatments like chemotherapy, radiotherapy are at an increased risk of developing bedsores. These therapies can weaken the immune system, making the skin more vulnerable to damage.

Common Sites Bed sores commonly develop in bony prominence areas. These include the sacrum, which is the lower back

Treating bedsores is an emerging problem in today's world. The term "bed-sore" might seem misleading because it suggests they only happen to people who stay in bed. These sores, also called pressure ulcers, form when certain areas of the body are under pressure for too long. Bedsores are a serious concern for people in palliative care, as their health conditions and limited ability to move put them at a higher risk. As their illness gets worse, they become less active and more vulnerable to these sores.

area near the tailbone, elbow, back of the head, shoulder, hips and the heels, where pressure builds when lying down. Recognizing and managing bedsores by stages - Bed sores progress through four stages and their management includes:

" Stage 1: In this stage,



skin gently every day, especially if it becomes sweaty or soiled. Use mild soaps and warm water, and always dry the skin thoroughly. Moisturizers can also be applied to prevent dryness and cracking.

3. Maintain a Balanced Diet: Nutrition is

essential for preventing and healing bedsores. Foods high in protein, such as eggs, lean meats, fish, and beans, aid tissue repair. Including vitamin C-rich options like oranges, strawberries, and broccoli helps promote healing, while zinc-rich foods such as seeds, whole grains, and dairy products support skin recovery. Staying well-hydrated by drinking plenty of water is equally important to maintain healthy skin and speed up healing.

4. Use Special Cushions and Mattresses: Using support surfaces like air mattresses, foam cushions, or gel pads can help distribute body weight evenly. This reduces pressure on bony areas and prevents sores.

5. Encourage Movement: Even small movements can make a big difference. For patients who can move, simple exercises like stretching or lifting their arms and legs can improve blood circulation and reduce the risk of sores. For those who cannot move on their own, caregivers can help with gentle range-of-motion exercises.

6. Watch for Warning Signs: Bedsores often start as red or discoloured areas on the skin. These spots may feel warm or hard to the touch. If these signs are noticed, action should be taken immediately.

Stage 2: Open sores or blisters affecting the top skin layers. Stage 2 pressure ulcers should be cleaned with salt water (saline) and rinsed, to remove loose, dead tissues. Avoid using other chemicals without consulting a doctor. Keep the area clean, dry and covered with dressing.

" Stage 3: Deeper wounds resembling craters, possibly showing dead tissue.

" Stage 4: Severe wounds exposing muscle, bone, or tendons, often with infection signs like pus or a foul odor. Stage 3 and 4 will be treated by the doctor.

How to Prevent Bedsores: -

1. Change Positions regularly: It is important to relieve pressure on the skin by changing position regularly. For bedridden patients, this should be done at least every two hours. If the person is in a wheelchair, they should shift their weight every 15 to 30 minutes.

2. Take Good Care of the Skin: Clean the

Navratri: A Celebration of Devotion, Culture, and Unity

■ ARUN KHAJURIA

Navratri, one of the most vibrant and widely celebrated festivals of Hindus, is much more than just a religious occasion. Spanning nine nights and ten days, this festival is a beautiful amalgamation of devotion, dance, music, and spiritual awakening. Dedicated to the worship of Goddess Durga and her various forms, Navratri holds deep significance for millions, symbolizing the triumph of good over evil and the power of feminine energy. The festival occurs two times a year and the celebrated versions are Sharad Navratri in autumn and Chaitra Navratri in spring. The nine nights are dedicated to the different manifestations of Goddess Durga namely Shailputri, Brahmacharini, Chandraghanta, Kushmanda, Skandamata, Katyayani, Kalaratri, Mahagauri, and Siddhidatri. Each day is marked by unique rituals, prayers, and fasting, fostering spiritual rejuvenation among devotees. One of the most striking aspects of



Navratri is its diverse cultural significance across various regions in India. In Gujarat, it is synonymous with Garba and Dandiya Raas, where people dressed in col-

orful traditional attire dance to folk music, creating an atmosphere of joy and togetherness. In West Bengal, Navratri culminates in the grand celebration of Durga Puja, with massive artistic pandals, mesmerizing idol processions, and elaborate rituals. In North India, Ramlila performances narrating the epic of Ramayana are held. Navratri is not just a festival of devotion but also a time for self-discipline, reflection, and renewal. Many observe fasting, abstaining from grains, alcohol, and non-vegetarian food, while engaging in meditation and prayers to cleanse the body and mind. The festival also underscores the power and divinity of women, reinforcing the belief that the feminine force is central to creation, preservation, and destruction in the universe.

