**Case Study 7.3: Sylvia, Raymond, and Reginald**

**Have a Fat Mother with Type 2 Diabetes**

Sylvia, Raymond, and Reginald are siblings in their 30s. They live in close proximity to each other, frequently joining their mother for Sunday dinner and other family events. Their mother is an excellent cook who always encouraged her children to clean their plates of very generous portions. Sylvia was the first to notice that their mom was getting heavier than she had been. In fact, Sylvia tried to get her mother to join her in an exercise club. Mom did not want to do this because she was tired enough as it was and did not think she had what it took to go to an exercise session three to four times a week. Sylvia was dedi- cated to her exercise program. She even signed up for additional activities and decided to begin to train for marathon running. It was hard at first but eventually she became fit enough to run her first race. Mom was on the sidelines cheering her on until she collapsed into a chair. Sylvia became alarmed. She got her mom to an urgent care center as soon as she could.

Mom was transported to the local hospital. Her blood work revealed a glucose level of over 500 mg/dL. She had indeed gained a lot of weight and her entry weight was 375 pounds. She was not very tall so this meant that she was very fat indeed. Over the years Sylvia had become used to seeing her mother always with a glass of iced tea or some beverage close at hand. She had also noticed how frequently her mom had to use the bath- room. Unfortunately Sylvia did not connect the dots. She did not realize, until mom collapsed, that her mom had become diabetic. The hospital stay put it all together.

Mom had type 2 diabetes. The doctor first started mom on metformin to see if oral medication would get the glucose level down. This did not work so he then prescribed insulin injections, and mom was instructed on how to inject herself and how to check her blood glucose. A diabetes educator worked with her to help her develop a food plan that she liked. The clini- cians also began a mild exercise program with mom’s consent. Sylvia agreed to help mom adjust to this new lifestyle and mom got her glucose under control. Sylvia began to look at her brothers. Although Raymond was 35 and Reginald was 39, she noticed that they were both becoming increasingly fatter and sedentary. Where they used to play touch football on Sunday afternoons at family gatherings, now they were content to watch a game on TV. Sylvia worried that they were going to follow in mom’s footsteps.

**Problem Analysis and Resolution**

1. Does Sylvia have something to worry about?

2. Based on the above story, what do you think is the problem with this family?

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3. How likely is it that all three siblings will follow in their mother’s footsteps?

4. What are the consequences for these siblings if this happens?

5. What strategies would you suggest and implement for this family?

6. Will the outcome for all three siblings be the same?