

## Nutritional Interventions in Managing Chronic Diseases: A Global Perspective

### AUTHORS DETAIL

Maira Ashfaq<sup>1\*</sup>, Sibgha Shafqat<sup>2</sup>, Alishba Mazhar<sup>2</sup>, Tehreem Fatima<sup>1</sup>, Ushna Mubashir<sup>1</sup>, Alishbah Siddiqui<sup>1</sup>, Maryam Naeem<sup>1</sup>, Wareesha Rabbani<sup>1</sup>, Ayesha Anwar<sup>2</sup>, Umama Rehman<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Nishtar Medical University, Multan, Pakistan

<sup>2</sup>Muhammad Nawaz Shareef University of Agriculture, Multan, Pakistan

\*Corresponding author: [mairaashfaq032@gmail.com](mailto:mairaashfaq032@gmail.com)

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### Abstract

The complex relationship between nutrition and health is focusing on the contribution of dietary choices in preventing chronic diseases. However, the knowledge about the fundamental principles of nutrition, including macronutrients such as carbohydrates, fats, and proteins, as well as micronutrients such as vitamins, and minerals, and their effect on the human body. A balanced diet is important for a healthy life, and if not followed, then nutritional deficiencies can adversely affect our health. With the advancement in science, several modern dietary trends have emerged like plant-based diets, intermittent fasting, and ketogenic diets, which have their benefits and repercussions. Through a detailed study of scientific literature, this chapter highlights the importance of customized nutrition, recommending diet plans tailor-made for individuals following their genetic makeup, and the requirement for public health policies that encourage healthy eating habits. In short, this study concludes with hands-on recommendations for individuals and communities to enhance their nutritional and overall well-being.

**Keywords:** Nutrition, Dietary Choices, Chronic Diseases, Macronutrients, Nutritional Deficiencies

### Introduction

The long-lasting conditions that need continuing medical attention and restrict the daily life activities are the chronic diseases. These diseases are non-communicable. High blood sugar, cancer, heart conditions and chronic lung diseases i.e. chronic obstruction pulmonary disease (COPD) are categorized as the chronic diseases (Budreviciute et al., 2020). Vaccines or any medication cannot prevent this kind of non-infectious diseases. These are the major killing diseases globally and causes about 29 million deaths worldwide (Coates et al., 2020).

According to studies in 2011, every third adult suffers from multiple chronic conditions and suffers from even greater disadvantages in health and costs. For older adults in developed countries, this figure is approximately three out of four and is believed to rise considerably (Farley, 2020). As it is evident from literature that nutrition plays very important role in the prevention and management of the symptoms of chronic diseases. Chronic diseases, including heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and even cancer can be avoided or treated with good nutrition. Such diets may incorporate a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds, omega-3 fatty acids, low-fat dairy products, but limit highly processed grains, sweetened and unhealthy foods as well as red and processed meats. One effective strategy is the Mediterranean diet (Tsigalou et al., 2020). Chronic diseases could also be avoided or managed by nutrigenetic and nutrigenomic-based personalized recipes which are relatively new methods that target chronic diseases. The role of registered dietitians and dietetic technicians in implementing some of the nutrition preventive measures, participating in policy formulation or the promotion of health and prevention of diseases or complications is emphasized. (Singh et al., 2020).

