

# **Non Communicable Diseases**

# Why in news?

A recent study published stated that the prevalence and morbidity of NCD in India has been increasing in the past decade.

# What is non-communicable disease (NCD)?

- Non-communicable disease (NCD) are chronic diseases that are not caused by infectious agents and *doesn't spread from person to person*.
- These diseases are long-lasting, progress slowly and often require prolonged treatment.
- Global concern They are a major cause of death and disability worldwide, accounting for approximately 74% of all deaths globally.
- It results in <u>86% premature deaths</u> (died before reaching 70 years of age) in low- and middle-income countries.
- <u>Low middle income countries contributes 77%</u> of all NCD cases.

## Status of NCDs in India

- NCD prevalence *has tripled since 1995*, with increasing burden in both urban and rural areas
- **Rising Burden** NCDs account for over 60% of deaths in India.
- **Common NCDs** Hypertension, diabetes and cancer are leading contributors.
- **Premature Deaths** About 55% of NCD deaths occur before the age of 70, disproportionately affecting working-age populations.
- **Regional Disparities** Higher prevalence in urban areas, but rural regions are increasingly affected.
- Kerala has reported the highest prevalence of non-communicable diseases of 177 per thousand individuals followed by Pondicherry, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Tamil Nadu and Punjab.
- The north-eastern States have reported the lowest prevalence of non-communicable diseases.
- According to WHO's report, deaths caused by NCDs in India are:
  - Cardio vascular 22.66 lakhs.
  - Chronic respiratory diseases 11.46 lakhs.
  - Cancer 9.20 lakhs.
  - Diabetes 3.49 lakhs.

#### What are the Risk factors for NCDS?

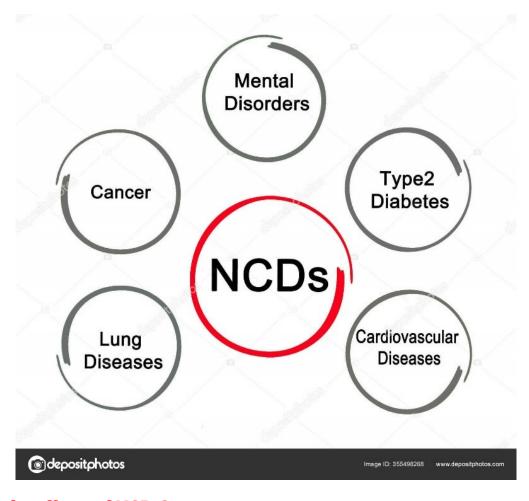
- A risk factor is a condition that increases the possibility of developing a noncommunicable disease. The more risk factors one has, the greater the chance of getting a particular disease.
- Lifestyle choices Poor diet, lack of physical activity and tobacco or alcohol use.

- The Lancet Global Health found that nearly 50% Indian adults insufficiently physically active.
- **Genetic factors** Family history or genetic predisposition to certain diseases.
- **Environmental factors** Exposure to pollution, unsafe drinking water and workplace hazards.
- Ageing Increased risk due to natural wear and tear of body systems over time.
- **Environmental factors** Air pollution is the major contributor to NCDs that accounts for 5.7 million deaths globally.

#### Risk factors of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) Factors of self-Factors of medical conditions · Family diseases • Age · Tobacco use · Medications Air pollution history · Alcohol use Gender · Weather changes · Blood pressure · Genetic · Physical activity • Sunlight (UV · Race · Lipids inheritance radiation) · Ethnicity · Person's weight Glucose · Epigenetic • Education · Food choice Viruses · Dental health care • Income · Obesity · Environment Stress exposure-based (e. g. radiation) toxic materialbased mutations

# What are the types of non-communicable diseases?

- Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) Includes heart attacks, strokes and hypertension.
- **Cancer** Is an uncontrolled cell growth in specific tissues or organs contributing 9.3 million cases annually.
- **Chronic respiratory diseases** Examples include asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- Diabetes (type-2) A metabolic disorder resulting in high blood sugar levels.
- Mental health disorders Conditions such as depression and anxiety, increasingly recognized as NCDs.



