

Editorial

Lifestyle Medicine: Need of the Hour to Combat the Epidemic of Noncommunicable Diseases

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Lifestyle medicine is an evidence-based medical field that employs dietary modifications, routine physical activity, stress management, management of sleep disorders, avoidance of drug abuse, etc. so that we can prevent, cure and also reverse chronic non-communicable illnesses. It is one of the fastest-growing fields in health and medicine around the globe.¹ It can also be defined as the adoption of practices by individuals and families to have better health and quality of life.² Unhealthy lifestyle choices are a major contributor to the global burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), accounting for roughly 63% of all deaths worldwide.³

Lifestyle linked ailments are defined as illnesses whose pathophysiology is predisposed greatly by lifestyle variables and where a modification in these risk factors can lead to disease prevention and non-progression to complications. Average BMIs have increased by 2 to 2.5 kg/m² per decade on average, and are currently 30 kg/m² or more in several nations.⁴ Because of economic expansion, digitisation, and urbanisation, physical activity has declined dramatically during the last century. In much of the modern industrialised world, more than 70% of individuals do not engage in sufficient amounts of health-promoting physical activity.⁵

Clinical medicine, psychology, community medicine, and environmental science are all part of lifestyle medicine. Thus, lifestyle medicine is a field that combines the better elements of community medicine and traditional medical care. Concentrating on lifestyle variables provides the possibility of reducing the financial load of NCDs on healthcare along with improving individual quality of life and lifespan. Comprehensive lifestyle modifications, in addition to chronic illness prevention, can reverse disease development.⁶

Lifestyle medicine therapies include assessing the level of health, advocacy communication and social mobilisation, and clinical implementation of modifications in lifestyle. Lifestyle medicine is commonly recommended in conjunction with medication and other methods of remedy. Irrespective of the target behaviour, such as quitting the habit of smoking, reducing liquor consumption, increasing fruit and vegetable consumption, increasing physical activity, or losing

weight, the ability of a provider to implement and sustain behaviour change in patients is critical in the practice of lifestyle medicine.³

A large body of evidence suggests that leading a low-risk lifestyle and maintaining optimal cardiovascular health measures are linked to low morbidity and mortality due to NCDs. However, there is evidence that only a small percentage of the population follows a healthy lifestyle. Lifestyle medicine represents a novel and interesting way of addressing the prevention and management of non-communicable diseases, the most vital and widespread reason of increasing morbidity and consequently deaths globally.

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