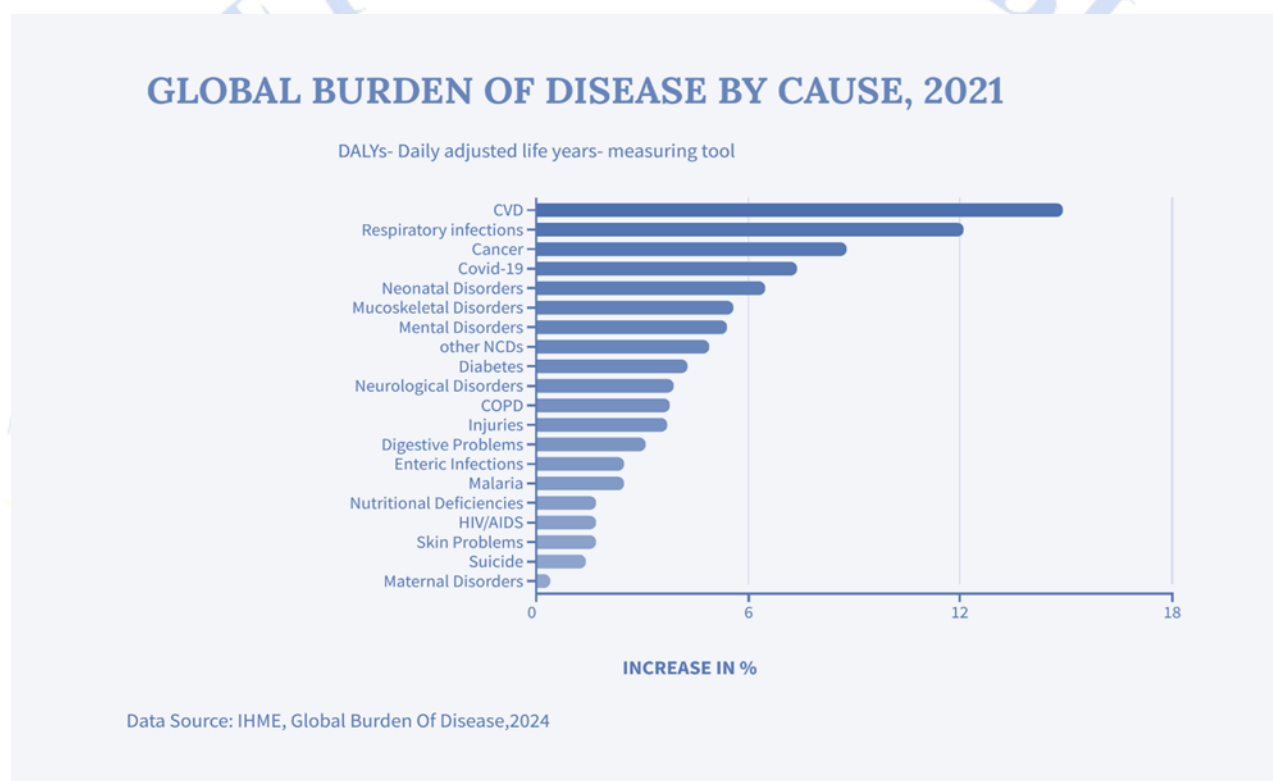
In the quest to prevent chronic conditions such as non-communicable diseases (NCDs), nutrition should be provided in a global perspective as it involves different ways of eating, socio-cultural and health systems.

### Nutritional Transition and Chronic Disease

- Such chronic diseases would not have arisen if these substitutes consisting of a high concentration of saturating fats and simple carbohydrates had not been introduced to the population. (Grosskopf & Simm, 2020).
- The diet, which adheres to a Mediterranean dietary pattern rich in unrefined foods, has been advocated as a preventive measure against cardiovascular diseases and neurodegenerative disease. (Franco et al., 2018).

