

Addressing NCDs in emergencies

STAR HEALTH DESK

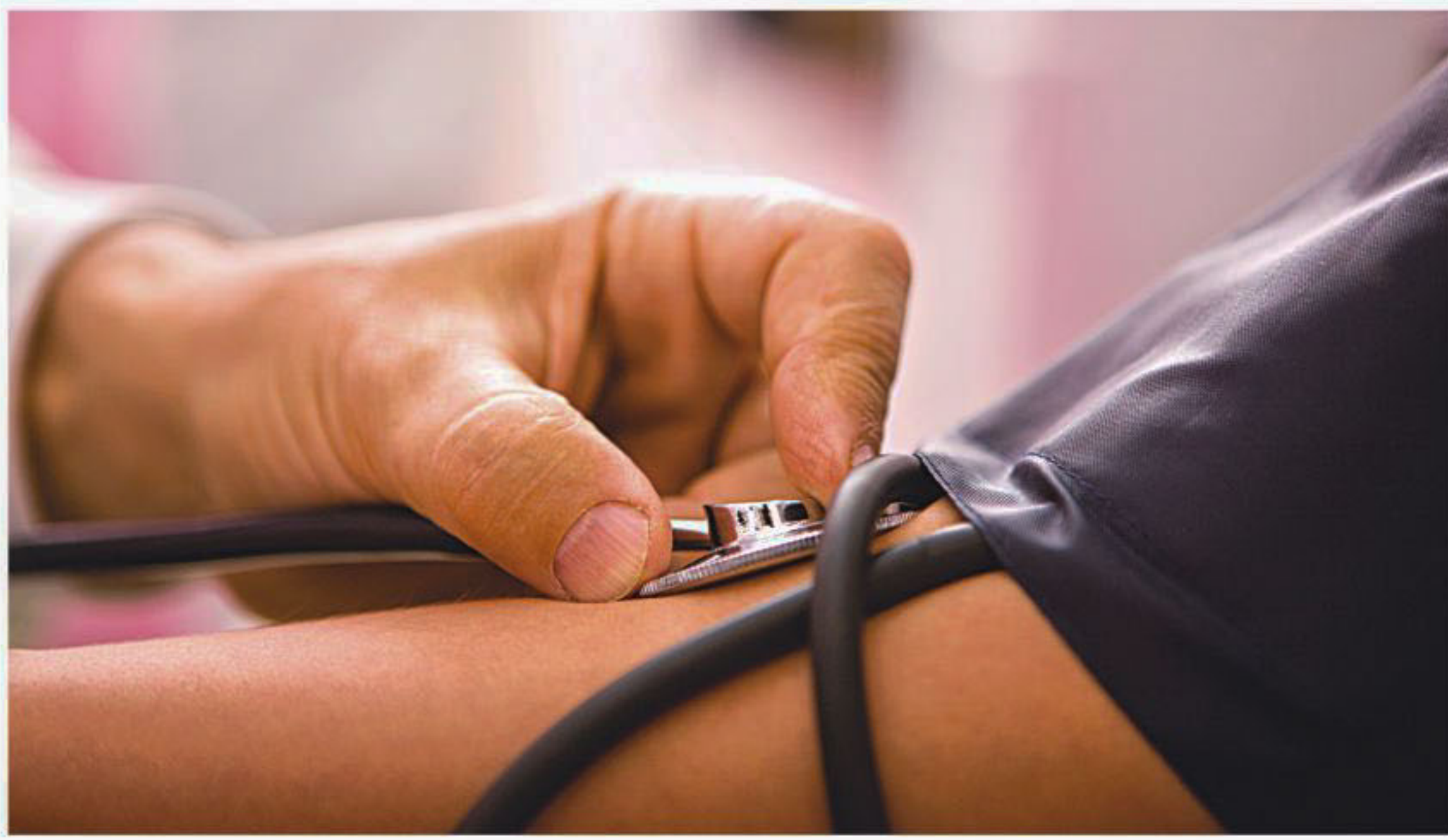
In the shadow of the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, people are struggling to receive treatment for their non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cancer, lung and heart disease and diabetes.