In today's fast-paced world, where cultural values are often overshadowed by modernity, Navratri serves as a powerful reminder of India's rich traditions and deep-rooted spirituality. The festival unites people across

communities, transcending barriers of caste, creed, and social status. It fosters a spirit of inclusivity, where people from different backgrounds come together to celebrate life, faith, and cultural heritage. As we immerse ourselves in the festivities, it is also essential to ensure that our celebrations remain environmentally conscious. With increasing concerns about pollution and waste, adopting sustainable practices such as using eco-friendly idols, minimizing plastic usage, and reducing noise pollution can make a significant difference. By blending tradition with responsibility, we can ensure that Navratri continues to be a festival of joy and harmony for generations to come. Navratri is not just a festival; it is an experience that encapsulates the spirit of devotion, unity, and cultural magnificence. As we revel in the divine energy of these nine nights, let us also embrace the values of righteousness, resilience, and reverence that this festival teaches us. May this Navratri bring prosperity, peace, and positivity into our lives and communities.

Navratri - The Triumph of Divine Feminine Power

■ PUPUJI KOUL

Navratri festival is celebrated twice in a year, once as Chaitra Navratri and then as Sharad Navratri. Both Navratris are celebrated with great devotion and traditional gaiety. The underlying essence and spirit is the celebration of respect and reverence to feminine power which is the cause and action of the universe. Thus Navratri is dedicated to the importance of feminine power without which we cannot think of the universe. Therefore by celebrating the Navratris, we actually celebrate feminine power as its significance is very great in the world and for all humanity. As the name implies, Navratri consists of nine days and nights which are dedicated to the nine forms of the Shakti. During Navratri people especially the women keep fast and worship the small girls being the form of Shakti that is being the feminine power. Navratri shows and teaches us to revere and respect women and therefore we should learn to respect the women folk in the day to day life and only then we are successful in celebrating Navratri. We should appreciate that before manifestation of the universe, when nothing else existed, what existed was the omnipresent formless Divine Consciousness. This is also called the static consciousness or Shiva in Hindu scriptures. When universe came into being, first of all from static consciousness manifested Dynamic Consciousness Shakti. Shakti is the feminine power of Shiva and is the creative force behind the world. Shiva as masculine power is not capable of creating anything without feminine power and hence first to manifest is His own creative feminine power as Shakti, who was then allowed to create the universe. This Shakti is also known as the Divine Mother, as everything in the universe has taken birth from its womb. This Divine Mother, which has given birth to the universe, also nurtures and sustains it, and has the power to destroy it. There are primarily and actually

nine aspects of the Divine Mother which helps it to create, sustain and destroy or dissolve back the universe. There are nine aspects of the Divine Mother who are worshipped in the Hindu religion as nine Shaktis during the nine-day Navratri festival. These nine forms of the Divine Mother (Goddess Durga) are named as Shalputri, Brahmacharni, Chanderganta, Kushmandi, Skandamata, Katyayani, Kalaratri, Mahagauri, and Siddhidatri. Durga is the inaccessible, invincible one and omnipotent, the main source of energy for creation. Shalputri is the mother of the gross universe. All the gross objects and beings have manifested from this Shalputri aspect of the Divine Mother. Brahmacharni is the form of celibacy. As per the Samant Dharmas, Durga in her Kali Roopa fought demons for nine days and eventually freed mother earth from their atrocities. Thus the tenth day is celebrated as Vijaydashmi, meaning the day of victory, triumph over bad elements. The Navratri festival basically denotes the tremendous potential power, the feminine aspect of creation has within herself, which also draws down to the power of an ordinary/common woman. In fact, women are the epitome of the feminine aspect of creation and till she is respected, loved and treated as auspicious for the entire human race, she can give joy, peace and help in the growth of every aspect of creation. Shailputri is the daughter of the Mountain King Himavat and is manifestation and form of the Hindu mother goddess Mahadevi, representing herself as the pure form of goddess Parvati. She is the first Navadurga venerated during the first day of Navratri and is incarnation of Goddess Sati. Thus Maa Shailputri is one of the Navadurgas and is the provider of fortune and prosperity. Devotees hail her as mother nature and pray for their spiritual awakening. The second form of Navadurga is called Brahmacharni, which means a devoted female student who lives in an Ashrama with her Guru along with other stu-