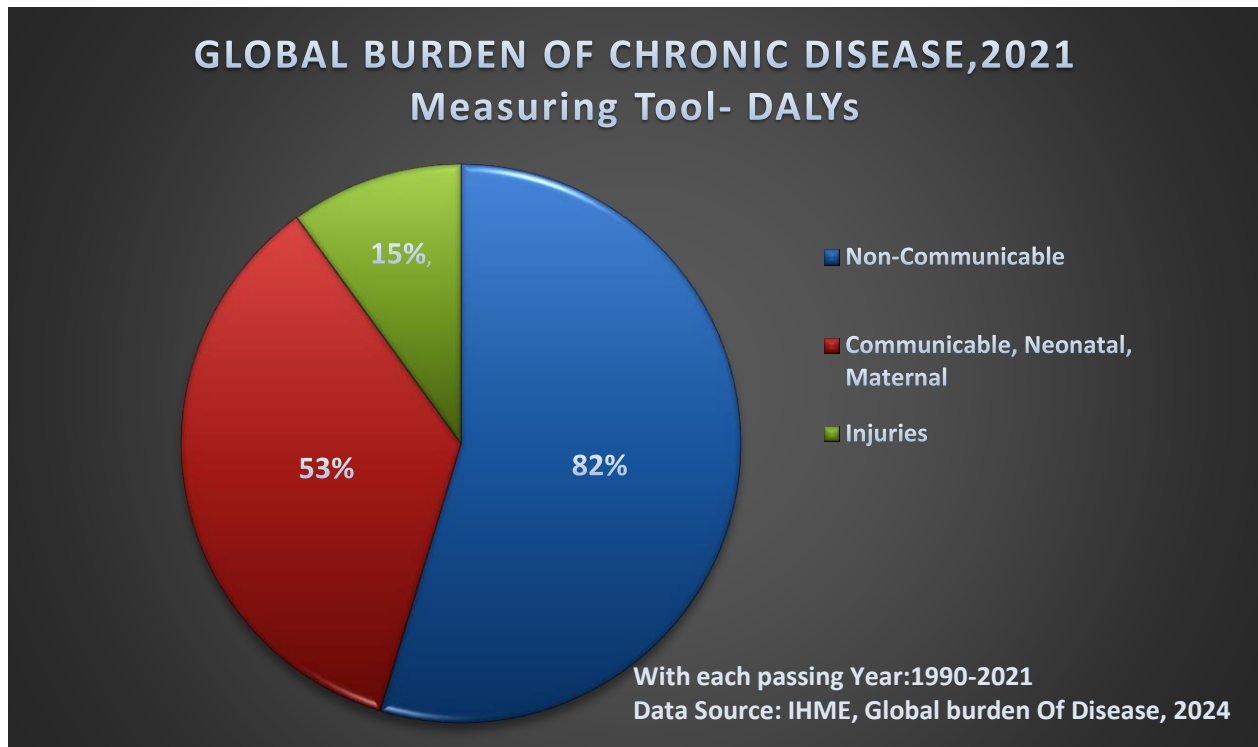
### Global Burden of Chronic Diseases

Chronic diseases, specifically cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic obstruction pulmonary disease (COPD), and diabetes had become the emerging cause of death globally, estimated 29 million deaths in 2002. Despite their predominant epidemiological and socioeconomic impact, the global response remains ineffective due to lack of financial support, misconceptions, and health systems oriented towards acute care (Yach et al., 2020). The global burden is overpopulated by globalization, which impedes progress in prevention and control (Meetoo, 2008). The World Health Report of 2002 describes that the mortality, morbidity and disability pointed to the major chronic diseases, account for almost 60% of deaths and 43% of the global burden of disease. By 2020, it rises to 73% and 60%, respectively (Fig. 1) (Terzic & Waldman, 2011). Fig. 2 depicted how is the burden of disease distributed and how did it change over time?



**Fig. 1:** Global burden of chronic diseases, reflecting the major ones with more prevalence on the top, followed by those having less chance of occurrence at the bottom.

To assess the health, the main focus is on mortality, or life expectancy which can be measured by “Disability Adjusted Life Years” (DALYs) (Rose et al., 2021).



**Fig. 2:** Global burden of chronic diseases by 2021 worldwide with higher prevalence of non-communicable disease followed by communicable, neonatal, maternal and other injuries respectively.

