

Prevalence of non-communicable diseases among women

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Background: The health of women is always linked with reproductive health. Though there is an increased education, employment opportunities, financially sound as well as enhancement in social participation of women, the prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) among them is also high. It has been one of the principal causes of death in women. Two out of three women are dying due to NCD. Hence the present work has been taken up to assess the prevalence of NCDs and the associated risk factors among women.

Methodology: The literature search was carried out using the keywords “non-communicable diseases (NCDs), women’s health, risk factors and lifestyle approaches” in databases such as PubMed, ScienceDirect, Medline, and Web of Science. Based on the set inclusion and exclusion criteria, studies were selected. Inclusion criteria include 1) review papers, observational studies or clinical trials; 2) Studies published from 2000 onwards and 3) working women and homemakers as participants. The exclusion criteria were: 1) outcome not related to NCD; 2) articles not in English; 4) Only abstract available.

Results: Among women coronary heart disease, diabetes mellitus, hypertension, chronic respiratory diseases, cancer, obesity and mental health issues are the commonly seen NCDs. The risk factors were non-modifiable like genetics,

gender and modifiable such as overweight/obesity, low physical activity, stress and unhealthy diet. Many studies report mental health of women is neglected which affects their health.

Conclusion: Non-communicable diseases pose a significant burden on women. It not only affects her health but indirectly affects her overall family well-being. It will lead to reduced work quality both at home and at the workplace. Women and their family members must be given awareness of the NCDs. Regular health checkups and healthy lifestyle training must be imparted. Women must be provided with the awareness of rights and resources, and the capacity to fight exploitation and injustice.

Biography

Shunmukha Priya S. holds M.Phil. and Ph.D. in Food Science & Nutrition. Her Ph.D. work was under the title Bioavailability of iron and zinc. She has qualified for the University Grants Commission - National Eligibility Test for assistant professor eligibility. She has published eight scientific articles in journals and presented over 15 papers at national and international conferences. She was cited twice and her H-index is 1. She is a speaker and blog writer. Her topics of research interest are micronutrients, lifestyle diseases, community health and non-communicable diseases. She is a Life Member of the Nutrition Society of India and an Associate Life Member of the Indian Dietetic Association. Currently serving as Research Supervisor at the Institute of Nutrition and Fitness Sciences, Pune Maharashtra.

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