WORLD HEALTH DAY 2022

Our planet, our health

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STAR HEALTH DESK

For decades, industrial evolution, an increase in the number of chronic diseases, and pandemics have been wreaking havoc on people's quality of life. The World Health Organisation (WHO) is drawing worldwide attention to these challenges in order to promote awareness. This year's World Health Day theme is Our Planet, Our Health.

This year marks the 72nd year of World Health Day. It is no secret that our world has altered dramatically in how it impacts our health. This year, we recognise not just the negative effects of unhealthy habits but also how our planet's health impacts ours.

WHO estimates that preventable environmental factors cause more than 13 million deaths worldwide each year. This includes the climate problem, the most dangerous to humanity's health. The climatic catastrophe is a health crisis as well.

What are the ways in which the Climate Crisis is also a Health Crisis:

Global warming: The steady rise in the planet's temperature has also been shown to harm human health. People from low-income families are disproportionately impacted because they lack the basic requirements to protect themselves from the scorching heat. In the worst-case scenario, exposure to this heat level may result in heatstroke and even death.

Depleting air quality: The air quality has deteriorated dramatically, and around 90% of the world's population is exposed to it. However, it is also to recognise that numerous factors contribute to the deterioration of air quality. To mention a few, increased automobile traffic, smoke from industry, and wildfires all contribute to air quality degradation.

Increase in wildfires: Wildfires have become more likely as the environment has heated up. Wildfires devastate not only the plants but also the wildlife. In addition, the air pollution caused by wildfires may cause respiratory difficulties in humans. The trauma of suffering wildfires or losing loved ones or things may also significantly impact people's mental health.

Industrial waste: Poorly dumped industrial waste contributes to land and water contamination. It harms people's health, and degrades soil quality and turns it barren over time.

Climate change has caused several illnesses and chronic diseases and exacerbated pre-existing conditions. Among them:

Waterborne diseases: Waterborne infections are caused by drinking dirty water. Another explanation might be toxic compounds like lead and mercury in the water bodies. This may induce typhoid, diarrhoea, hepatitis, liver damage, and cancer.

Cancer: Pollution has been linked to some cancers. A weakened immune system may worsen the disease and recovery of cancer patients.

Asthma: Researchers discovered that air pollution is a major cause of asthma. It causes asthma and makes it difficult for persons with asthma to operate normally. Inhaling polluted air is unpleasant in general, but for asthmatics, the swelling and tightness of the airways make it much more so.

Finally, we must make intentional efforts to prevent contact with these contaminants, reduce industrial pollution of the air, land, and water, and reduce waste and littering.

Antenatal care for a positive pregnancy experience

The World Health Organisation (WHO) guideline on regular antenatal care (ANC) offers worldwide, evidence-based guidelines. In line with a human rights-based perspective, the guide strives to reflect the complex nature of the concerns underlying ANC health care practices and delivery and promote person-centred health and well-being above mortality and morbidity prevention.

The guideline applies to all pregnant women, teenage girls, and unborn fetuses and infants who receive ANC in any hospital or community setting. Nutrition, maternal and fetal evaluation, preventive measures, therapies for common physiological complaints, and actions to increase prenatal care usage and quality of care are all included in this guideline.

However, one of the 49 suggestions included in the WHO guidelines on antenatal care for a pleasant pregnancy experience has just been modified. The suggestion was first generated utilising the established operating procedures for guideline creation specified in the WHO handbook.

In summary, the process included the following steps: (i) identification of priority questions and outcomes; (ii) retrieval of evidence; (iii) assessment and synthesis of evidence; (iv) formulation of recommendation; and (v) planning for implementation, dissemination, impact evaluation, and recommendation updating.

The Executive Guideline Steering Group (GSG) identified this recommendation as a high priority for updating in response to new evidence on this question. To get a full preview of the guideline, visit WHO website.

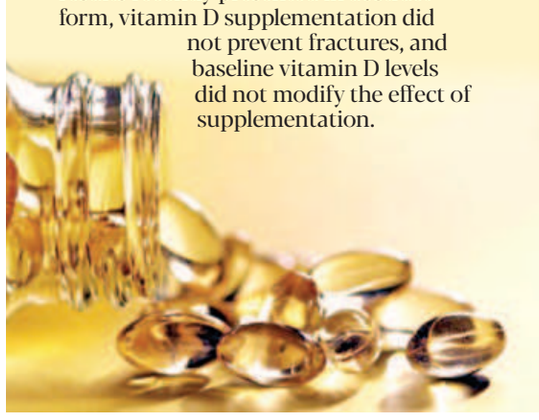
Source: **World Health Organisation**

Does routine vitamin D supplementation prevent fractures?

Researchers examined 32 previously published systematic reviews and meta-analyses of randomised trials to find an answer. Most meta-analyses found a slight but statistically significant absolute decrease in hip fractures or any fractures with vitamin D with calcium treatment, although this advantage was not shown in studies confined to community-dwelling persons.