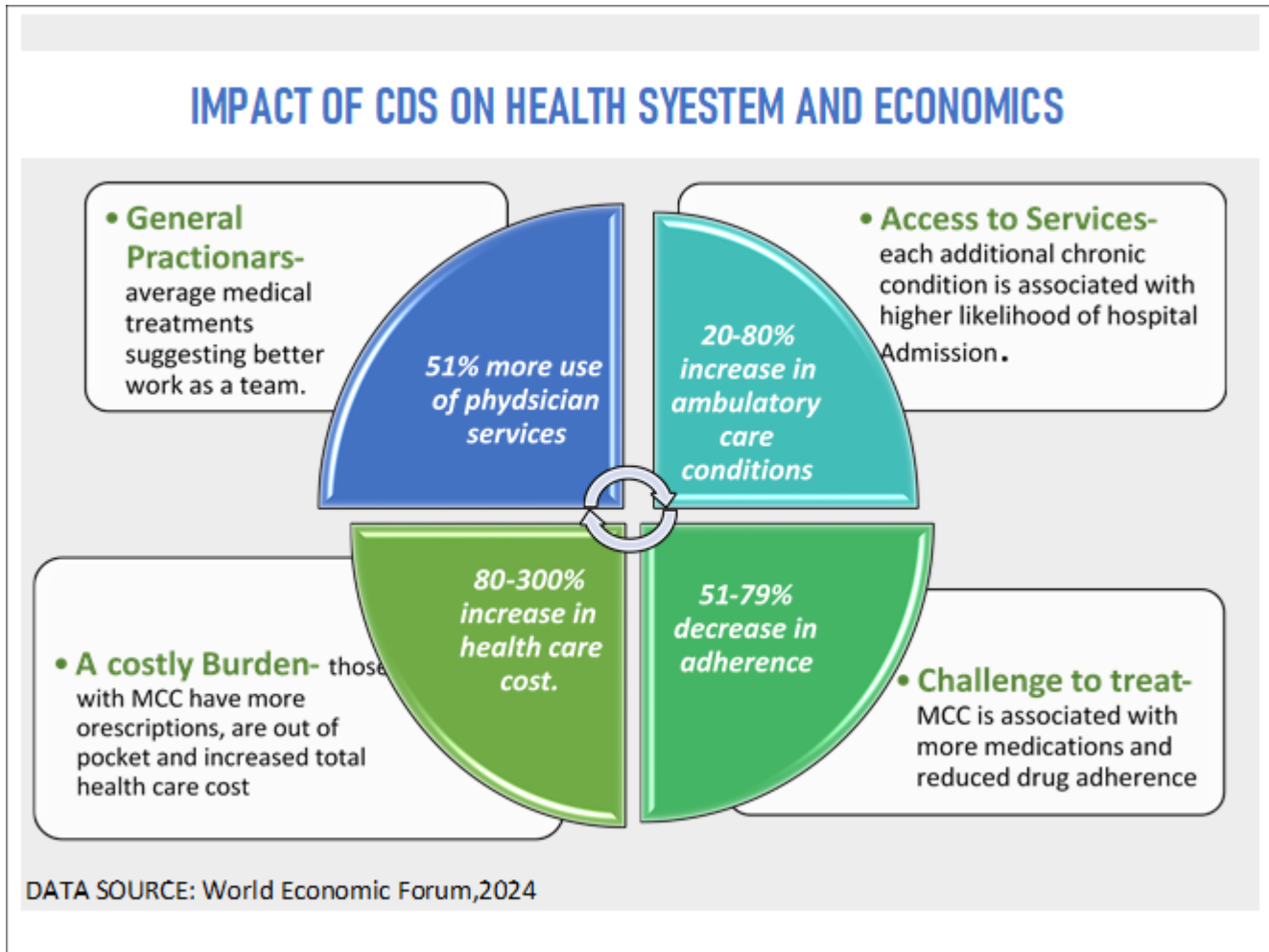
### I. Addressing Social Determinants of Health and Chronic Diseases

Nonmedical factors influencing health, or conditions in which people born, grow, work and live. Agents behind are economic policies, power, prestige and social norms adversely affecting the racial and ethnic minorities, people living in rural and urban areas, with disabilities, and racism associated with wealth of an individual, or community, one's ability to become involved in, afford stress levels, and manage medical care (Bharmal et al., 2015).

Education affects sociopolitical power exposing to stressors, fewer ways to cope with causing HTN. Employment Status affects psychosocial pathways, contact to hazardous agents from the occupational setting. Income causes increased illness and premature mortality, affecting behavioral and physiological aspects. Food Insecurity causes disruption of food intake, eating patterns due to insufficient resources, a threat for chronic diseases. Housing Insecurity, an umbrella underlying poor housing quality, unstable occupancy, overcrowding. One prefers to delay medical needs, emergency care, experience adverse mental health consequences (Emeny et al., 2022). e

### II. Impact on Health System & Economics

The existence of multiple chronic conditions simultaneously can crucially strain health systems and economies, leading to a complex and convoluted impact on healthcare resources, costs, and patient outcomes. These have a sound effect on their sufferers. Costs and complications tend to grow exponentially, limiting mobility, and making it hard or impossible to work. Adhering to drug regimens becomes a challenge (Hajat et al., 2018). Such combinations mount-up burden to healthcare systems, tend to double the cost of treatment and contraindications up-to 16 times (Fig. 3) (Swerissen & Duckett, 2016). Reorganizing the delivery of healthcare, thinking about medication, redirecting systems towards prevention, empowering health care services can address problems. Rush to modernize health services, the role of the general practitioner is neglected. Much of the care that now takes place in hospitals can be administered in the community. Where hospital care is necessary, teams of doctors should work together to improve health and general wellbeing (Sturmberg & Bircher, 2019).



