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Textbook of chronic noncommunicable diseases: The health challenge of 21st century, J. P. Narain, R. Kumar, editors (Jaypee Brothers Medical Publishers (P) Ltd., Delhi) 2016. 270 pages. Price: ₹ 775.00

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The silent epidemic of chronic non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is taking a heavy toll on many lives and is on the rise worldwide. India is also experiencing a rising death toll due to NCDs. According to the Registrar General of India, about 50 per cent of the deaths are now due to NCDs. Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs), chronic respiratory diseases (CRDs), cancers and diabetes are major contributors to the NCD burden. These diseases share common risk factors namely, tobacco (both smoking and smokeless) and alcohol consumption; diets high in sugar, salt, fats and low in vegetables and fruits; and sedentary lifestyle. Hence, health promotion programmes should be on the agenda of the policy makers in contrast to the emphasis presently given to screening and treatment.

There is a need for the development of new strategies for prevention and control of NCDs in developing countries where it is not possible to implement state-of-the-art medical technologies due to their high cost. Public health approaches for prevention and management of risk factors, and primary health care strategies for early detection, treatment, and follow up could be more cost-effective in dealing with the rising burden of NCDs in India. Some evidence is building up in favour of these strategies. A comprehensive understanding of NCD epidemiology, prevention, and primary clinical care is essential for every medical practitioner and public health administrator. This textbook fills up this gap and can potentially empower medical and public health community to face this challenge.

This book contains eighteen chapters ranging from the extent of disease burden, social determinants and risk factors to best practices for prevention, care, and control. First four chapters focus on NCD

epidemiology, prevention, and control followed by five chapters devoted to CVDs, diabetes, cancers, CRDs, and mental illnesses. The next three chapters deal with childhood obesity, health promotion, and essential medicines for hypertension and diabetes. One of the chapters exclusively deals with research priorities which would be of considerable interest to research scholars. Two chapters trace a link between communicable and non-communicable diseases, not only as a causative factor but also to learn lessons from communicable disease control programmes (*i.e.*, TB and HIV/AIDS). Two chapters deal with inter-sectoral and health system responses required for combating an NCD epidemic. The book ends with a chapter on the global response, since NCDs are now on the international developmental agenda.

Overall, the book covers all aspects of NCDs comprehensively. It would have been nice to have separate chapters on tobacco, alcohol, diet, and physical activity, though these issues have been covered in various chapters. In summary, this book is a valuable companion not only for all medical and public health scholars, but also for those who are involved in planning and management of NCD prevention and control programmes.

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