

## **INTENSIFIED NON COMMUNICABLE DISEASE (NCD) SCREENING CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED**

**NEWS:** *The Government of India has intensified its efforts to combat Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) through the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD).*

### **WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?**

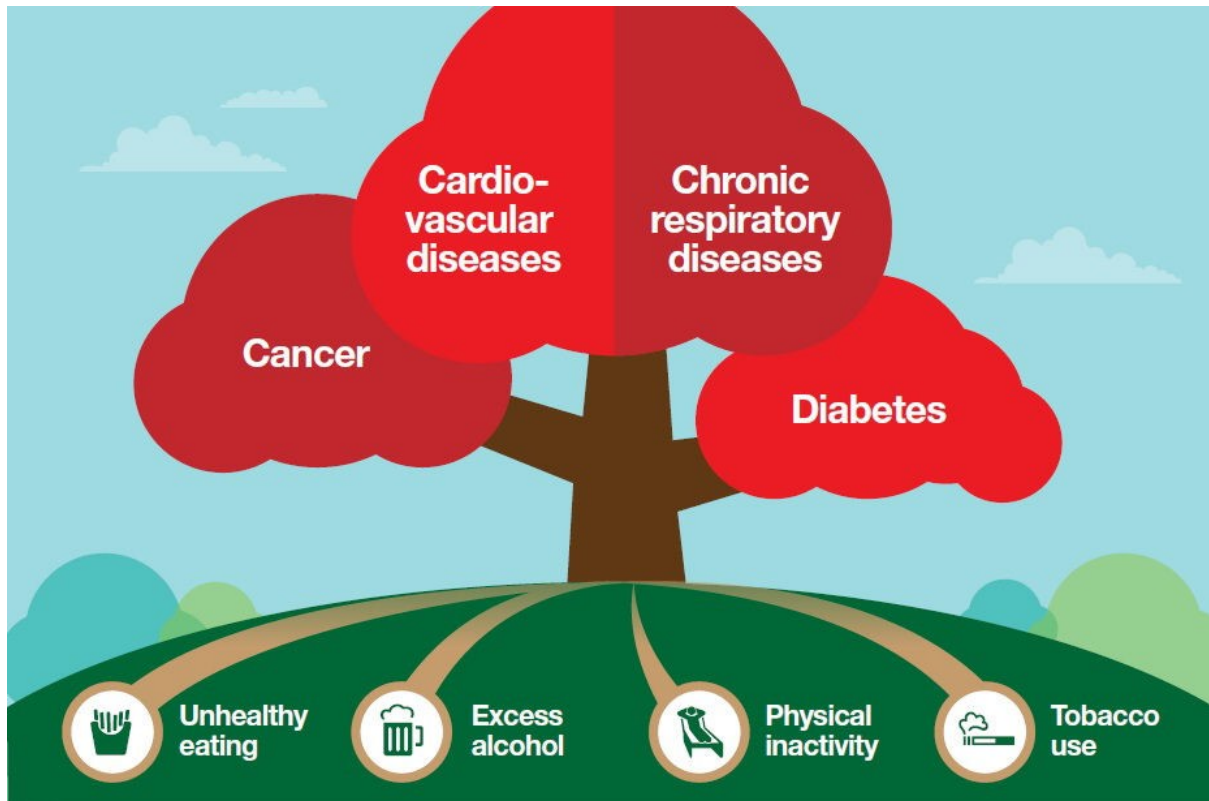
With the establishment of NCD divisions at the National, State, and District levels, the government aims to ensure 100% screening of individuals aged 30 years and above to identify and manage prevalent NCDs, including Diabetes, Hypertension, and common cancers (Oral, Breast, and Cervical).

With the recent formation of dedicated NCD divisions across national, state, and district administrative tiers, the government is implementing a comprehensive strategy to conduct universal health screenings.

This initiative specifically targets all individuals aged 30 years and above, ensuring that every eligible person is evaluated for major chronic conditions. The focus is on early detection and effective management of diseases such as Diabetes, Hypertension, and common cancers—including Oral, Breast, and Cervical cancers—thereby reducing disease progression and long-term health complications.

## About Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

NCDs are chronic diseases that do not spread from person to person but pose significant



health and economic burdens.

Non-Communicable Diseases refer to long-term health conditions that are not transmitted between individuals. Despite their non-infectious nature, these diseases create considerable challenges by burdening healthcare systems, reducing quality of life, and imposing heavy economic costs due to prolonged treatment and management requirements.

According to the WHO (2018), NCDs account for 63% of all deaths in India, with key contributors being:

- Cardiovascular Diseases (27%)
- Chronic Respiratory Diseases (11%)
- Cancers (9%)
- Diabetes (3%)

Based on the World Health Organization's 2018 data, NCDs were responsible for 63% of all deaths in India. Specifically, cardiovascular diseases contributed 27% to the mortality rate, chronic respiratory diseases accounted for 11%, cancers were responsible for 9%, and diabetes contributed 3%. This breakdown highlights the varied impact of different NCDs on public health.

### ▪ Status of Non-Communicable Diseases in India:

- According to WHO, over **60.46 lakh people died due to NCDs in India in 2019.**

- **Over 25.66 lakh deaths** in 2019 in the country were **due to cardiovascular diseases** while 11.46 lakh deaths were **due to chronic respiratory diseases**.
- Cancer led to 9.20 lakh deaths while 3.49 lakh deaths in the country were attributed to diabetes.