**Fig. 3:** Increased burden on health systems, directly effecting health care services with decreased adherence and doubling of costs.

### Pathophysiology of Chronic Diseases

**I. Diabetes:** Type 1 diabetes results from autoimmune destruction of pancreatic  $\beta$ -cells, leading to insulin deficiency. Type 2 diabetes is characterized by insulin resistance and progressive  $\beta$ -cell dysfunction, causing chronic hyperglycaemia (Eizirik et al., 2020; Mughal et al., 2021). Complications include microvascular damage (retinopathy, nephropathy) and macro vascular complications like cardiovascular disease (CVD). (Zakir et al., 2023)

**II. Cardiovascular Disease:** Cardiovascular disease (CVD) involves endothelial dysfunction, inflammation, oxidative stress, and lipid disturbances.

- **Endothelial Dysfunction:** Impaired nitric oxide production leads to atherosclerosis.
- **Inflammation and Oxidative Stress:** Persistent inflammation and reactive oxygen species (ROS) damage tissues, worsening cardiac function.
- **Lipid Dysregulation:** Elevated low-density lipoprotein (LDL) and triglycerides promote plaque formation and ischemia (D'Oria et al., 2020).

**III. Cancer:** Cancer arises from genetic mutations and epigenetic changes that disrupt cell growth. Chronic inflammation, oxidative stress, and metabolic dysregulation contribute to carcinogenesis.

- **Inflammation:** Promotes DNA damage and tumour progression.
- **Oxidative Stress:** Damages cellular structures, supporting carcinogenesis.
- **Metabolic Dysregulation:** Obesity and hyperinsulinemia increase hormone-sensitive cancer risks (Zhang et al., 2020).

## Impact of Diet on Disease Progression

A balanced diet including lean proteins, complex carbohydrates, and healthy fats stabilizes glucose levels. High-fiber foods like whole grains improve insulin sensitivity, while ultra-processed, high-sugar diets worsen glycemic control. Mediterranean and Dietary Approaches to stop Hypertension (DASH) diets, reduce low density lipoprotein (LDL), cholesterol and systemic inflammation (Zhang et al., 2022). Diets high in Trans fats and refined sugars accelerate atherosclerosis and hypertension. Diets rich in processed meats, unhealthy fats, and excessive alcohol elevate cancer risk. Conversely, antioxidant-rich fruits and vegetables neutralize reactive oxygen species (ROS), supporting deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) repair and immune function (Jideani et al., 2021).

## Nutritional Risk Factors and Protective Components

### I. Risk Factors

- **High Glycaemic Index Foods:** Trigger insulin surges and inflammation, increasing diabetes and cancer risks.
- **Low Fibre Intake:** Impairs glycaemic control and promotes obesity.
- **Processed Foods:** High in saturated fats and preservatives, contributing to inflammation and chronic diseases.
- **Excessive Animal Products:** Linked to cardiovascular diseases (CVD) and colorectal cancer (Singh et al., 2023).

### II. Protective Components

- **Fruits and Vegetables:** Provide vitamins, fibre, and antioxidants, reducing inflammation and oxidative stress.
- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids:** Found in fish and flaxseeds and support cardiovascular health.
- **Whole Grains:** Improve metabolic health and insulin sensitivity.
- **Polyphenols:** Neutralize free radicals, offering anti-cancer benefits.
- **Probiotics and Prebiotics:** Enhance gut health, reducing systemic inflammation. (Awuchi et al., 2022).

