

## Lifestyle Problems – Common Causes, Diseases and How to Overcome the Problem

Deblina Biswas Diseases

To most of us, fitness means a sweaty session at the gym, at the park or at home. As long as that is done, we feel relaxed that we are done for the day. But are we? [The rising levels of chronic diseases](#) in the country have a completely different tale to tell! Yes, the facts are out and the results are telling enough to make your brow permanently creased.



A study made by a reputed newspaper has stated that for each hour a day that an adult spends on the couch, they narrow down their life span and increase the incidences of heart disease by 14%.

That is why young, so-called active professionals are combating heart diseases as early as in their thirties. "Sitting is the new smoking." This is the adage doing the rounds now, and we are rather helpless as our work demands that we complete our jobs at the right time and our health says we need to take a break and go for a walk! WHO quotes rather ominously that inactivity is the fourth biggest killer amongst adults.

There have been enough studies to prove that inactivity can give rise to a number of diseases like, cancer, heart disease, chronic fatigue syndrome, blood pressure and so on.

# The Numerous Diseases Afflicting Young Indians

Lifestyle diseases are now on the rise, and they are at an all-time high; with India now being hailed as the diabetes capital of the world. These facts simply reiterate how lifestyle diseases are on the rise.

A 2008 report, prepared by the World Health Organization and also the World Economic Forum had claimed that the increasing number of diseases afflicting Indians are largely due to a sedentary lifestyle and poor eating habits.



Another survey done in 2009, conducted by The Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ASSOCHAM) projected that more than half of the women population ranging from 21-52 years are getting affected by lifestyle ailments such as obesity, chronic backache, diabetes, and hypertension, in their lifetime.

## What are Lifestyle Diseases and what are their Causes?

Lifestyle diseases are an oft bandied word nowadays, but what does the term imply? Lifestyle diseases are a result of the lifestyles being led by people. So what are the causes of the sudden rise in [lifestyle diseases](#)? A little peek into our lives will answer the pertinent question.

### 1. Eating Habits

The increasing tendencies of eating processed junk food kind of lead us into a vortex of deadly diseases, which includes diseases like cancer, heart disease, diabetes and so on.

Poor eating habits spell disaster for our health! Poor eating habits mean choosing processed food over wholesome unprocessed foods. With increasing stress at work, we kind of take the convenient route out, banking on takeaways and foods which are high in saturated fats, also loaded with high sugar, salt, additives, and preservatives.



Also, what is really ironic is that the healthy food in our country, namely organic fresh produce like fruits, vegetables and cereals are priced higher than the inorganic processed food stuffs. So, now we are forced to choose unhealthy foods, as it is more convenient. So when you are back from your office, ordering a burger or a pizza seems more enticing than cooking a wholesome meal!

## 2. Lack of physical activity

When a baby is born, have you noticed how sprightly and energetic the baby is? How the baby is trying his/her best to move, but as soon as he/she grows up the same person would prefer spending time on the couch with their innumerable gadgets. It is true that the more convenient our lives have become, the more we are hurtling towards obesity and a host of chronic diseases.

Most of our jobs require little or no physical activity and most of the time we spend our time before our computers typing away furiously, hardly caring what impact it will have on our health! Cars, washing machines, dishwashers have ensured that we spend less time doing our work physically. Our physical exercises are limited to that stipulated time we spend exercising, if at all!

Additionally, commuting by walking seems to be unheard of. We'd rather zoom in our fast cars than walk down to the supermarket. Needless, to say it is making us very very sick.

## 3. Poor sleep

A few days back we were stunned to hear the death of a young successful entrepreneur who died of a heart attack! He ate healthily, exercised a little more than two hours most days of the week! So what went wrong? The simple reason that he did not give sleep the importance it deserved!



He managed a meager four hours of sleep, whereas you need to sleep for at least 8-9 hours every night. The quantity and quality of sleep impacts both your physical and mental health. It affects the metabolic, neurological and endocrine health, and once you start skimping on your sleep, you end up with diseases like obesity, hypertension, digestive health, stomach disorders, extreme tiredness, heart ailments and so on.

Poor sleep habits can cause irritability and affect your mood adversely, which in turn may affect your work and family life. So, the equation is rather simple; if you want to stay healthy, don't sacrifice your sleep.

#### 4. Smoking

Despite the statutory warning on the cigarette smoking case or before the screening of a film in the cinema hall, there are still too many people smoking and digging their own grave. Smoking poses a huge health risk to people, yet people do not think it is necessary to kick the butt. Smoking leads to different kinds of respiratory problems, cancers like lung and oral cancers, cardiovascular diseases, strokes and so on.

There are too many diseases linked to smoking. To ignore it would mean that most of the diseases lead to fatal consequences. If this is not a warning, we really don't know what is!

#### 5. Consumption of alcohol

Consumption of alcohol is now considered a part and parcel of modern lifestyle. While moderate drinking does not pose much of a problem, it is binge drinking which leads to a host of diseases.



Excessive consumption of alcohol can raise your bad cholesterol, lead to diabetes, several kinds of cancers like colorectal cancer and [breast cancer](#), as well as liver cirrhosis and so on. If you cannot control your alcohol consumption, then it is best that you steer clear of it.

## 6. Stress

Stress is said to cause a number of lifestyle diseases. Unfortunately, however much we try, we are not able to eliminate stress completely from our lives. A stressful job at the office, a competitive job scenario which affects our family lives in the process, are all leading [causes of stress](#).

Sometimes stress rears its ugly head in a way that we are left reeling under its influence. The emotional repercussions have a far-reaching impact, sometimes it forces you to be a recluse, shunning human company, and you feel depressed that you are not able to measure up to the standards set up by your immediate rivals.

