Acknowledgement

A teacher affects eternity; one can never tell where his influence stops.* Such has been the role of my mentor and guide Prof. (Dr) U. V. Mani. He has led me through this wonderful journey not only as a guide but as a father figure constantly motivating me to excel. His patience, compassion and unceasing scientific quest never cease to amaze me. It is his vision that has shaped into this form. I would like to thank him for enlightening my mind. His influence on my life is immeasurable.

Another incredible person who I am in awe of is Dr (Mrs) Indirani Mani. Her guidance and support during and beyond this project have been invaluable. Like a parent she helped me selflessly. Her constructive criticism has helped me gain a new perspective to research. I thank her for always being there for me.

I am grateful to Prof. (Dr.) Pallavi Mehta, Head, Dept. of Foods and Nutrition for her constant encouragement and for providing the necessary facilities to carry out my research.

I am greatly indebted to Dr. Mayur Patel and Dr. Ina Patel, founders of Swasthya Diabetic clinic and All India Research Centre for Diabetes (Ahemadabad) for their constant support, attention. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the consulting physicians, Ms. Dhara, Ms. Ronak, technicians and staff at Swasthya. Without this efficient team, completion of this project would have been impossible.

This journey would not have been as rewarding without the help of the ex-Managing Director Mr Madhukar Parikh, the current Managing Director Mr Ashok Dullu of Integra India Group Ltd (Integra Hindustan Control Ltd), who gave me a free hand, access to the premises and staff and all the assistance required in organizing the innovative Health Promotion Programs. I would also like to thank the enthusiastic staff for participating in the project whole heartedly and making it a tremendous success.

I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Dr H.T. Toprani of Toprani Advanced Labs and Systems and his dedicated team, for their kind gesture in allowing me access in their laboratories and carrying out the analysis.
The thesis would not have been in its current form without the help of Dr R. M. Pandey, Head, Department of Statistics, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi. I thank him for his kind assistance and timely support.

I would also like to thank Dr Prabakaran, New Delhi for his support and kind invitation to attend a state of the art workshop organized by him and the CCDC team. He gave me a great opportunity to interact with some of the great minds in India and abroad and gaining new insights.

I thank Prof Uma Iyer and Dr Swati Dhruv for their support, suggestions and advice which have helped me complete my research in a befitting manner. I also seize this opportunity to thank all the staff members of the Dept. of Foods and Nutrition for their encouragement and help.

I duly acknowledge and thank the University Grants Commission for their financial assistance provided under the Research Scholarship for Meritorious Students in Science.

I acknowledge and thank all the participants for their time and support rendered to carry out this study. This project would not have been in its current form if it weren't for their cooperation.

I would like to thank my friends Pallavi, Shonima, Rachana, Nitya and Trushna for not only enriching my knowledge but being invaluable companions and making this experience both wonderful and unforgettable.

Embarking on this endeavor would not have been possible without the support of my family who have stood by me through thick and thin. I feel at a loss of words when it comes to thanking Ma and Papa who have been more like parents than in-laws. Without them, completion of this work would be unimaginable. Their love and support was a constant source of encouragement.

It was my parents' dream that I pursue my doctoral program, and it is their faith and belief that was my driving force. I thank them from the depth of my heart for their selfless love, affection and unstinted support. They have always been my pillar of strength.
A special word of thanks to my other family members especially, Preeta who has constantly boosted my morale. All my love to ‘Moran’ who sat by me the whole time.

This note of thanks would be incomplete without the mention of my beloved husband, Vivek. He has been ever supporting and my edifice of strength throughout this period. I thank him for his affection, patience, understanding and being my ‘problem solver’.

I offer my humble pranams to the Almighty for showering his infinite blessings on me and my well wishers.

Smriti Nanda Kumar