

# The rising threat of NCDs in Bangladesh

The rise of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) has been driven by primarily four major risk factors: physical inactivity, unhealthy diets, tobacco use, and the harmful use of alcohol.

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The World Health Organisation (WHO) says that non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and chronic lung disease, are collectively responsible for almost 70% of all deaths worldwide. Almost three quarters of all NCD deaths, and 82% of the 16 million people who died prematurely, or before reaching 70 years of age, occur in low- and middle-income countries like Bangladesh.

In Bangladesh, the numbers of people suffering from NCDs are rising very rapidly. According to Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), some NCDs like stroke, ischaemic heart disease (e.g. hypertension, heart attack), Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), diabetes and lung cancer were the main reasons for causing deaths in Bangladesh in 2017. These diseases also caused a significant number of disabilities. Dietary risks, high blood pressure, tobacco, blood sugar, high BMI etc. were among the top contributing factors.

The Government of Bangladesh has paid special attention to tackle NCDs at the primary care level and rolling out WHO-PEN protocol for early detection and management of cardiovascular dis-

## What causes the most deaths?



Top 10 causes of death in 2017 and percent change, 2007-2017, all ages, number

eases, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases and cancer to prevent life threatening complications (e.g. heart attacks, stroke, kidney failure etc.).

As part of the protocol, the patients diagnosed with hypertension and diabetes will be counselled about living a healthy lifestyle and provided with required expensive anti-hypertensive and anti-diabetic drugs at free of cost at the primary healthcare level.

20% of adults aged ≥25 years are hypertensive in Bangladesh. Only 12% of adults

were previously diagnosed with hypertension, indicating a gap in case detection. Almost half of the patients with diagnosed hypertension were not adhering to treatment. Overall, 10% of our people are diabetic. The rise of NCDs has been driven by primarily four major risk factors: physical inactivity, unhealthy diets, tobacco use, and the harmful use of alcohol.

NCDs are predisposed by various risk factors including behavioural, environmental and metabolic (diabetes). There is increasing and strong evidence of a causal

link between dietary behaviours and patterns, nutrients, physical activity and NCDs. Numerous observational studies have associated obesity with increased total mortality and increased risks of disease or death from diabetes, ischaemic heart disease and ischaemic stroke, cancers, chronic kidney disease, and osteoarthritis.

The risks of diabetes and ischaemic heart disease increase monotonically with an increase in the body-mass index (BMI=Kg/m<sup>2</sup>), starting at a BMI in the low 20s. According to ICDDR,B, NCDs account for an estimated 59% of total deaths in Bangladesh (886,000 deaths a year). In Bangladesh, 48% of men smoke; 20% of men and 32% of women have raised blood pressure. There were 7.1 million cases of diabetes in Bangladesh in 2015; a further 3.7 million cases may go undiagnosed. An estimated 129,000 deaths were attributed to diabetes in 2015.

The epidemic of NCDs poses devastating health consequences for individuals, families and communities, and threatens to overwhelm health systems. The socio-economic costs associated with NCDs make the prevention and control of these diseases a major development imperative for the 21st century.

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HAVE A NICE DAY



## Finding good cooking oils for 2019



The health benefits of cooking oils can be a complicated subject. Some are better at lowering cholesterol while others might become 'bad fats' when exposed to high heat. Some are expensive, although their marketing strategies are very smart.

For example, if you quickly take a look at the top choice for cooking, one can say about extra virgin olive oil (does not require high heat), peanut oil for frying (yes, if you do it correctly) or sesame oil. But please keep in your mind that a good olive oil may be recommended for high temperature cooking, but a poorly processed good olive oil may not be considered healthy! Again, in cooking oils 'best list' importers may also add peanut, walnut or avocado — most of them would be unreachable among most of us. Well, what about mustard or coconut oil (for stir frying it is a good choice) or rice bran oil?

Rice bran oil is a relatively new entrant in the category of cooking oils and perhaps one of the healthiest. This is for a number of reasons. Rice bran oil has 37 percent polyunsaturated and 45 percent monounsaturated fats, more or less a 1:1 ratio which is ideal. It is relatively cheaper and it can be produced right here in Bangladesh. The outer layer of the rice grain is called bran and the oil is extracted from this brown husk. But is there anything that makes rice bran oil stand out from the others? It is high in two unusual compounds called oryzanol and tocotrienols. Other oils do not have much of these two compounds. Oryzanol has been shown to block the absorption of cholesterol into the body.

Tocotrienols are a group of related fat-soluble compounds that are converted into vitamin which is a well-researched antioxidant for the heart. They are a form of vitamin that has not been as widely researched as the more well-known alpha-tocopherol form. This oil is stable and makes a good oil for pan frying. It has also a high smoke point so one can cook at higher temperatures. However, if the oil is not of good quality, it is not the ideal choice for cooking at high temperatures and it has been found that it tends to ruin the non-stick pans.