Roads are blocked, health facilities are in disrepair, medicines are scarce and financial resources to make out-of-pocket payments are absent.

Humanitarian health workers like Dr Tamara Rudalovska in Mariupol, Eastern Ukraine, who works from one of the World Health Organisation (WHO)-supported Mobile Emergency Primary Healthcare Units, is also finding it difficult to monitor and treat patients with NCDs.

Responding to the need
A lapse in care for NCDs, even for a short period of time, can result in higher levels of disability and premature deaths. Worldwide, NCDs take 16 million lives prematurely every year. Without adequate supplies and trained staff to treat patients with NCDs in humanitarian emergencies, this number is expected to grow.

Working closely with the Ukrainian Ministry of Health and local health authorities, WHO has been piloting emergency



NCD kits in the Mobile Emergency Primary Healthcare Units since early 2015. The kits provide many fundamental supplies for treating NCDs including, drugs for managing cardiovascular disease, insulin and glucometers to measure blood sugar levels for diabetes, and inhalers for asthma.

The kits are a success. Patients who were not able to afford medications or find pharmacies with supplies are now continuing

treatment for their NCDs.

"People are very grateful and pleased when the Mobile Emergency Primary Healthcare Unit's team comes to their village to provide medical care and medicines to them," Dr Rudalovska explains.

Scaling up globally
Based on the success of Ukraine's pilot emergency kit, WHO is working to improve the emergency health kits it already deploys to humanitarian

emergencies so they better address the needs of people living with NCDs.

The existing Interagency Emergency Health Kits, managed by WHO, provide essential medicines, supplies and equipment to provide basic medical care for 10,000 people for 3 months. The kit, however, does not provide the tools needed to prevent and treat NCDs.

Later this year, WHO and other humanitarian agencies plan to

review the possibility to increase the quantity and types of medicines for NCDs in the Interagency Emergency Health Kit. These could include lifesaving medicines for severe asthma, heart failure and Type I diabetes.

"There is a high demand for emergency kits with supplies to treat non-communicable diseases," says Hyo Jeong Kim, technical officer in Emergency Risk Management and Humanitarian Response department at WHO.

Because humanitarian organizations need to ensure the kits are light and mobile, heavy equipment like defibrillators and dialysis machines cannot be included in the Interagency Emergency Health Kit. A separate global emergency NCD kit, like the one in Ukraine, is being discussed.

"The burden of NCDs is becoming ever more prominent in humanitarian emergencies," says Kim. "Treating these patients will not only help to save lives of those experiencing severe symptoms but also alleviate the longer term health consequences, which can put an exponential burden on the health systems as they recover."

HAVE A NICE DAY

Killing our egos - 2



A classic egoistic person believes in rigidity. They forget - 'everybody makes mistakes, only the wise learn from them'.

Ego can hurt your health badly. According to a University of Michigan study, egotistic people had higher levels of hormone named 'cortisol'. Other than stress, it can lead to chronic conditions such as heart disease and stroke. Too much cortisol ultimately may raise insulin levels, putting one at risk for diabetes.

It is said that ego is a disease that makes everyone sick except the person with the disease. Ego is just like smoking a cigarette. Smoking a cigarette makes you feel better for a short time like nurturing ego. It keeps you from feeling worse very temporarily. But you would feel best if you did not smoke at all. And without ego, you do not require telling lies or showing off your unreal habits and that saves a lot of energy. You have to stop lying to yourself and then your self-consciousness will be pure like natural mineral water from the top of the mountain. You will be able to work hard to cover up for your poorly concealed complexity.

One of the secrets of success of great people was defeating their egos. Like Buddha gave clear instructions on how to understand the ego and how to reduce its influence over us. God says I may forgive your sins committed towards me but if you hurt a human, only they can forgive you in the hereafter and I cannot intervene on their behalf. In religion, duty towards fellow humans has as high an importance as towards God.

