

Lifestyle change in NCD

There are 6 main aspects to the lifestyle advice we should give:

- 1) Stopping smoking
- 2) Dietary advice
- 3) Reducing alcohol consumption
- 4) Weight control
- 5) Regular physical exercise
- 6) Daily routine
- 7) Be prepared
- 8) Follow up appointments

1) **Stopping smoking**

- This is the single lifestyle change that will make by far the greatest difference to a patient's future risk of disease.
- All patients with NCD should be strongly advised to stop smoking.\

2) **Dietary advice**

A. Salt restriction in hypertension

- Avoid salty foods (fish paste, dried fish)
- Avoid processed foods (instant soups and noodles)
- Don't add salt in cooking or put extra salt on food
- Eat more fresh fruit and vegetables, pulses, beans, grains, and nuts.
- Eat less red meat and animal fats
- To increase potassium intake, eat more bananas, white mushrooms, spinach, white beans, avocado

B. Glucose restriction in diabetes

- Advise to avoid sugar, honey, sweets, cakes, ice-cream, soda and fried snacks.
- eat healthy and regular meals-
3 healthy eating plates per day, consisting of
 - ½ vegetables/ fruit

- ¼ protein
- ¼ carbohydrate
- 2 fruit/vegetable snacks per day
- **Advise to eat** fish, low-fat meat, vegetables, fibre-rich meals, and vegetable oil instead of butter

3) Reducing alcohol consumption

- Less than 14 units a week (2 shots a day) for men
- Less than 7 units a week (1 shot a day) for women
- Avoid binge drinking

4) Weight control

- BMI should be within the healthy range of 20-25 kg/m²
- If BMI is over 30, specific dietary advice should be given to attempt to reduce this

5) Regular physical exercise

- Has been shown to have a significant effect on reducing BP.
- Helps lower blood sugar levels and improves how your body uses insulin
- At least 30 minutes of moderately dynamic exercise (e.g., fast walking) on 5-7 days per week

6) Daily routine:

- Patients need to get into a daily routine of taking their medication and checking their feet.
- This will take time, but once it becomes a habit, patients will find their diabetes much easier to manage.

7) Be prepared:

- To prevent hypoglycemia, patients taking a sulphonylurea or insulin should always carry a sugary snack or drink (e.g., five candies; a small can of Coke).

8) Follow-up appointments:

- Patients need to understand the importance of the follow-up visits and attend them regularly.

Remember,

- this is a large amount of information for a patient to take in on their initial visit;
- try to share this information progressively over several visits to avoid overwhelming the patient.
- Reassure the patient that it will take time for them to get used to their diagnosis and taking their medication, but that they are able to come back to the clinic if they have any further questions or concerns or forget anything.
- Having a family member or friend present during the patient education can be very beneficial.