The health impact of cooking oils depend mostly on our overall diet and lifestyle. Even if you are using extra virgin oil or avocado oil, but leading an inactive lifestyle and eating a diet rich in carbohydrate (rice, bread etc.), sugar and packaged food, chances are that you have not done anything to improve your unhealthy lifestyle.

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The Daily Star congratulates the author for writing the "Have a Nice Day" column for 20 years.



/StarHealthBD

## HEALTH bulletin



## No value for routine vitamin D supplementation

Enthusiasm for recommending vitamin D supplementation to prevent a wide range of skeletal and extra-skeletal disorders was diminished considerably by three publications in 2018.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) updated previous guidelines addressing vitamin D supplementation. The Task Force found adequate evidence to recommend against vitamin D supplementation to prevent falls and found insufficient evidence to recommend supplementation to prevent fractures in men and premenopausal women.

For postmenopausal women, they recommend against low-dose supplementation, but evidence was insufficient to determine whether higher doses prevent fractures. The USPSTF emphasised that these recommendations apply only to community-dwelling older adults who are not known to have osteoporosis or vitamin D deficiency.

However, given widespread routine measurement of vitamin D levels by clinicians (a practice for which there is no supportive evidence currently) and over-the-counter availability of supplements, vitamin D use is unlikely to decline.

## Tips for a comfortable flight

STAR HEALTH DESK

Whether for business or pleasure, flying can be stressful. Making your flight on time, hoping you remembered to pack everything, changing time zones, long layovers, crowded airports and long security lines can all induce stress. Take note of these expert tips and you will step off the plane feeling relaxed and ready for whatever awaits you at your final destination.

- Wear comfortable clothes when you travel. Tight-fitting clothes may naturally cause some discomfort and it is advisable to wear loose-fitting clothes instead.

- Drink plenty of fluids, a lot of water, juices and soft drinks with no caffeine to keep hydrated during the flight. Too much caffeine beverages are not recommended. Alcohol is especially harmful to proper hydration. Instead, fruit juices of all kinds are excellent for your health and in-flight comfort. It also helps to moisten the face from time to time as cabin air tends to dry the skin.

- Eat lightly. If you want to reduce in-flight discomfort, we recommend that you try lighter meal options. If you have special requirements — vegetarian, diabetic or other, let the airline company know well in advance so they can meet your needs.

- Gentle, low impact exercises at least 5 minutes every hour is recommended. While seated stretch your legs, rotate your ankles and flex your feet to push blood toward the heart. Avoid crossing your legs at the ankles or knees.

Here are some simple exercises that you can perform on-board:

- **Ankle exercises:** Lift your feet off the floor and draw a circle with your toes moving one foot clockwise and the other foot in a counterclockwise motion. After a few repetitions, reverse the direction of each foot.

- **Foot exercises:** Keep both heels on the floor then point the feet upward as high as you can. Put your feet flat on the floor again and then point both feet up again, repeating the cycle a number of times.

- **Knee exercises:** Lift your leg with the knees bent while flexing your thigh muscles. Lift each leg alternately and repeat at least 20 times for each leg.

- **Arm exercises:** Hold out your right arm, elbows down, then lift up your hands to your chest, then back down again. Do the same with the left arm repeating the motion a number of times, as desired.

- **Overhead stretch:** Raise both hands high up over your head. Grab with one hand the wrist of the other hand and pull it gently to one side. Hold the position for 15 seconds and repeat with the other hand.



## Orion Pharma Scholarship for Medical Student

### ডাক্তারবিহীন একটি সুস্থ, সুন্দর এবং সাবলীল সমাজ কি চিন্তা করা যায় ?

ডাক্তার হওয়ার স্বপ্ন অনেকেরই, কিন্তু অনেক সময় শুধু আর্থিক সংকটের কারণে আজন্ম লালিত স্বপ্ন ম্লান হয়ে যায়। সেই সব স্বপ্নবান, সম্ভাবনাময় মেধাবী শিক্ষার্থীদের লক্ষ্য অর্জনের সহযোগিতার জন্য ওরিয়ন ফার্মা ওয়েলফেয়ার ট্রাস্টের সমন্বয়পযোগী উদ্যোগ “ওরিয়ন ফার্মা মেডিকেল স্কলারশীপ”।

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### প্রয়োজনীয় তথ্যাবলী

- ১) নিজ মেডিকেল কলেজের অধ্যক্ষের প্রত্যয়নপত্র, পূরণকৃত আবেদনপত্র, জাতীয় পরিচয় পত্র/ স্মার্ট কার্ড এর ফটোকপি
- ২) অভিভাবকের বাৎসরিক আয়ের সনদপত্র (ওয়ার্ড কমিশনার/ ইউপি চেয়ারম্যান/ নিয়োগদাতা প্রতিষ্ঠান কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত), ২ কপি পাসপোর্ট সাইজের সত্যায়িত ছবি
- ৩) সকল শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতার সনদপত্র এবং নম্বরপত্রের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি
- ৪) নিজ মেডিকেল কলেজ থেকে রেজিস্ট্রেশনের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি