

Covid pandemic leads to rise in diabetes, BP, asthma patients in India

As we emerge from the shadow of COVID, it is imperative to bring the focus back on the pandemic of non-communicable diseases like diabetes, hypertension and heart disease, asthma and obesity.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Non communicable diseases (NCDs) kill 6 million people every year
- 23 per cent of people dying of NCDs are between 30-70 years of age
- Diabetes, BP, cardiovascular diseases attack people who are physically inactive

The prevalence and distribution of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, hypertension and heart disease, asthma, and obesity is significantly on the rise across the country after the two years of Covid-19 pandemic, according to a report, ahead of the World Health Day.

World Health Day is a global health awareness day celebrated every year on April 7.

The Health of the Nation 2022 report, by Apollo Hospitals, indicated a national prevalence for diabetes mellitus of around 7 per cent, over 8 per cent for hypertension, and around 2 per cent for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (COPD) and asthma.

NCDs pose devastating health consequences for individuals, families, and communities with socioeconomic costs that can derail India's achieving the target of reducing premature mortality from NCDs by one-third by 2030 in line with the United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In India, NCDs kill 6 million people every year of which around 23 per cent are between 30-70 years of age.

"As we emerge from the shadow of Covid, it is imperative to bring the focus back on the pandemic of NCDs, a focus that faced a disruption impacting diagnosis and treatment for millions of patients," said Dr Prathap C. Reddy, Chairman, Apollo Hospitals Group, in a statement.

"For a developing country like India, NCDs are a critical matter that need to be addressed. Considering our population of 1.2 billion, these are huge numbers that will increase the burden of disease and impact productivity and economic growth," he added.

He suggested addressing the NCD challenge through promotion of healthy lifestyles, early diagnosis and management.

The increasing risk of NCDs such as diabetes, BP, and cardiovascular diseases in India are majorly the result of physical inactiveness clubbed with genetic factors, revealed a report by Indus Health Plus. Regular preventive screening and a healthy lifestyle with physical activities may help curb the NCDs in the country.

According to Dr Tilak Suvarna, senior interventional cardiologist, Asian Heart Institute, Mumbai, correcting six lifestyle choices such as unhealthy snacking habits, excessive salt consumption, lack of physical activity, overindulging in alcohol, smoking and chewing tobacco, and excessive stress can help people live with not only a healthy heart but overall fitness and well being.