

Diabetes caused 1.5 million fatalities worldwide

DR RAMISHA MALIHA

Diabetes is a long-term illness characterised by inadequate insulin synthesis or poor insulin administration. Insulin is a hormone that regulates blood sugar levels. Hyperglycaemia, or high blood sugar, is caused by uncontrolled diabetes, and it damages a variety of body systems, including neurons and blood vessels.

Type 2 diabetes, which primarily affects adults and arises when the body develops insulin resistance or does not produce enough, is the most prevalent. During the previous three decades, type 2 diabetes has become far more prevalent in countries of all income levels.

Type 1 diabetes, also known as juvenile diabetes or insulin-dependent diabetes, is a long-term condition in which the pancreas produces little or no insulin on its own. In 2014, 8.5% of individuals aged over 18 years had diabetes. Unfortunately, in 2019, diabetes caused 1.5 million fatalities worldwide, with 48% occurring before 70 . Therefore, proper interventions and strategies are imperative to curb the occurrence of such progressive metabolic disease.

World Diabetes Day is observed on November 14th to raise public awareness among the public regarding the disease. This year the theme for World



Diabetes Day is “Access to diabetes care”. Diabetes care is unavailable to millions of individuals throughout the world. Yet, to control their illness and minimise complications, people with diabetes need constant care and assistance. Besides, World Diabetes Day is an opportunity to rebuild awareness of diabetes as a worldwide public health concern and what can be done, both collectively and individually, to improve diabetes prevention, diagnosis, and management.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) and partners have taken advantage of the 100th anniversary of the discovery of insulin to highlight the enormous disparity between those who need insulin to control their diabetes and those who have access to essential technologies such as blood glucose meters and test strips. The campaign’s symbol is a blue circle established in 2007 when the United Nations passed a resolution on diabetes. The

blue circle represents diabetes awareness throughout the world. It represents the diabetic community’s worldwide solidarity amid the diabetic epidemic.

The following are essential components of diabetic care:

- **Access to insulin:** Unfortunately, millions of diabetes patients cannot obtain the insulin they require, although insulin was discovered 100 years ago.
- **Access to oral medications:** To cure their disease, many

patients need to take oral drugs. Unfortunately, they are still inaccessible or prohibitively expensive in many low- and middle-income countries.

- **Access to self-monitoring:** The monitoring of blood glucose levels is an essential aspect of diabetes management. Many patients are unable to get the required supplies and equipment.
- **Access to education and psychological support:** Diabetes patients need ongoing education and psychological support to manage their condition. However, many persons with diabetes, paradoxically, do not have access to diabetes education.
- **Access to healthy food and a safe place to exercise:** People with diabetes, or those at risk of getting it, need to consume nutritious foods and exercise in a secure setting. Both are essential aspects of diabetes treatment and prevention.

An early diagnosis is a foundation for living well with diabetes; the longer a person goes without being recognised and treated for diabetes, the worse their health outcomes are. Basic diagnostics, such as blood glucose tests should be easily accessible in primary care settings. Patients should require specialised evaluation or treatment for complications regularly.

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ADVICE

Avoid taking medicines unnecessarily

AMIT SARKER

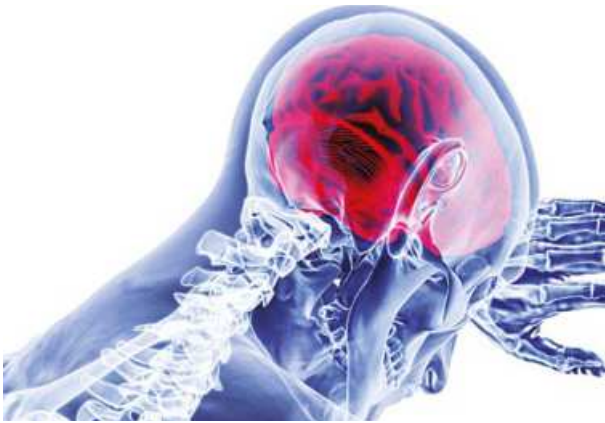
Lifestyle is considered a significant factor of health. An unhealthy lifestyle leads to several non-communicable diseases. If you successfully follow a healthy lifestyle, you might avoid, delay or reduce the need for medication.

- **Eat healthier foods:** Conscious eating increases the enjoyment of food. To stay physically, mentally, and emotionally fit, you need essential vitamins, nutrients, and minerals. For example, replace sweeteners with fresh fruit and vegetables.
- **Physical activity or exercise:** Exercise gives the physical and mental shape along with boosting your confidence. It can reduce the risk of developing diseases like type 2 diabetes, cancer and heart disease and cure mental illnesses like depression, anxiety. In addition, regular activity can improve your quality of life.
- **Quality sleep:** Sleep can help to protect your mental health, physical health and control emotion as well. Quality sleep will improve your memory, make you happier and help you to live longer. An average of eight hours of sleep is enough to stay fresh all day.
- **Love yourself:** Besides the biological events, life events such as trauma, loss of a loved one, a complex relationship, an early childhood experience, or any stressful situation may play roles in depression. However, by loving yourself, you can beat the depression.
- **Change your mind:** Involve yourself in learning a new hobby and playing brain games. A refreshed mind can help prevent dementia. Also, try to maintain a positive social circle.