dents. She is the second form of Mahadevi and is worshipped on the second day of Navratri. The goddess Brahmacharni is an aspect of Parvati and wears white clothes, holding a japamala in her right hand and a kamandalu in her right. She is the form of Navadurga who did severe penance and is the goddess of devotion and penance. The third form of MaaDurga is known as Chandraganta. On the third day of Navratri, this form of Durga is worshipped. She is called Chandraganta because on her forehead is half moon in the shape of Ganta. By her worship, the devotees are freed from all the troubles of this body and with ease reach to supreme bliss. It is the Chandraganta who had killed the demon Maheshasura and freed the world from this cruel demon. The fourth form of MaaDurga is called Kushmanda. She has created the universe with her small smile and thus the name Kushmanda. She is worshipped on the fourth day of Navratri. Skandamata is the fifth among the Navadurga forms of Mahadevi. Her name comes from Skanda, an alternate name for the war god.

She is the powerful goddess whose love and care helped Lord Kartikeya to defeat the demon Tarkasura. Lord Shiva and MaaParvati's first son, Lord Kartikeya, was also known as Skanda. Hence MaaParvati is often referred to as Skandamata. She is believed to protect her devotees just like a mother protects her child from harm. The sixth form of MaaDurga is known as Katyani and she is an aspect of Mahadevi and the slayer of the tyrannical demon Mahishasura. In Shaktism, she is associated with the fierce forms of Shakti or Durga, a warrior goddess, which also includes Bhadrakali and Chandika. With the difficult penance of saint Kantiyan, she took birth from the couple of Katayana as she was happy with his penance and hence the sixth form of MaaDurga is called Katyani. She is believed to bliss her devotees and benefits them. The seventh form of MaaDurga is known as Kalaratri and she is worshipped on the sixth day of Navratri. She seems very dangerous and fearful, but she always gives good results and blessings. She is first referenced in Devi Mahatmya. Kalaratri is one of the fearsome forms of the goddess. She is the goddess of auspiciousness and courage. Kalaratri is traditionally worshipped during the nine nights of the Navratri celebrations. The seventh day of Navaratri-pooja in particular is dedicated to her and she is considered the fiercest form of mother goddess, her appearance itself invoking fear. This form of goddess is believed to be the destroyer of all demon entities, ghosts, evil spirits and negative energies, which flee upon knowing of her arrival. Kalaratri is also known as Shubankari, meaning auspicious/doing good in Sanskrit, due to the belief that she always provides auspicious results to her devotees. Hence, it is believed that she makes her devotees fearless. Mahagauri is the eighth form among the Navdurga aspects of the Hindu mother goddess Mahadevi. She is worshipped on the eighth day of Navratri. According

to Hinduism, Mahagauri has the power to fulfill all desires of her devotees. The one who worships this goddess gets relief from all the sufferings in life. She is the goddess of beauty and women. She is very powerful and is the bestower of all good fruits and results. Siddhidatri is the ninth and final among the Navadurga aspects of the Hindu mother goddess Mahadevi. As the name Siddhi implies, the supernatural power or meditative ability and Dhatri means giver or awarder. She is worshipped on the ninth day of Navaratri. She fulfills all the divine aspirations. It is believed that one side of Lord Shiva's body is that of Goddess of Siddhidatri. Therefore Shiva is also known as Ardhanarishwara. According to Vedic scriptures, Lord Shiva attained all the Siddhis by worshipping this form of MaaDurga. She is in fact the goddess of supernatural powers or Siddha's. On the ninth day of the Navaratri, nine small girls are worshipped as being the nine forms of MaaDurga and their feet are washed and they are offered fruits, money, utensils, etc. We Indians worship the feminine power during Navaratri's but alas! in actual practice the women are heaped atrocities and they are harassed and even some are subjected to sexual assaults. There is talk of the empowerment of women but in actual world, the women folk are harassed and even molested. It is a big contradiction that on one side we worship the women and on the other side there are the increasing cases of molestation and sexual assaults on the women which is very unfortunate and this way we nullify the essence and spirit of Navaratri-pooja. The best performance of the Navaratri celebrations is only when we learn to revere, respect and honor the women in the day to day life and in homes, places of worship, at workplaces, in educational institutions and at all the places because where women are respected, gods travel there. Thus the best way to celebrate the feminine power is that we should respect the women in the actual world.