Did you notice? People with ego love to use 'I' instead of 'we' all the time. In fact, killing one's ego gets one in tune with reality. Killing ego is as important as killing bad habits of a lifestyle. Let's defeat our ego before ego defeats us.

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HEALTH bulletin

Bulimia, an eating disorder

PROF M KARIM KHAN

Last week I received a female patient of 12 years old with a lean and thin body. According to her mother, she eats a lot and soon after eating, she goes to the washroom and by putting her finger in her throat, she vomits all that she ate. This has been going on for a long time.

In spite of gaining weight she is losing weight day by day. Physical and laboratory findings were normal. Actually this is a typical presentation of bulimia. This is an eating disorder.

Bulimia is an illness in which a person has regular episodes of overeating (bingeing) and feels a loss of control. The person then uses different ways, such as vomiting or laxatives (purging) to prevent weight gain.

Many people with bulimia also have anorexia nervosa. Many more women than men have bulimia. The disorder is most common in adolescent girls and young women. The person usually knows that her eating pattern is abnormal and may feel fear or guilt with the binge-purge episodes.

The exact cause of bulimia is unknown. Genetic, psychological, trauma, family, society, or cultural factors may play a role. Bulimia is likely due to more than one factor. In bulimia, insensible over eating is common following vomiting by putting fingers in the throat to avoid over weight.

People with bulimia are often at normal weight, but they may see themselves as being overweight. Because the person's weight is often normal, other people may not notice this eating disorder.

Bulimia cases usually do not require hospital admission but reassurance, psychotherapy, family and friends support is important to recover from the situation. Sometimes antidepressant drugs are prescribed.

Complications may be constipation, dehydration, dental cavities, electrolyte imbalances, hemorrhoids, pancreatitis, swelling of the throat, tears/ruptures of the esophagus from excessive vomiting etc.

Over conscious and concerned girls do think they are gaining weight and becoming ugly so they start unusual dieting. In bulimia the feeling is the same. They eat a lot and to avoid weight gain they induce vomiting. This vicious cycle of over eating and vomiting in the long run creates serious health problems. Nothing unusual is good for health.

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PHOTO: BBC

Current methods for investigating UTIs rely on culturing bacteria

Hope for faster treatment of UTI

Urinary tract infections can be treated more quickly using a new DNA sequencing device, according to research, reports BBC.

Scientists from the University of East Anglia (UEA) say the device - the size of a USB stick - can detect bacteria directly from urine samples four times more quickly than traditional methods.

The technology could lead to faster treatment and better use of antibiotics, they say.

The device can also detect resistance to antibiotics, said Dr Justin O'Grady, also from UEA's Norwich Medical School.

Superbugs are now a major global health threat with multi-drug resistant bacteria.



Moni Begum to attend the UNGA70

Advocating for no child marriage and access to healthcare for every mother and child



PHOTO: COURTESY

Moni Begum, 16, studying in class 10, attending United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) 70 to advocate for ending child marriage and improving access to health care for every mother and child, comes from Kulaura - a small town in Maulvibazar, Sylhet.

In the forum she will meet national and international delegates from all over the world, including 19 other child delegates from across the globe.

66% of the girls are married off before their 18th birthday and that makes Bangladesh one of the top three countries in the world that is heavily burdened with child marriage. The pace at which the reduction is taking place needs to change.

The project in which Moni Begum is a beneficiary of is implemented by Save the Children in partnership with Dhaka Ahsania Mission and Bangladesh Pediatric Association.

f /StarHealthBD

WORLD ALZHEIMER'S MONTH

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive, degenerative disorder that attacks the brain's nerve cells, or neurons, resulting in loss of memory, thinking & language

Symtoms

- Forget about recent conversations or events
- Get lost in a familiar place or on a familiar journey
- Struggle to find the right word in a conversation
- Forget appointments or anniversaries
- Lose items (eg keys, glasses) around the house

Prevention

- Stop smoking if you smoke
- Eating a healthy, balanced diet
- Having regular health tests as you get older
- Staying physically fit and mentally active

