

# Chronic Disease: Health Care

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## Introduction

An illness that continues for a long period can be considered as chronic illness. As a definition from National Center for Health Statistics of United States “an illness lasting for three or more months”. Chronic illnesses largely do not have vaccines and/or targeted medication. They also do not disappear like pandemics.

Chronic diseases are currently the major cause of death among adults in almost all countries and the toll is projected to increase further in coming years. Worldwide almost every third person is affected with at least one of the multiple chronic illness. In United States almost 6 in 10 adults have a chronic illness and out of 10 adults at least 4 have 2 or more than two. According to a report in the year 2005, out of 58 million deaths nearly 35 million deaths were due to chronic illness. Life style and behaviors; smoking and chewing tobacco, too much alcohol consumption, sedentary nature, over eating/bas eating are major factors responsible chronic illness. Age is another major factor in chronic illness.

## Examples of Chronic Diseases

The prominent chronic illnesses include several types of cancer, obesity and diabetes, arthritis or joint pain, heart diseases, neurological disorders and oral health conditions. With advanced age comorbidity of chronic illnesses become more common. An increasing trend of chronic illness in recent years is alarming for health sector; public and private both.

## Common Stresses of Chronic Diseases

Patients suffering with Long-term diseases feel several stresses

- Dealing with treatments and the side-effects
- Should understand disease condition, treatment and management
- Emotional balance is highly required to deal with negative thoughts
- Self-confidence and a positive attitude helps more

## Management of Chronic Illness and Interventions

Every year more than 40 million deaths are contributed by chronic diseases globally. This can be reduced to a significant level by efficient management and investments.

- At individual level it can be reduced by a slight change in life style and food habits.
- Investment in better management of disease is very vital.
- Proper screening, detection and treatment of these illnesses and providing access to specialized medical care for people in need.
- Investment in primary health care system to encourage early detection and timely treatment.
- “Eating right” play a very vital role in the etiology and management of such illnesses. Proper and regular nutrition counseling can have a strategic role in avoidance of chronic illness.
- Compared to disease management early interventions are better economic investments.
- Health insurance coverage is another essential in chronic illness interventions.

## Conclusion

Chronic illnesses are already the leading cause of death across the countries, and major threat to human health and life. Many countries have shown that efficient and cost effective interventions are very helpful. Growth in chronic illness can be checked by integrated and inclusive approach of all the available interventions. Collective work of public and private sectors along with civil societies come together in preventing and treating chronic illness.

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