

'Hypertension high in Kerala, low in Bihar'

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) have become a growing threat to global health. A recent study done to assess the diet and nutritional status of urban population has pointed out that the increase in incidence of NCDs can be attributed to change in food habits, sedentary behaviour and unhealthy lifestyles, among other risk factors.

The study, titled 'Diet and Nutritional Status of Urban Population in India and Prevalence of Obesity, Hypertension, Diabetes and Hyperlipidaemia in Urban Men and Women', has brought to light the prevalence rates for non-communicable diseases as well as stunting, under-nutrition and obesity in children under 5 years in the 16 States surveyed.

Revealing that Kerala has the highest prevalence of hypertension as well as high cholesterol in urban men and women, the study pointed out that Puducherry tops the list of States with the highest prevalence of diabetes. The survey was carried out by National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau during 2015-16 by researchers from the National Institute of Nutrition.

Avula Laxmaiah, lead investigator of the study, told *The Hindu* that the highest prevalence of hypertension was found to be in Kerala (31.4% women and 38.6% men) and lowest in Bihar (22.2% men and 15.7% women).

Puducherry had the highest number of diabetic men and women (42%), followed by Delhi (36%), Karnataka and Kerala (33% each). Diabetics were the highest in the age group of 60-70 and lowest in the age group of 18-30.

The Southern States were among the 10 with the highest prevalence of obesity among urban adults. Puducherry topped with almost 60% women and 42% men being overweight.

Tamil Nadu was close behind with 54% men and 38% women recorded as obese. Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh recorded high levels of obesity among its urban men and women, he said.

Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala were among the top six States which had the most tobacco smokers among urban men.

Dr. Laxmaiah said the researchers interviewed 5,642 mothers, who have children aged less than 36 months, for information on antenatal care and infant and young child feeding practices. While U.P. had the highest (43.6%) proportion of underweight children followed by Madhya Pradesh (32.3%), Puducherry had the lowest (14.2%).

Lifestyle-related risk factors are being cited, compounded by an inadequate number of treatment centres in the region

Without policies to stop the worrying spread of antimicrobial resistance, the mortality rate could be disturbing

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