

Lifestyle and Its Impact on Spread of Non-Communicable Diseases



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Even though India is a phenomenally growing economy and IT global super power, the changes in demographic, epidemiological and social factors have posed serious challenges to the country, especially to its health system. In the light of the emergence of so-called 'lifestyle' diseases or non-communicable diseases, it is becoming essential to increase specialized healthcare and awareness to prevent these NCDs. To combat the impact of the NCDs on health, the public needs to have awareness about lifestyle changes, and also the healthcare system needs to be equipped appropriately.

Non-communicable diseases are chronic health problems that are mainly contributed through genetic, physiological, environmental, and behavioral factors. According to World Health Organization (WHO), Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are of major public health concern in India. It is estimated that non-communicable diseases (NCDs) contribute to around 5.87 million deaths, which account for more than 60% of all the deaths occurring in India. The Global Status Report by WHO on the risk factors associated with NCDs on <http://bit.ly/2ux441R> .Particularly, the aging population and the increasing risk factors such as harmful effects of smoking, drinking, physical inactivity and unhealthy eating patterns have contributed a lot to the non-communicable diseases and its effects on public health care as a whole.It is evident that the rising occurrence of non-communicable diseases is one of the key challenges for the healthcare industry today, contributing to rising mortality levels in the country. In India, 53% of total deaths result from cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, stroke, and diabetes. (<http://bit.ly/2vwuchf>). This high burden of non-communicable diseases in the country pose a great challenge to the Indian healthcare system. Moreover, the purported rise of lifestyle diseases in the current decade has increased the healthcare spending because of its chronic treatment needs. As per reports, the non-communicable diseases account for around 50 percent of the nation's healthcare spending.

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Of the 1 crore deaths in India every year, NCDs such as blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, heart problems, and other chronic diseases contribute to a major share of the deaths in the country. It, hence, becomes essential for the healthcare professionals of all levels in the country in bringing awareness of common man about the NCDs and its impact on deaths.

IIHMR, one of the leading healthcare institutions in India, has recently put forward its efforts to convey the importance of lifestyle changes and the impact of non-communicable diseases, through a press conference held on 7th July 2017 in Hisar, Haryana (India). The press conference conducted by the institution, articulated the measures that should be taken to control the ongoing spread of non-communicable diseases, and its impact on the rising mortality rates in the country.

Since most of the non-communicable diseases are a result of unhealthy lifestyle, it becomes utmost important for the people to be aware of adopting a healthier lifestyle so as to prevent chronic lifestyle diseases. The primary objective of the conference held by IIHMR was to focus on strengthening the healthcare services and to fulfill the existing healthcare needs of the public. IIHMR's press conference revolved around making healthy lifestyle changes to prevent the spread of non-communicable diseases.

Several doctors and medical professionals from the Urban Health Mission were present in the conference. The team included Civil Surgeon of Hissar Dr. J.S. Grewal, PMO Dr. Dayanand, Dr. Jitendra Sharma, and Dr. Tarun, among others.

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Dr. Sanjiv Kumar, the Director of IIHMR, Delhi, proposed focusing on Yoga and healthy diet as the simple and effective way to prevent NCDs. He mentioned that yoga, exercise, walking, and healthy and balanced diet are very much important in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. He also addressed the adverse effects of smoking and urged the audience to strictly say 'NO' to tobacco/smoking. Not many are aware of the excessive intake of salt, and so he also stressed the importance of lessening the use of salt in our day-to-day life. Healthy lifestyle is even more important for those who have hypertension, diabetes, etc.

Recently, there has been a consistent improvement in quality healthcare services in Hisar. However, there is still a lot of scope for improvement left. Dr. Grewal highlighted the progress of Hisar in terms of healthcare services and facilities. Though he also mentioned about the need to improve and strengthen the maternity and pediatric services, which require adequate financial support and manpower.

To cater to the needs of the healthcare industry and to extend the reach of efficient healthcare services, especially in the rural areas, well-educated and capable management professionals are a must. To bring this issue to light, Dr. Grewal addressed the current inadequacy of management and administrative professionals to manage the challenges within the healthcare sector. He further stated the need for hospital and healthcare managers to strengthen the nation's healthcare facilities. The conference collectively stressed the dire need for the country to increase the number of qualified and well-trained healthcare managers as a key solution to enhance the status of the healthcare facilities and services in India. This is particularly important so as to enable the doctors and the other medical staff to focus more on the quality of healthcare services and patient care delivered to the public.

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Only by raising the level of healthcare services in the country and by spreading awareness about the lifestyle related disorders, we can put a control on the increasing cases of non-communicable diseases. The primary focus should lie on curbing the tobacco/alcohol use, promoting physical activity, and adopting a healthy lifestyle and food habits.

To conclude, it is undeniable that lifestyle factors are the root cause behind the rising occurrence of non-communicable diseases in the country. No doubt, NCDs are affecting people at an early age, robbing away their health by creating complex health problems. To combat the existing status-quo, lifestyle changes are the immediate solution that can stanch the growing epidemic of NCDs.