

LIFE STYLE MEDICINE: AN EMERGING HEALTHIER FUTURE

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<p>Corresponding author: Rabiah Mahwish: Associate Professor: Community Medicine department, Khawaja Muhammad Safdar Medical College Sialkot Email: dr.rabiah5@gmail.com</p> <p>Vol: 3 Issue:1</p> <p>ISSN Print: 2960-2580 ISSN Online: 2960-2599</p> <p>Copy Right: Pioneer Journal of Biostatistics and Medical Research (PJBMR)</p> <p>Publisher: Medical Research and Statistical Consultancy Training Centre (SMC-PRIVATE) Limited</p> <p>Keywords: Life style, Digital health, Emerging, sedentary life style</p>	<p>Burden of deaths due to non-communicable diseases is increasing worldwide. Low- and middle-income countries share 70-80% of this burden. WHO Pakistan country profile shows that approximately 80 million population is suffering from one or more noncommunicable diseases. About 25.3% population has hypertension, 19% cardiovascular diseases, 17% diabetes mellitus while 8% cancers and about 6% suffer from chronic respiratory diseases.¹</p> <p>Traditional medicines mainly deal with symptoms of diseases by medications and treatment procedures but do not address the underlying causes of chronic diseases at primordial and primary level of health care. Life style medicine bridges this gap by intervening in daily life habits and behaviors. Life style medicine is an evidence-based approach that works mainly in 6 domains of life style.</p>

These domains include nutrition, physical activity, stress management, avoidance of harmful substances, positive socialization and sleep hygiene. Interventions in life style of these domains help in preventing underlying causes of non-communicable diseases. American College of Lifestyle Medicine recommends the following practices in lifestyle:

1. A regular physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day for five days in a week or 150 minutes per week is considered a healthy lifestyle. Regular exercise decreases triglycerides and low-density lipoprotein and increases high density lipoprotein which regulates lipid profile and helps in decreasing blood pressure as well as glucose levels. It also reduces weight gain.
2. Practicing a peaceful sleep of 9–10 hours per day is recommended. Any kind of sleep deprivation may increase the risk of hypertension, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.
3. Avoiding alcohol, smoking and substance abuse.

4. Adopting nutritional modifications for a healthy balanced diet comprising of 45-65% carbohydrates, 25-35% fat and 10-30% protein of total caloric requirements. Avoiding high caloric foods, soft beverages and junk food promotes a healthy lifestyle.
5. Taking measures for stress management and participating in healthy activities. Nature such as forests, gardens, mountains and seas can not only improve psychological health but also physical health of individuals.
6. Building a healthy relationship with family and friends. A healthy social relationship improves mental health and enhance self-esteem.²

Recently our world has faced COVID-19 pandemic which left many challenges to maintain a healthy lifestyle and promote a good quality of life. Evidence showed that high prevalence of morbidity and mortality was associated with unhealthy lifestyle practices. The main pillars of lifestyle medicine supported the healthcare workers and patients to combat during this pandemic and even after this to lead a healthy life.³ Health care providers can enhance the effectiveness of their treatment by incorporating comprehensive treatment along with life style medicines. This step will not only reduce the burden of pharmacological medicines but also increase the quality of life. Individuals can take informed choices to avoid unhealthy behaviors and combat modifiable risk factors of chronic diseases.⁴ Although evidence based new research is required to develop guidelines for lifestyle medicine, but following recommendations are necessary to adopt healthy behavior by individuals:

Firstly, health education and Awareness: Health education programs, awareness campaigns and outreach community health programs can sensitize individuals about unhealthy behaviors. Individuals can make healthier lifestyle choices.

Secondly, healthcare multidisciplinary Integration: Train health care providers to incorporate lifestyle medicine with comprehensive treatment. This incorporation of lifestyle medicine will help to reduce the modifiable risk factors of non-communicable diseases.

Thirdly, healthy environmental policy: Adopt healthy environmental policy to promote lifestyle medicine by providing good space in residential areas for physical activity, easy and cheap availability of healthy food, no access to harmful substances and providing healthy working environment.

Lastly, Social support systems: Provision of social support programs through community participation can provide a platform to individuals for maintaining healthy lifestyles.^{5,6} Life style medicine is a paradigm shift in the field of healthcare, providing prevention and improving quality of life and well-being. Through sustainable lifestyle modifications, we can address the modifiable risk

factors of the non-communicable diseases and reduce the burden of our tertiary health care facilities in terms of cost and patient turn over. So, it is imperative for healthcare providers, individuals and policy makers to adopt lifestyle medicine as a fundamental component of their health and wellbeing. As we are moving forward, combined efforts can carve the way to a better, healthier and more well-suited lifestyle.

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