

## The impact of inflation on mental health

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In recent days, it has become impossible to look away from the fact that people from all walks of life are becoming increasingly wary of inflation. Inflation decreases our purchasing capabilities which lowers the standard of living within a short span of time, and according to psychologists, this creates chronic anxiety, exhaustion, and strained relationships. Inflation also creates a sense of deep insecurity among the masses because, it is very difficult to ascertain the point from which the economy will start to recover and how bad it will get before it even gets to that point.

Although, inflation hits everyone in different ways, researchers have established substantial connections between inflation and overall deterioration of a society's mental health. Inflation causes income inequality. A study published in the World Psychiatry journal has indicated that two-thirds of the world population were more likely to suffer from depression when income disparity increased. Another study from the same journal has shown that citizens from highly uneven countries are 1.2 times more likely to experience depression. Studies have also shown that unequal societies have higher rates of schizophrenia.

Inflation is a precursor to rising unemployment as well, and unemployment is the 8<sup>th</sup> most stressful situation a person can ever face according to Holmes and Rahe. Unemployed citizens are also 2.3 times more likely to face mental health problems compared to employed people. Inflation is also one of the root causes of underpayment, which is heavily linked with exasperation, dissatisfaction, and bitterness. Inflation makes it harder to afford basic needs too and researchers from Canada has shown that persons with unmet basic needs have 16% lower mental health score than the average.

No matter who we blame for this predicament, there is no denying that inflation is here to stay, and it is going to get much worse before it gets better. Therefore, we must brace ourselves for a potential mental health crisis. The adult members of our society are particularly at the greatest risk because, the population aged between 18 to 44 are most likely to face mental health issues due to inflation.

We must remember that inflation is no different from a catastrophe and during catastrophes, it is our responsibility as human beings to help the ones who are in less favourable situations than us. After all, it is all for one and one for all.

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# The high cost of physical inactivity

Almost 500 million people will develop heart disease, obesity, diabetes or other noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) attributable to physical inactivity, between 2020 and 2030, costing US\$ 27 billion annually, if governments don't take urgent action to encourage more physical activity among their populations.

### STAR HEALTH REPORT

The Global status report on physical activity 2022, published recently by the World Health Organisation (WHO), measures the extent to which governments are implementing recommendations to increase physical activity across all ages and abilities.

Data from 194 countries show that overall, progress is slow and that countries need to accelerate the development and implementation of policies to increase levels of physical activity and thereby prevent disease and reduce burden on already overwhelmed health care systems.

- Less than 50% of countries have a national physical activity policy, of which less than 40% are operational
- Only 30% of countries have national physical activity guidelines for all age groups
- While nearly all countries report a system for monitoring physical activity in adults, 75% of countries monitor physical activity among adolescents, and less than 30% monitor physical activity in children under 5 years

- In policy areas that could encourage active and sustainable transport, only just over 40% of countries have road design standards that make walking and cycling safer.

The economic burden of physical inactivity is significant and the cost of treating new cases of preventable non-communicable diseases (NCDs) will reach nearly US\$ 300 billion by 2030, around US\$ 27 billion annually.

Whilst national policies to tackle NCDs and physical inactivity have increased in recent years, currently 28% of policies are reported to be not

funded or implemented. Considered a "best buy" for motivating populations to combat NCDs, the report showed that only just over 50% of countries ran a national communications campaign, or organised mass participation physical activity events in the last two years.

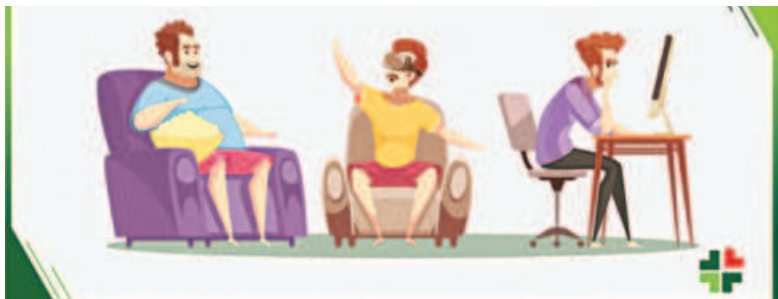
The COVID-19 pandemic has not only stalled these initiatives, but it also affected other policy implementation which has widened inequities in access to and, opportunities for, engaging in physical activity for many communities.

To help countries increase physical activity, WHO's Global action plan on

physical activity 2018-2030 (GAPPA) sets out 20 policy recommendations – including policies to create safer roads to encourage more active transport, provide more programmes and opportunities for physical activity in key settings, such as childcare, schools, primary health care and the workplace. Today's Global Status report assesses country progress against those recommendations, and shows that much more needs to be done.

One critical finding in the Global status report on physical activity is the existence of significant gaps in global data to track progress on important policy actions – such as provision of public open space, provision of walking and cycling infrastructure, provision of sport and physical education in schools. The report also calls for weaknesses in some existing data to also be addressed.

"We are missing globally approved indicators to measure access to parks, cycle lanes, foot paths – even though we know that data do exist in some countries. Consequently, we cannot report or track the global provision of infrastructure that will facilitate increases in physical activity," said Fiona Bull, Head of WHO Physical Activity



Unit. "It can be a vicious circle, no indicator and no data leads to no tracking and no accountability, and then too often, to no policy and no investment. What gets measured gets done, and we have some way to go to comprehensively and robustly track national actions on physical activity."