The increasing prevalence of NCDs is driven by multiple factors, including lifestyle changes, environmental conditions, and genetic predisposition.

The rise in NCD cases can be attributed to a multifaceted interplay of factors. Rapid lifestyle changes, adverse environmental conditions, and genetic predispositions all contribute to the increasing incidence of these chronic diseases, underscoring the complexity of their prevention and management.

**Lifestyle Choices:** Tobacco use, alcohol consumption, unhealthy diet, lack of exercise, and air pollution.

Unhealthy lifestyle choices are a major contributor to NCDs. Regular tobacco use, excessive alcohol consumption, poor dietary habits, and a sedentary lifestyle, compounded by exposure to polluted air, significantly increase the risk of developing chronic diseases.

**Health Risks: Obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and high blood sugar.**

Certain health indicators serve as warning signs for potential NCDs. Conditions such as obesity, elevated blood pressure, high cholesterol levels, and consistently high blood sugar not only indicate underlying health issues but also increase the likelihood of developing severe chronic conditions if not managed properly.

**Other Factors: Stress and hereditary predisposition.**

In addition to lifestyle and measurable health risks, factors like chronic stress and a family history of disease also play a crucial role. Persistent stress can lead to adverse physiological changes, while genetic predisposition may heighten an individual's vulnerability to NCDs, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach to prevention.

## Implications of NCDs

**Health Burden:** Increased demand for long-term care and treatment.

NCDs significantly increase the health burden on individuals and the healthcare system by creating a sustained demand for long-term care, continuous treatment, and ongoing management, thereby straining medical resources.

**Economic Impact:** Loss of productivity and higher medical expenses.

The economic consequences of NCDs are far-reaching, resulting in reduced workforce productivity due to prolonged illness and disability, alongside escalating medical expenses that impact both households and national economies.

**Healthcare Inequality:** Limited access to early diagnosis in rural areas.

NCDs expose disparities within the healthcare system, as rural and underprivileged areas often experience limited access to early diagnostic services and quality healthcare. This inequality can lead to delayed treatments and poorer health outcomes for these communities.

- **Government Initiatives**

**NP-NCD: Screening, early diagnosis, and awareness programs.**

Under the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases & Stroke (NP-NCD), the government has launched comprehensive screening and early diagnosis initiatives. These programs are designed to raise awareness, facilitate prompt intervention, and ultimately reduce the long-term impact of these chronic diseases.

- **PMBJP Scheme: Affordable generic medicines.**

The PMBJP (Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana) Scheme is focused on providing affordable generic medicines to the public. By ensuring that cost-effective

and quality medications are readily available, this initiative helps mitigate the financial burden on patients and improves access to essential treatments.

- **AMRIT Program: Low-cost treatment for cancer and heart diseases.**  
The AMRIT Program is dedicated to offering low-cost treatment options for critical conditions such as cancer and heart diseases. By targeting economically disadvantaged populations, this program aims to bridge the gap between high treatment costs and the need for accessible healthcare services.
- **Eat Right India Movement: Promotes healthy eating habits.**  
The Eat Right India Movement is a public health initiative that encourages citizens to adopt healthy eating habits. This movement promotes nutritional awareness and balanced diets, which are key to preventing diet-related chronic diseases and fostering overall well-being.
- **Ayushman Bharat: Free healthcare services for the underprivileged.**  
Ayushman Bharat is a flagship healthcare scheme that provides free or highly subsidized medical services to underprivileged populations. This initiative seeks to ensure that all citizens, regardless of their economic status, have access to quality healthcare, thereby reducing disparities in health outcomes.

## Way Forward

### **Strengthen Primary Healthcare for prevention and early detection.**

Moving forward, it is crucial to reinforce primary healthcare systems to focus on prevention and early detection of NCDs. Strengthening local health centers, training healthcare professionals, and enhancing community outreach efforts can lead to more effective management and timely intervention in chronic diseases.

- **Promote Healthy Lifestyles through awareness campaigns.**  
Encouraging healthy lifestyles through comprehensive awareness campaigns is essential. By educating the public on the importance of regular physical activity, balanced nutrition, and the avoidance of harmful habits, these campaigns can significantly reduce the risk and prevalence of NCDs.
- **Improve Air Quality and reduce pollution-related risks.**  
Improving air quality is a vital step in reducing the incidence of NCDs, particularly respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. Implementing robust environmental policies to lower pollution levels can help mitigate health risks associated with poor air quality and create a healthier living environment.
- **Enhance Insurance Coverage for affordable treatment.**  
Expanding insurance coverage is critical to ensuring that all individuals have access to affordable treatment for NCDs. Enhanced insurance schemes can reduce the financial burden on patients, making it easier for them to receive timely and effective medical care without the risk of economic hardship.
- **Encourage Public Participation in health initiatives.**  
Active public participation is key to the success of health initiatives. By involving communities in awareness programs, screening drives, and preventive measures, the

government can foster a collective commitment to health, thereby creating a more resilient and proactive society in the face of NCD challenges.

**Source:** <https://www.newsonair.gov.in/centre-launches-special-ncd-screening-campaign-for-100-coverage-of-30-age-group/>