## Dietary Interventions in Managing Chronic Diseases

Dietary interventions play a crucial role in managing chronic diseases, with specific dietary patterns and nutrient composition that influence health outcomes. Reduced cardiovascular events and improved metabolic health is related with Mediterranean diet enriched with whole grains, vegetables, fruits and healthy fats. On the other hand, Dietary Approaches to stop Hypertension (DASH) diet focused on lowering sodium intake and increase nutrient-rich foods, lowers blood pressure and maintains good heart health (Benson et al., 2020). Published literature shows that the likelihood of chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and specific cancers can notably reduce by adherence to healthy dietary patterns (Wang et al., 2023). These dietary patterns are characterized by high consumption of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins, while saturated fats, trans fats, sodium, and added sugars in low concentration. Through studies, it is shown that low insulinemic diets, diets with inflammatory properties, along with those that reduce the risk of diabetes, are specifically effective in preventing chronic diseases (Papakonstantinou et al., 2022). There is demonstrated reductions in cardiovascular disease risk ranging from 10% to 60% through specific dietary approaches like the Mediterranean, Dietary Approaches to stop Hypertension (DASH), and Prudent diets. Dietary patterns that are plant based rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains are consistently related with reduced risks of several chronic diseases, while those high in refined grains, red and processed meat and added sugars increase these risks (Carrero et al., 2020).

## Global Variations in Nutrition Interventions

Cultural dietary practices indicate the traditions related to food, social norms, symbolic meaning of food and practices in specific regions or communities. The dietary patterns of individuals are molded and their nutritional preferences and choices are modified by these norms. Food consumption is affected by dietary laws of different religions such as avoiding pork in Islam and abstaining from meat in Hinduism. Dietary practices are significantly influenced by economic status. People having high economic status might import nutritious food, while those with low economic status might eat locally sourced ingredients (Boxer et al., 2023). These financial conditions have impact on their food choices, accessibility, availability, and consumption patterns in populations.

Environment is also a major factor which determines food resources availability, and methods to prepare meals (Hoek et al., 2021). For example, people who live near water bodies, in many cases, depends on a diet enriched with seafood, and fish, on the other hand, those in fertile valleys may consume a lot of vegetables and grains. (Chávez-Dulanto et al., 2021).

**I. Global nutrition programs:** Global nutrition programs are assigned to take notice on malnutrition, food insecurity, and dietary health issues in various populations worldwide. Such programs are often implemented by governments, international organizations, non-government organizations (NGOs), and local communities to promote food security and combat the effects of nutritional problems such as under nutrition, over nutrition, and micronutrient deficiencies. Some of the programs are: World Food Program (WFP), Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement which mainly focus on maternal nutrition, Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) implemented globally by World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nation International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Universal Salt Iodization (USI) implemented globally by World Health Organization (WHO) and Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Tax implemented in Mexico by the Mexican Government. (Sotiraki et al., 2022).

**II. Nutritional problem in low-income families:** 3% of all households with children, and 7.5% of low-income families with children experienced lack on nutritional food. Several demographic and characteristic differences shows that they have macro & micro nutrient deficiencies even if they are food sufficient or not. (Pastori et al., 2024)

Food Insufficiency refers to inadequacy in the amount of food intake because of a lack of money or resources to access enough food. (Ae-Ngibise et al., 2021).

### Nutritional Strategies for Specific Chronic Diseases

Nutritional techniques have a significant role in the prevention and treatment of many diseases. Such treatments typically include dietary changes, increased consumption of important nutrients, and achieving or maintaining an ideal weight. Cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and cancer are the most frequently connected with these disorders. Maintaining a healthy nutritional condition promotes tolerance to cancer medicines, accelerates healing, and raises quality of life (Carrero et al., 2020).

**I. Nutritional Management of Diabetes:** The fundamental components to control diabetes are medications, a good dietary plan, and physical activity on daily basis. The primary goal of dietary therapy for diabetics is to monitor metabolic parameters such as body weight, blood pressure, glucose, lipids, renal function, and so on in order to ensure successful health outcomes (Gandhi et al., 2024). In this context, the American Diabetes Association (ADA) has established general aims. Blood pressure should be kept at 140/80 mmHg, A1C at no more than 6.5%, low density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol at 100 mg/dl, and triglycerides at 150 mg/dl. High density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol of men should be kept at 40 mg/dl and women at 50 mg/dl.