You should follow the above tips to stay away from medicine. But, remember, you must get checked regularly for any potential problems. Regular check-ups can help find potential health issues before they become a problem.

The write-up is compiled by Amit Sarker, Department of Pharmacy, Primeasia University, Dhaka. E-mail: amit.pharmacy30@gmail.com

HEALTHbulletin



Does taking aspirin before a stroke actually help?

Despite changing recommendations, aspirin is widely used to prevent vascular events such as myocardial infarction and stroke. Studies showed that 15% to 40% of patients with ischemic stroke are already taking aspirin at the stroke time. During an observational study, the authors investigated functional outcome, thrombus burden, early neurologic deterioration (END), and hemorrhagic transformation in aspirin users versus nonusers. Thrombus burden was determined by the susceptibility vessel sign (SVS), and functional outcome was assessed at 3 months. Patients who received thrombolysis or thrombectomy were excluded.

Overall, 5,700 patients (mean age, 67 years; 41% women) were included in the multicenter registry, and 15.9% had documented aspirin use within the seven days before stroke. Because of imbalances between aspirin users and nonusers, the authors used propensity adjustment before analysis. Compared with nonuse, pre-stroke aspirin use was associated with a 30% smaller infarct volume and a 45% lower rate of atherosclerotic stroke.

In addition, aspirin users had an 85% lower occurrence of the SVS, indicating a smaller thrombus burden. Among those with cardioembolic stroke, aspirin users had a lower rate of END than nonusers. The favourable functional outcome was 30% more common in aspirin users than nonusers. Rates of haemorrhagic transformation did not differ between aspirin users and nonusers.

Air pollution: A silent killer of people and planet?

ANDREW SMITH

How people cook their food, how nations generate power directly impact the health of millions worldwide and planet Earth’s ability to support human life. For example, in Bangladesh alone, in-home polluted air from wood or coal-powered stoves and outdoor pollution from power stations and unplanned construction causes over 200,000 annual deaths from respiratory diseases.

Recently, Digital Hospital undertook a clinical study of its patients with Asthma and COPD, both of which are aggravated by air pollution. A Brahmanbaria housewife has had Asthma for a long time. She frequently uses a mud stove, which is a significant source of

indoor air pollution in Bangladesh. She consulted a doctor in 2018 and then again in 2021, this time from Digital Hospital.

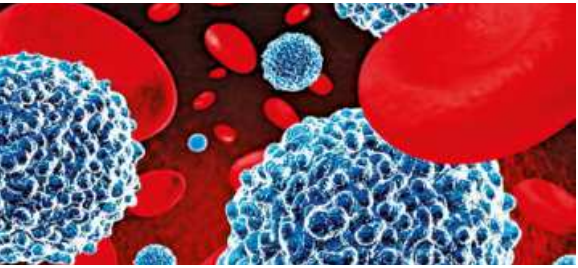
Her first severe asthma attack cost her approximately 5,000 Taka and disrupted her life since she could not adequately care for her children. Her kid also has asthma, which she and her family feel are related to indoor pollution. She said, “Asthma nearly destroyed my life, and now it affects my daughter. We breathe in dirty air all day.”

Bangladesh being a developing country, one of its biggest concerns currently is air pollution. As per the *World Air Quality Report*, it has repeatedly been listed as the country with the worst air quality . The report also states that with the

annual average particulate matter (PM) 2.5 concentrations of 77.1 micrograms per cubic meter, Dhaka ranks as one of the most polluted capital cities in the world.

Sadly, the lowest earners in the slums are the most harmed by pollution. Because they work in unsanitary and polluted environments without sufficient protective gear and fail to acquire timely healthcare services due to a lack of income and wealth, in addition, pollution-related health issues can develop gradually and become highly complex. Thus, early management from the government and volunteers can help reduce disease-related harm.

The writer is the Co-Founder of Digital Hospital.



Innovative cancer therapy shows early promise

DR SHRAVANA KUMAR CHINNIKATTI

Cancer treatment involves early awareness, early prevention, screening/early detection and early treatment. The bacterial defensive mechanism is a renewed interest in cell gene editing simplified by Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats (CRISPR) technology.

Now patients with cancers can be treated with new targetted drugs, CART (Chimeric antigen receptor T-cell) and CARNK (Chimeric antigen receptor natural killer) cell treatment for better results. These new treatments involve re-engineering of cancer and immune cells gene edition with molecular scissors. New and challenging to treat malignancies may now be efficiently managed and treated with few or no side effects with this innovative new treatment.

Recently published trials in The New England Journal of Medicine for refractory and relapsed cases of leukaemia and lymphomas treated with CARNK treatment responded well without the development of neurotoxicity, Graft-Versus-Host Disease (GVHD) and cytokine release syndrome.

Following completion of acceptable dosages of therapy, rapid responses were reported within 30 days. Initial data showed that 70% of patients were in complete remission. After a year, the gene-edited cells survived and grew without causing any adverse effects. Due to the simplistic nature of this treatment, our patients can be treated with a minimum duration of admission to avoid hospital-acquired infections.

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