#### What are the effects of NCDs?

- **Increased health burden** Urban communities face a <u>triple health burden</u> during health crises due to hazardous work environments, limited healthcare access, and financial vulnerability.
- **Financial instability** Catastrophic out-of-pocket on healthcare expenditures jeopardize family livelihoods and financial stability.
- Marginalized communities often lack health insurance, compounding financial stress.
- Impact on Vulnerable Populations Informal workers, including sanitation workers, gig workers and migrants are disproportionately affected due to lack of hygiene, nutrition and contract protections.
- Social and economic marginalization of these vulnerable people exacerbates the impact on health outcomes.
- **Generational health impacts** Limited access to preventive care contributes to worsening health conditions in marginalized families often persist across generations, creating a cycle of vulnerability.
- **Inaccessible health care** Public health systems, designed to support the lowest 40% of the population, are often inaccessible to urban marginal.
- Growing NCD cases causes overburden on health systems that inturn fail to cater effectively.
- **Widening inequality** Slum-dwelling populations and other marginalized groups face unequal access to health care highlights systemic issues in urban planning and governance.
- Economic productivity loss Illnesses like diabetes and cardiovascular diseases

reduce workforce efficiency and productivity.

• Untreated or poorly managed NCDs contribute to absenteeism and long-term incapacity among urban workers.

## **Government Measures in India**

- National Programme for Prevention and Control of NCDs (NP-NCD) Focuses on awareness, prevention, and affordable treatment.
- **Ayushman Bharat** Provides financial support to following initiatives under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY).
- Setting up of <u>State Cancer Institutes (SCI)</u> and <u>Tertiary Care Centers (TCCC)</u> in different parts of the country to strengthen cancer facilities scheme.
- PM Swasthya Suraksha Yojana To setup oncology department in in news AIMS and upgrade the others.
- Health and Wellness Centers (HWCs) To offer screening and management of common NCDs.
- **Tobacco control initiatives** Campaigns like the National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) and increased taxes on tobacco products to curb tobacco product.
- Fit India Movement Promotes physical activity and healthy lifestyles.
- **POSHAN Abhiyaan** To combat malnutrition and promote healthy eating habits.
- **Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme** Which offers regular health check-ups and digital data collection.
- Mobile Medical Units (MMUs) & Telemedicine are implemented with National Health Mission support to improve healthcare access particularly in rural areas.

#### What are the measures to address NCD?

- **Strengthen primary health care** Improve access to publicly run primary health care, especially for urban marginalized communities.
- Leverage technology Implement real-time health monitoring using digital tools for conditions like hypertension and diabetes.
- Use screening for population-level evidence and individual awareness.
- **Promote community-based solutions** Create health awareness and education among public to coordinate and work in communities with ASHA workers.
- Develop community-led NCD surveillance systems for marginalized urban settlements.

ASHAs are trained to work as an interface between the community and the public health system.

- **Engage all stake holders** Engage employers, municipalities, traffic systems, schools and health systems in dialogue to address interconnected health determinants.
- Create solutions for healthy cities through collaboration with urban local bodies and experts.
- Improve Primary Health Centers In rural areas by increased participation and enhanced accountability for provision of better facilities to the patients in the public health facilities.
- Address Social Determinants of Health Tackle issues related to workplace safety, housing, family connections, and community health infrastructure.
- Recognize that health outcomes are deeply tied to social identities, employment and

migration status.

- **Policy-level interventions** Scale up state-level action plans for better access to primary health care.
- Emphasize preventive measures to avoid catastrophic out-of-pocket (OOP) healthcare expenses.

## **References**

- 1. The Hindu |India's and its Non-Communicable Disease Burden
- 2. The Hindu | Prevalence Of NCDS Tripled
- 3. WHO | Non Communicable Diseases