**II. Recommendations for Nutritional Management:** Fruits, vegetables, legumes, dairy products and whole grains are thought to be a better source of carbs than other carbohydrate sources, especially those with added sodium, sweets, or fats. Fructose from naturally occurring foods provides better glycemic management than starch or sucrose (Ren et al., 2023). Carbohydrate diets high in protein are not recommended for treating hypoglycemia. Omega-3 (EPA and DHA) supplements for diabetics can help prevent or treat cardiovascular issues. (Bhat et al., 2023).

**III. Heart disease prevention with dietary interventions:** Despite significant advances in cardiovascular disease (CVD) treatment, our understanding of the cardiovascular effects of food remains restricted. Mediterranean Diet and Dietary approaches to stop hypertension (DASH) Diet, the most common diet features in these trials were; high in fruits (especially fresh), vegetables (emphasis on root and green kinds), whole grains (cereals, breads, rice or pasta), and fatty fish (high in  $\omega$ ). (Singh et al., 2022)

**IV. Nutrition's role in managing obesity and metabolic syndrome:** Healthy nutrition is critical for illness prevention as well as maintenance or promotion of health, yet it is still unclear how to define it. When treating obesity and obesity-related metabolic illnesses, great emphasis has been placed on the food composition of what is considered appropriate nutrition. There is strong evidence that nutrition influences the development and progression of the metabolic syndrome. Obesity is a major

contributing factor to the development of the metabolic syndrome (Castro-Barquero et al., 2020). Understanding gene-gene, gene-nutrient, and gene-nutrient-environment interactions will help to answer the molecular foundation of the metabolic syndrome, reducing the negative health impacts of obesity and the risk of the metabolic syndrome, which leads to T2DM and cardiovascular disease (CVD). Timing food consumption, meals, and macronutrients is a novel approach to addressing obesity and metabolic syndrome. It suggests that eating with proper regulated meal timing and macronutrient distribution could be part of the solution (Świątkiewicz et al., 2021).

### Challenges and Barriers to Effective Nutritional Intervention

**I. Socioeconomic and educational barriers to healthy eating:** Barriers often arise from a mix of familial, personal, or community factors that impede access to nutritious food.

**II. Income Level:** People from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds frequently encounter restricted access to affordable nutritious food, resulting in a dependence on more inexpensive, less healthy alternatives (Placzek, 2020).

**III. Community Resources:** The scarcity of healthy food and the prevalence of fast-food establishments in low-income areas intensify dietary difficulties.

**IV. Socioeconomic obstacles to healthy eating:** It involves work and socioeconomic status, which affect mothers' perceptions and behaviour. The research indicated that stay-at-home mothers commonly experience more limitations, whereas working mothers might have better opportunities for healthier eating practices.

**V. Peer Pressure:** Social influences, especially among teenagers, can lead to poor eating habits due to the urge to fit in with group norms (Higgs et al., 2020).

**VI. Educational Obstacles Nutritional Awareness:** Insufficient knowledge and comprehension of healthy eating can result in unhealthy food selections.

**VII. Cultural Factors:** The eating habits of families and cultural traditions often shape food choices, which may conflict with guidelines for healthy eating. Furthermore, ineffective policies in schools and restricted access to nutrition education further limit their capacity to make nutritious dietary decisions.

### Socioeconomic Disparities in access to healthy foods and healthcare

Approximately one-third of children in low-income nations experience stunting due to malnutrition, while obesity rates are increasing in wealthy countries where processed foods are prevalent in diets. (Bose et al., 2022)

**I. Access to Healthy Food:** Limited access to fresh, nutritious food often results from poverty, causing a dependence on less expensive, processed alternatives. Global agribusinesses are increasingly focusing on low-income countries, worsening food insecurity and malnutrition issues. (Wangu, 2021).

**II. Healthcare Inequities:** Racial and ethnic minority groups encounter considerable obstacles to accessing healthcare, facing higher rates of uninsured individuals in comparison to white populations. Nations that provide universal healthcare access typically experience improved health outcomes and reduced inequalities (Ndugga et al., 2021).

### Cultural and behavioral factors influencing dietary choices

**I. Cultural Identity:** Cultural context plays a significant role in shaping food choices and eating habits, affecting overall dietary behaviours.

**II. Family and Community Norms:** Social pressures and family dynamics significantly influence eating habits, especially in adolescents.

**III. Behavioural Aspects Peer Influence:** Social groups can greatly affect food choices, particularly among younger individuals, where trends and preferences are often shaped by their peers.