The report calls for countries to prioritise physical activity as key to improving health and tackling NCDs, integrate physical activity into all relevant policies, and develop tools, guidance and training to improve implementation.



## HAVE A NICE DAY Painful truth about the rat race

DR RUBAIUL MURSHED



Once a wise person said, "The problem with the Rat Race is that even if you win, you are still a rat." Rat race is a pain for today's lifestyle. It is usually defined as 'a way of life in which people are caught up in a fiercely competitive struggle for wealth and/or power'.

I found the proverbial term 'rat race' more applicable in urban culture and in well-off societies. It is an endless chase – often quite tiring; mainly to have more financial gains or possessions. However, these gains never feel satisfactory enough and eventually invites unhappiness full of unseen stress and unnoticed jealousy. Eventually it changes one's psychological behaviour and social well-being. It targets our mindset and activity especially from adolescence.

WHO says that an estimate of 10%-20% of adolescents experienced mental health conditions, yet these remain undertreated. Our mental health is getting worse with the 'rat race'. Although wellbeing has now become one's ultimate goal; but, we are running and running; do not know where to stop? We do not know what is enough? We are overusing our brain capacity at the cost of mental illness. But who cares? We are just rats. Our unawareness and cold-heartedness play a vital role in promoting illnesses to get worse in addition to common factors of mental health like anxiety, depression to sleepless nights problems. Some have even major drawbacks that can cause self-harm and threat to life.

Although some of us with 'strong minds' think of themselves as very much 'independent', but beneath our awareness, our brain is constantly picking up on signs and signals from the people around us to inform our behaviour. And the consequences can be serious. Our health and wellbeing choices are constantly influenced by our companions, both consciously or unconsciously.

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## Your skin savior hyaluronic acid serum

DR TAUHIDA RAHMAN EREEN

Today we would like to discuss a prime ingredient in skin care regimen. Any guess...? Yes, it is full of goodness, fan-favorite hyaluronic acid serum. There are many queries regarding serum, like what is serum, how to use, what does it do. We all know more or less about skin care rituals moisturising, cleansing, and protecting.

These days, magical hyaluronic acid is dermatologists' one of the most treasured skin care ingredient. By using hydrolysed hyaluronic acid infused serum, you introduce more hydration to your skin. Hyaluronic acid is a supercharged water magnet. Hyaluronic Acid holds 1,000 times its weight in water.

The serum is available pumped or dropper. 2/3 drops or a pea-sized amount of serum is enough for the whole face as it is the high concentration of active ingredient. Apply daily as moisturiser day and night to face and neck on a



cleansed and dry skin or whenever you like.

This humble hydrator is easy to incorporate into a simple skincare routine. Due to its small molecular size and weight, this serum can be easily absorbed by skin cells and prepares your face for next step.

Water based serum unclogs pore, act as a pore minimiser, isn't that wonderful? Revitalising hyaluronic acid serum helps your skin achieve a youthful appearance, reducing the appearance of aging sign. Multifunctional hyaluronic

acid serum improves skin tone, texture and repairs skin barrier. It provides regenerating, tightening, protecting, glowing properties that everyone admires. Its antioxidants effects stimulate to fade hyperpigmentation and dark spot.

Hydrolysed hyaluronic acid serum is designed for all skin type for its non-irritating nature. The best hyaluronic acid serum is fragrance free, paraben free, dye free, very watery and dermatologist tested.

## Cardiovascular disease after COVID-19

There is mounting evidence suggesting that an infection with SARS-CoV-2 can increase cardiovascular risk (NEJM JW Gen Med May 1 2022 and Nat Med 2022; 28:583).

Investigators leveraged the large UK Biobank cohort to examine the association of SARS-CoV-2 infection with incident cardiovascular events among almost 18,000 participants between March 2020 and 2021.

The investigators identified people with a SARS-CoV-2 infection and matched each one with two uninfected controls using a propensity model that included age, sex, material deprivation, body mass index, ethnicity, diabetes, prevalent ischemic heart disease, smoking, hypertension, and high cholesterol.

During a mean follow-up of



approximately 5 months, compared with matched controls, participants who were not hospitalized (~14,300) had increased risks for incident venous thromboembolism (hazard ratio, 3) and all-cause death (HR, 10), and those who were hospitalized with a primary diagnosis of COVID-19 (~2700) had increased risks for venous thromboembolism

(HR, 28); myocardial infarction (HR, 10); stroke (HR, 18); atrial fibrillation (HR, 15); heart failure (22); pericarditis (HR, 14); all-cause death (HR, 118); cardiovascular death (HR, 9), and ischemic heart disease death (HR, 14). The risks were highest in the first 30 days after COVID-19 diagnosis but remained high throughout follow-up for many of the outcomes.

The COVID-19 pandemic may have long-term effects on cardiovascular risk, heightening the importance of addressing modifiable risk factors. We are at risk of losing many of the gains we have made against cardiovascular disease. Whether vaccination modifies this association is not yet known. Cardiovascular risk algorithms may need to be recalibrated in this new age.



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