The more frustrated you are, the more likely you are to slip into severe depression. Sometimes the sky-high expectations do unmitigated damage to our mental health. Chronic depression can lead to problems like obesity, which leads to more diseases.

## 10 Common Lifestyle Diseases in Indians

Going by the number of lifestyle diseases affecting Indians, it makes sense that we should be wary of the host of diseases that can affect us sometime in our lives. The top ten lifestyle diseases affecting Indians are the following,

- **Type 2 diabetes:** As we have already mentioned, India is the diabetes capital of the world, it has about 50 million people suffering from Type 2



- **Arteriosclerosis:** When fatty plaques are deposited on the arterial walls, it results in a condition called arteriosclerosis. It causes blood circulation disorders, chest pain, strokes and so on.
- **Hypertension:** Too many people are suffering from hypertension to give it a royal ignore. The rise of obesity has also led to the rising population of people with elevated levels of blood pressure.
- **Heart disease:** Unfortunately, the scenario is not too good when it comes to heart disease either. A whopping 50 million of people in India suffer from heart disease.
- **Swimmer's ear:** A strange condition where people become hard of hearing due to inflammation, infection of the outer ear. Noise pollution seems to be the cause of this condition.
- **Cancer:** There have been escalating cases of people getting affected by cancer in India, because of increasing pollution levels, pesticide laden foods, and lifestyle problems.
- **Stroke:** Besides the older generation, the relatively younger generation are also suffering from sudden stroke. In India, almost 10-15% of strokes affect the younger brigade, and people below forty, suggesting that there is something very wrong with our lifestyle.
- **Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD):** A disease which affects the lungs, it leads to more fatal conditions. Smoking and pollution are the chief causes of this deadly disease.



- **Liver Cirrhosis:** In this disease, the liver is severely affected. Severe alcohol consumption is said to cause this disease.
- **Nephritis:** Inflammation of the kidneys is called nephritis. Nephritis has been affecting more and more people as we go.

## 9 Lifestyle Changes to Combat Diseases

These kinds of statistics do ring an alarm bell in our minds. It is time we did something about it and prevent the diseases before it becomes too late. Tell me which one you would prefer: lazing on your couch, gorging and ending up with a lifestyle disease; or leading a healthy lifestyle and going on to live for a long time to come? The choice shouldn't be too difficult for you, right? Here are some of the things which you must immediately start following.

### 1. Sleep on time

While everyone would think eating right should rank the highest, we think you should get your sleeping cycle right first. If you sleep on time, you will wake up fresh, workout next and then break your fast with a nutritious breakfast. So you get the point? It all begins with good sleeping habits.

Also, don't forget that to improve your sleep habits, you need to stop spending time with your gadgets at least an hour before you hit the snooze button. The light from your gadgets hinders the secretion of melatonin, a hormone which has a positive effect on your sleep cycle.

### 2. Eat healthy

Eat fresh produce like vegetables, fruits, cereals, meat and stop eating processed junk. Good food habit begins from your kitchen, so try and cook your food. Our grandmother's secret to a long healthy disease-free life has been wholesome, home-cooked foods, so it is time we went back to our roots.



Also, healthy cooking is not boring, look for interesting recipes on the internet and magazines, and you will be surprised at the sheer variety of healthy food recipes available. Eating in moderation is another point you should adhere by. We, Indians eat way too much food. Portion control is the first thing we should try, chewing our food for good twenty-five times.

Yes, that many times, as it takes twenty minutes for your brain to get the signal that you are full. So, eat slow, savor each morsel and you will be surprised that you are satiated with a very small amount. So, remember, chew and savor, and you will feel a lot lighter.

### 3. Take care of your gut health

A healthy gut would mean no [digestive problems](#), and when you digest your food well, you will have less number of health problems. Make probiotics a part of your dietary regime, in the form of fermented foods like yogurt, kefir and so on. A healthy gut means a healthy you.

### 4. Exercise





A thirty-minute or a forty-minute workout won't suffice to keep diseases at bay, it definitely counts, but it is not enough, remain active throughout the day. Start following the 10 thousand steps a day route. Get a fitness tracker to track your steps, this is the easiest way to track your activity levels, and if you want to do this, try walking to nearby places. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. These small steps matter a great deal.

Whatever exercises you do, yoga, Pilates, Zumba, boot camp; keep it regular. All those happy hormones are great ways of keeping your weight under control and stress at a safe distance away from you.

## 5. Get regular health check-ups

Regular health check-ups can help you catch the disease right at its onset. Diseases like cancer show better prognosis if caught at the early stages. Be mindful of the changes in your body and seek help as soon as you gauge something is wrong.

## 6. Drink more water

Yes; drink at least 8-10 glasses of pure unadulterated water to reap a multitude of benefits for the body. Drinking more water helps in digestion and keeps you fresh and energetic. Remember, fizzy drinks are a complete no-no! So steer clear of those drinks.



## 7. Practice yoga and breathing

Stress is a killer, and if you want to keep stress at bay, you need to incorporate yoga and breathing into your daily lives. Mindful breathing can calm you down and help you manage emotional problems better. Just give yourself ten minutes to practice mindful breathing and you will be a transformed man/woman.

## 8. Take a holiday

Yes, the importance of taking a break from our everyday lives is immense. It is a way to rejuvenate our tired body and minds, so instead of postponing your annual holiday, take that holiday for a change, and you won't regret that for a minute!

## 9. Eliminate bad habits

Stop smoking and drinking, it never did any good to anyone, and if you want to stay fit and healthy, these two habits must be eliminated for good.

Dedicate some time for yourselves! Yes, self-love is important; if you do not take care of yourself, you won't be able to take care of your loved ones as well. Take that all important step towards fitness and health and disease and sickness won't be able to touch you!

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