



Diabetes among the Pima: Stories of Survival

Carolyn Smith-Morris

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For the past forty years, the Pima Indians living in the Gila River Indian Community have been among the most consistently studied diabetic populations in the world. But despite many medical advances, the epidemic is continuing and prevalence rates are increasing. *Diabetes among the Pima* is the first in-depth ethnographic volume to delve into the entire spectrum of causes, perspectives, and conditions that underlie the occurrence of diabetes in this community. Drawing on the narratives of pregnant Pima women and nearly ten years' work in this community, this book reveals the Pimas' perceptions and understanding of type 2 and gestational diabetes, and their experience as they live in the midst of a health crisis. Arguing that the prenatal period could offer the best hope for curbing this epidemic, Smith-Morris investigates many core values informing the Pimas' experience of diabetes: motherhood, foodways, ethnic identity, exercise, attitude toward health care, and a willingness to seek care. Smith-Morris contrasts gripping first-person narratives with analyses of several political, economic, and biomedical factors that influence diabetes among the Pimas. She also integrates major theoretical explanations for the disease and illuminates the strengths and weaknesses of intervention strategies and treatment. An important contribution to the ongoing struggle to understand and prevent diabetes, this volume will be of special interest to experts in the fields of epidemiology, genetics, public health, and anthropology.

Click here for a Facilitator's Guide to *Diabetes among the Pima*



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