BG Pulse Journal USA
ISSN:1947-2536 http://www.bgpulseusa.com/index.php/bg
BG PULSE JOURNAL

THE FORMATION OF A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE: BEHAVIORAL DETERMINANTS, HYGIENIC FOUNDATIONS AND PREVENTION OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES: A REVIEW

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Formation of a Healthy Lifestyle

Doi: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.24252467

Abstract: Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are the leading cause of death worldwide, and many of their principal risk factors are behavioral and therefore modifiable. This paper reviews the main components of a healthy lifestyle — regular physical activity, balanced nutrition, adequate sleep, avoidance of tobacco and harmful alcohol use, and personal hygiene — and the evidence linking them with longevity and disease prevention. Particular attention is paid to the hygienic regimen of the day and to early childhood, when health-related habits and hygienic skills are formed. Practical recommendations for individuals, families and educational institutions are discussed to support the sustained formation of a healthy lifestyle.

Keywords: Healthy lifestyle, Prevention, Non-communicable diseases, Physical activity, Nutrition, Sleep hygiene, Health behavior.

1. INTRODUCTION

A healthy lifestyle is a system of daily behaviors and hygienic habits that preserves and strengthens health, increases working capacity and lowers the risk of disease. Modern preventive medicine increasingly recognizes that cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, cancer and chronic respiratory disease are driven to a large extent by modifiable behaviors rather than by infection or inheritance alone. Prevention therefore depends on whether people adopt, and sustain, a small number of health-protective behaviors. A healthy lifestyle is not a single act but the combined effect of several interdependent domains, summarized below.

COMPONENTS OF A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

1. Physical activity: regular movement, limited sedentary time
2. Nutrition: balanced, adequate and varied diet
3. Sleep and rest: regular daily regimen, sufficient sleep
4. Hygiene: personal, oral and environmental cleanliness
5. Risk avoidance: no tobacco, limited alcohol
6. Psycho-emotional balance: stress management, social contact

2. BEHAVIORAL FOUNDATIONS OF HEALTH

2.1 Physical Activity and Sedentary Behavior

Regular physical activity lowers the risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, several cancers and depression, and improves sleep and cognitive function. The WHO 2020 guidelines recommend

that adults accumulate at least 150–300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity per week (or 75–150 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity), and that children and adolescents average at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous activity per day; they also advise limiting sedentary time [1]. Physically active people, and athletes in particular, have energy and nutrient needs that differ from those of the general population, so their diet should be planned in line with training load [2].

2.2 Balanced Nutrition and Body Weight

WHO recommends a diet that includes at least 400 g of fruit and vegetables per day, limits free sugars to less than 10% of total energy intake, salt to less than 5 g per day, and total fat to less than 30% of energy intake, with saturated fat below 10% and industrially produced trans fat below 1% [3]. Balanced eating also protects the digestive tract, whose mucosal defense depends on local mediators such as prostaglandins and histamine [4]. In a long-term cohort analysis in the United States, a high-quality diet was one of five low-risk lifestyle factors that together were associated with a markedly longer life expectancy [5].

3. HYGIENIC REGIMEN AND RISK BEHAVIORS

3.1 Sleep and the Daily Regimen

A joint consensus statement recommends that adults sleep at least seven hours per night on a regular basis to promote optimal health [6]. Chronic short sleep is associated with obesity, diabetes, hypertension, low mood and reduced attention. A regular daily regimen — consistent sleep and wake times, regular meals, alternation of work and rest, and daily outdoor activity — supports circadian regulation and mental performance.

Component	Recommendation (adults)	Typical Deviation	Main Health Risk
Physical activity	150–300 min/week moderate-intensity [1]	Prolonged sitting	Cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity
Sleep	At least 7 h/night [6]	Chronic sleep shortage	Obesity, hypertension, reduced alertness
Diet	≥400 g fruit and vegetables/day; salt <5 g/day [3]	High salt and free-sugar intake	Hypertension, overweight
Tobacco	No tobacco use [5]	Regular smoking	Cancer, cardiovascular and respiratory disease

3.2 Tobacco, Alcohol and Personal Hygiene

In the US cohort analysis, never smoking, moderate alcohol intake, a healthy body weight, regular physical activity and a high-quality diet were the five low-risk factors; adults who had all five lived

on average about 12–14 years longer at age 50 than those who had none [5]. Personal hygiene — hand washing, oral care, clean clothing and living space — reduces the transmission of infections. Understanding the biology of pathogens such as HIV, which depend on specific host-cell mechanisms, provides the scientific basis for targeted prevention and therapy [7].

4. FORMATION OF HEALTHY HABITS IN CHILDHOOD

Health-related habits and hygienic skills are formed early and tend to persist into adulthood. The formation of cultural and hygienic skills in preschool children is a deliberate educational task that relies on repetition, adult example and a consistent daily routine [8]. Effective programmes therefore combine family, kindergarten, school and community action. The WHO Global Action Plan on Physical Activity likewise promotes a systems-based approach that creates active societies, environments and people [9].

5. CONCLUSION

A healthy lifestyle is the sum of a few well-documented behaviors: regular physical activity, a balanced diet, sufficient sleep, avoidance of tobacco and excess alcohol, and consistent personal hygiene. Their combined effect on disease prevention and longevity is substantial. Interventions should begin in early childhood, involve families and educational institutions, and focus on practical, sustainable daily routines rather than one-time advice.

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