**IV. Meal Timing and Convenience:** Hectic lifestyles result in a preference for quick meal options, which may not always align with healthy eating recommendations (Monterrosa et al., 2020).

### Emerging trends and innovations in Nutritional interventions

In an era where an individual's diet is modified to meet their health needs, nutrigenomics is positioning itself as a leading intervention model for combating chronic diseases. This branch aims to customize dietary advice to an individual's genetic, metabolic, and environmental characteristics. These technologies, combined with deep phenotyping and lifestyle data, is a means of tailoring customized dietary interventions for the prevention of metabolic diseases such as obesity and subsequently diabetes and cardiovascular complications.

- Critical genes such as lipid metabolism, the carbohydrate processing gene, have been identified as key players in weight management and chronic disease risk (Barrea et al., 2020)
- The surge in omics technologies (genomics, proteomics, and metabolomics) offers complete individualized assessments of the diet and initiates measures for one to maintain a healthy diet.
- Through the utilization of personalized nutrition, it is possible to achieve health benefits by the harmonization of nutrition and genomic traits (Chaudhary et al., 2020).

### Policy and Public Health Approaches

World health organization (WHO) works to promote health, keeping the world safe, and serving the vulnerable (Yokobori et al., 2023). The goal is to ensure that a billion more people have universal health coverage by:

- Focusing primary health care, approaching quality services for early detection and timely treatment.
- Working towards sustainable financing, technical support to strengthen health systems and improve capacity to manage chronic diseases.
- Training the workforce, raising global awareness.
- Evolving, monitoring the progress in reducing the burden, ensuring effective and efficient use of resources. (Firoozi et al., 2024)

Protection from health emergencies, through:

- Identify, mitigate and manage risks, disseminate evidence on interventions.
- Development of toolkits and guidelines required during outbreaks.
- Provision of valuable health services in fragile settings, leading global campaigns, initiatives to encourage healthy lifestyles, physical activity, and balanced diets. (Cavallo et al., 2023)

Provision of health and well-being by:

- Addressing social determinants, community-clinical linkages, food and nutrition security, social connections.
- Promoting intersectoral approaches, collaborating with stakeholders, governments, non-government organizations (NGOs) and private sector.
- Prioritizing health, setting targets like sustainable development goals (SDGs), millennium development goals (MDGs) (Fleck, 2021).

**I. Negative factors** in the Asian diet include salt, refined sugar, and fats. The Asia-Pacific Academic Consortium for Public Health (APACPH) Dietary Guidelines will need to be kept under review to meet regional differences in food supply.

- In Europe, most countries have developed nutrition policies, however performance remains challenging due to lack of funds.
- In Poland, nutritional guidelines are converging with Western counterparts due to globalization, mainly focused on reducing disease risks related with poor dietary habits.

- In Mexico, there is need for an adaptive approach to policy making that consider diverse “cultures of nutrition”. (Yates-Doerr et al., 2023)

## II. Government initiatives and health campaigns

- **Government Initiatives Legislative Actions:** Measures such as heightened taxes on tobacco products and all-encompassing smoking prohibitions have considerably decreased tobacco consumption.
- **Ayush Public Health Programs:** The Ayush initiative incorporates traditional medicine into the public health sector, improving health education and disease detection (Gupta et al., 2023).
- **Home Visiting Initiatives:** In Denmark, a government-led informational campaign lowered infant mortality rates by 17.2%, with a notable positive impact on low-income populations. The campaign emphasized maternal care and access to health services, which are crucial for reducing infant mortality.
- **Health Campaigns Public Awareness Initiatives:** Campaigns like the "truth" initiative successfully alter social attitudes towards tobacco use (Graham et al., 2020).
- **Education and Prevention Efforts:** Campaigns aimed at promoting vaccination and early disease identification contribute to reducing the overall disease burden.
- **Policy Impact:** Health campaigns play a role in influencing public health policy by increasing awareness and rallying community involvement. (Latif et al., 2024).

## Conclusion

Nutrition is important in supporting health, preventing diseases, and tackling challenges related to health. Tailoring the importance of nutrition to individual needs and prevailing health conditions also envisioning of such a future where dietary health gaps can be filled and improved.

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