Vitamin D supplementation alone did not reduce hip fractures or any other fractures in any population. One finding seems clearly apparent: Providing vitamin D to community-dwellers on a regular basis is unlikely to reduce fracture rates.

The VITAL trial is the latest randomised trial to test that hypothesis: 25,000 community-dwelling adults received 2,000 IU of vitamin D_3 or placebo for five years. According to results recently presented in abstract form, vitamin D supplementation did not prevent fractures, and baseline vitamin D levels did not modify the effect of supplementation.



Worst habits for belly fat

The worst fat is belly fat. Overeating may lead to heart disease and diabetes. Doctors think a larger waist indicates a shorter life. Following are the facts that contribute to belly fat:

Eating while distracted: Instead of browsing through your phone as you snack, focus on your food and taste it. Overeating is less probable if you eat mindfully.

Eating too fast: It takes roughly 20 minutes for your brain to get a full stomach signal. If you eat too rapidly, you will consume more than your body requires. Slow eaters consume fewer calories and lose weight.

Getting poor sleep: In one study, adults under 40 who slept less than 5 hours a night gained more belly fat. Conversely, sleeping more than 8 hours a night can have the same gut-expanding effect.

Eating late: Give your digestive system time to digest your food by eating earlier in the evening. The later you eat, the less time your body has to burn them.

Eating white bread: The refined grains in white bread and other processed meals are devoid of slow-digesting fibre, boosting blood sugar levels. This may cause weight gain.

Drinking diet soda: You may believe that substituting diet soda for regular would help you lose weight. But artificial sweeteners in diet drinks raise belly fat. Avoid soda and drink water instead.

Skipping meals: Obesity is 4 times more likely if you skip breakfast. Going without food slows your metabolism, making you more prone to overeating later when hungry.

Eating 'Low-Fat' or 'Fat-Free' food: It is beneficial to limit fat and sugar, yet meals low in fat and sugar are typically high in carbohydrates. High-carb meals may boost triglycerides, insulin sensitivity, and belly fat.

Smoking: Smoking is harmful to your health, but one of the side consequences is a bloated tummy. You store more fat in your stomach than in your hips and thighs as you light up.

Eating on a big plate: Put your food on a smaller plate and trick your brain into thinking you are eating more than you are.

Not moving enough: Fitness is the key to good health. Aim for 30 minutes of moderate activity every day to reduce your waistline.

Being stressed often: Stress releases a hormone called cortisol into your body. Higher cortisol levels can lead to weight gain.

Changing your diet may help you lose belly fat. Any excess calories might expand your waistline and cause belly fat.

Source: **WebMD**

Data favours a drug in better outcomes for most COVID-related symptoms

A study published data on the efficacy of molnupiravir in reducing the risk of progression of COVID-19 in non-hospitalised, unvaccinated patients at the highest risk of poor outcomes was published. All patients in phase 3 of the study were randomised and given molnupiravir or placebo within five days of symptom onset. The drug has been granted an emergency use authorisation by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

For most COVID-19 symptoms, sustained improvement was more likely in the molnupiravir than in the placebo group through Day 29; the observed benefit was greatest for loss of smell and fatigue. Similarly, symptom progression was less likely with molnupiravir.

When evaluating distinctive COVID-19 symptoms commonly associated with the disease, including shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, cough, fatigue (tiredness), loss of smell, and loss of taste, participants in the molnupiravir group were more likely to achieve sustained improvement by Day 3, Day 5 (end of treatment), and Day 10.

Source: **The Lancet**

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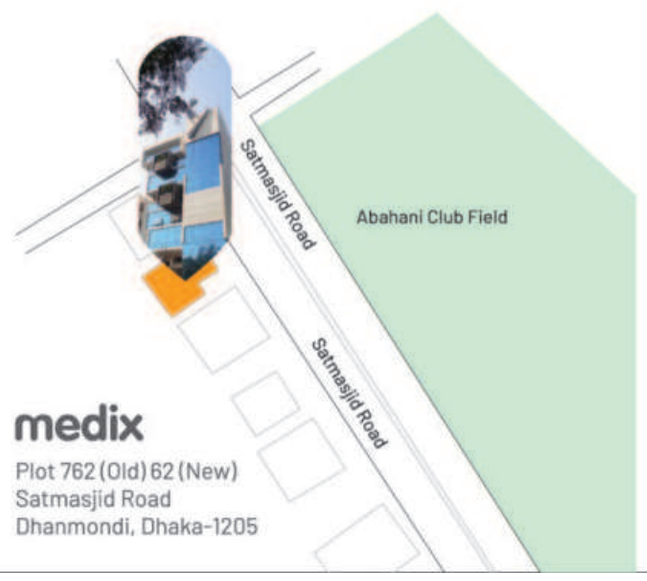

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