

## Palo Alto Medical Foundation Introduces

# Personalized Health Program for South Asians (PHP-SA)



**A Unique Health Pilot Program Designed for  
South Asian Employees**



*Palo Alto Medical  
Foundation*

A Sutter Health Affiliate

THE CURE FOR COMMON MEDICINE



**LifeConnections Health Center & Pharmacy**

An onsite medical facility for Cisco employees and their families



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## Case History

Arun is a 36-year-old Bay Area software engineer with high cholesterol and a borderline blood sugar level. He does not smoke, eats a vegetarian diet, and sees his doctor once a year.

Arun said significant job stress, a busy schedule and domestic responsibilities prevent him from making healthy lifestyle changes. Eighteen months after he was diagnosed with high cholesterol, Arun woke up at 2 a.m. with chest discomfort that he attributed to indigestion.

The pain intensified, and he called 911. Arun was taken to the emergency room and diagnosed with a heart attack due to a severe blockage in the main artery of his heart. Fortunately, Arun recovered fully from this event, and he now exercises five days a week and has completely changed his diet.

## PHP-SA Program



Arun is like thousands of other South Asian men and women in the Bay Area who face similar risks, but who lack the time and the right resources to improve their lifestyle. This is why the Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF) has developed a Personalized Health Program for South Asians (PHP-SA) to help South Asians incorporate healthy living into their busy schedules. This unique pilot program uses the extensive South Asian-specific health information from PAMF's PRANA Web site ([www.pamf.org/prana](http://www.pamf.org/prana)), and delivers it to employees using an innovative, high-tech platform. This program is open to South Asian employees regardless if you are a PAMF or non-PAMF patient.



## *Our Commitment to South Asian Health*

The Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF) is a not-for-profit health care organization that is a pioneer in the multispecialty group practice of medicine.

Preliminary research data indicates that South Asians are the second most common ethnic group cared for by PAMF. Based on this large patient base, PAMF has created an extensive library of health education resources specific for South Asians, including PRANA ([www.pamf.org/prana](http://www.pamf.org/prana)), the most comprehensive online resource on South Asian health to date. PAMF's Research Institute also has a leading researcher in South Asian health, Latha Palaniappan, M.D.



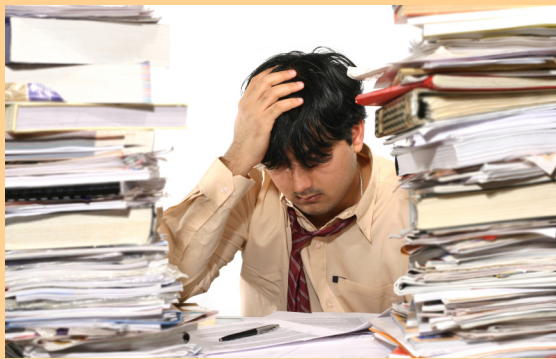
Ronesh Sinha, M.D., will provide you with coaching and support throughout the six-month program. He is co-founder of the PRANA Web site and has helped create the PHP-SA program. He is a dedicated teacher and promoter of health education who lectures at many Bay Area companies about employee health.

## Exercise Guide

Exercise is critical for South Asians to lower diabetes and heart disease risk, and manage stress levels. PHP-SA will integrate an activity program into your busy schedule that combines aerobic exercise and strength training. You'll discover that exercise does not always mean sweating it out at your local gym. There are many time-efficient ways you can get a good workout, even during work hours and on business trips. PHP-SA will help you set your target heart rate during exercise and discuss the use of motivating instruments, such as heart rate monitors and pedometers, to keep you moving.



## Stress Management



Stress is the most commonly overlooked risk factor that many South Asians face. High levels of ongoing stress are often the root cause of sleep problems, poor eating habits, a lack of exercise and unhealthy habits such as smoking and excessive alcohol use. Most South Asians set a very high standard for professional and academic

success that can produce stress when unmet. PHP-SA understands the unique demands that South Asians face and offers strategies to help South Asians lower their stress levels.

The three hallmarks of the PHP-SA program include the following:

### Cultural Sensitivity

PHP-SA was created by physicians, researchers and nutritionists with extensive experience and expertise in caring for South Asian patients. All of the information is sensitive to South Asian culture, diet and lifestyle habits.

### Customization

Creating a plan that is customized to fit your needs is important. Whether you eat a vegetarian South Indian diet, a mix of South Asian and Western foods, or any other combination, PHP-SA will customize a plan to meet your preferences.

### Convenience

The greatest obstacle to South Asians achieving optimal health is a lack of time. With this in mind, PHP-SA was designed to be a high-tech health program that can be conveniently integrated into the demanding schedules of today's South Asian employees. Unlike many health programs where you must schedule time to attend regular meetings, PHP-SA functions like a virtual coach that brings you vital information that can be accessed from work or home.

## How Does It Work?

### Step One: Health Risk Assessment (HRA)

- Unlike typical health risk assessments (HRAs), the PAMF Personalized HRA has questions tailored for South Asian lifestyle factors.

### Step Two: Health (biometric) Screening

- You will have a blood draw to test fasting cholesterol and blood sugar, as well as a blood pressure check, on the first and last day of the six-month program.
- You will monitor your weight every week.

### Step Three: PHP-SA Action Plan

- A specific action plan will be generated based on your individual HRA and biometric results.
- Brief information in text and video formats will be sent to you over the course of the PHP-SA program.
- You will be communicating regularly with a South Asian health coach to make sure you are on the right track.

## The Information You Need

### Setting Your Goals

All of us have our own goals when it comes to health and living well. Whether it's losing a few pounds, improving your cholesterol, boosting energy levels, managing stress or simply maintaining your current health, PHP-SA will not only help you meet your individual goals, but may also help you set a few new ones.

## Understanding Your Numbers



When it comes to risk factors for heart disease, not all of us are created equal. In fact, South Asians experience heart disease five to ten years earlier than other ethnic groups. Because of this, many standard target numbers (such as cholesterol and weight) are different for South Asians than for other ethnic groups. For example, did you know it takes less excess weight for South Asians to develop diabetes and heart disease? As a result, the World Health Organization (WHO) has established lower healthy weight limits for South Asians. PHP-SA will help you understand your South Asian adjusted risk factors and develop a plan to help you improve your numbers.

## Nutrition Guide

The real key to creating a healthy eating plan you can stick to is finding nutritious foods that fit your personal tastes.

For South Asians, this means finding foods that improve your health without dramatically changing the flavor and culture of your cuisine. PHP-SA will help you achieve a relatively seamless and simple integration of nutritious foods into your diet.

Healthy carbs, high-fiber foods, good fats and lean protein sources for vegetarians and non-vegetarians are just a few of the topics covered. The information you provide in the health risk assessment (HRA) will generate an eating plan that fits your preferences. Whether you eat a vegetarian South Indian diet, a non-vegetarian North Indian diet, or a mix of different cuisines (such as American, Thai and Chinese), PHP-SA will search its extensive database and give you the nutrition information you need to improve your health.

