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Diets that are centered around whole, unprocessed foods such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and lean proteins help maintain a balanced diet by reducing the intake of unhealthy fats, added sugars, and sodium. Dietary habits can vary depending on individual characteristics, lifestyle preferences, cultural background, locally available food options, and traditional dietary practices, although there are certain fundamental principles that apply to all diets. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Health Organization, establishing healthy eating guidelines is essential for promoting overall well-being. The World Health Organization has established a number of recommendations regarding diet and lifestyle, including regular physical activity, maintaining a healthy weight, and limiting tobacco use, which can help prevent or manage type 2 diabetes. Diabetes is a chronic condition that affects millions of people worldwide and is caused by the body either producing inadequate amounts of insulin or being unable to effectively utilize the insulin it produces. In individuals with diabetes, dietary management plays a crucial role in regulating blood glucose levels, preventing complications, and promoting overall health. A healthy diet combined with regular physical activity and medication can help manage type 2 diabetes and prevent its complications. Insulin is a hormone that regulates blood sugar levels; hyperglycaemia or high blood sugar occurs when the body fails to produce sufficient insulin or becomes resistant to it. Diabetes treatment coverage varies significantly across low- and middle-income countries where access to healthcare services is often limited. According to the World Health Organization, diabetes was responsible for over 2 million deaths in 2021 and accounted for around 11% of all cardiovascular-related deaths. In order to manage type 2 diabetes, individuals must adopt healthy lifestyle habits such as regular physical activity, maintaining a normal body weight, avoiding tobacco use, and making informed dietary choices. Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune condition that results in the complete lack of insulin production, thereby requiring daily administration of exogenous insulin. Type 2 diabetes affects how the body utilizes glucose for energy, resulting in inadequate insulin sensitivity leading to high blood sugar levels if left untreated or undertreated. In individuals with type 2 diabetes, managing blood sugar levels through dietary and lifestyle interventions is crucial to preventing long-term complications such as cardiovascular disease and kidney damage. Possibly, their children are also at an increased risk of type 2 diabetes in the future. Gestational diabetes is diagnosed through prenatal screening, rather than through reported symptoms. Impaired glucose tolerance and impaired fasting glycaemia, impaired glucose tolerance (IGT) and impaired fasting glycaemia (IFG) are intermediate conditions in the transition between normality and diabetes. People with IGT or IFG are at high risk of progressing to type 2 diabetes, although this is not inevitable. Prevention: Lifestyle changes are the best way to prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes. To help prevent type 2 diabetes and its complications, people should: reach and keep a healthy body weight; stay physically active with at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise each week; eat a healthy diet and avoid sugar and saturated fat; not smoke tobacco. Diagnosis and treatment: Early diagnosis can be accomplished through relatively inexpensive testing of blood glucose. People with type 1 diabetes need insulin injections for survival. One of the most important ways to treat diabetes is to keep a healthy lifestyle. Some people with type 2 diabetes will need to take medicines to help manage their blood sugar levels. These can include insulin injections or other medicines. Some examples include: metformin; sulfonylurea; sodium-glucose co-transporters type 2 (SGLT-2) inhibitors. Along with medicines to lower blood sugar, people with diabetes often need medications to lower their blood pressure and statins to reduce the risk of complications. Additional medical care may be needed to treat the effects of diabetes: foot care to treat ulcers; screening and treatment for kidney disease; eye exams to screen for retinopathy (which causes blindness). WHO response: WHO aims to stimulate and support the adoption of effective measures for the surveillance, prevention, and control of diabetes and its complications, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. To this end, WHO provides scientific guidelines for the prevention of major noncommunicable diseases including diabetes; develops norms and standards for diabetes diagnosis and care; builds awareness on the global epidemic of diabetes, marking World Diabetes Day (14 November); and conducts surveillance of diabetes and its risk factors. In April 2021, WHO launched the Global Diabetes Compact, a global initiative aiming for sustained improvements in diabetes prevention and care, with a particular focus on supporting low- and middle-income countries. In May 2021, the World Health Assembly agreed a Resolution on strengthening prevention and control of diabetes. In May 2022, the World Health Assembly endorsed five global diabetes coverage targets to be achieved by 2030. To learn more about the Global Diabetes Compact, to access diabetes-related technical publications to get involved in upcoming initiatives, visit the Global Diabetes Compact webpage. References: 1. Global Burden of Disease Collaborative Network. Global Burden of Disease Study 2021. Results. Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. 2024. Healthy living is a choice that requires effort and dedication, but the benefits far outweigh the costs. Here are ten simple tips to help you live healthier: 1. **Fight for clean air**: Be part of the movement to create tobacco-smoke-free environments in your community. 2. **Get moving**: Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per week. This can be as simple as walking or cycling to work, taking the stairs instead of the elevator, or doing a few jumping jacks during commercial breaks while watching TV. 3. **Monitor your blood pressure**: Regular check-ups can help prevent hypertension and its deadly consequences like heart disease and kidney failure. 4. **Respect traffic laws**: Wear seatbelts, follow speed limits, and avoid using your phone while driving to reduce the risk of road accidents. 5. **Use antibiotics wisely**: Only take them when prescribed by a doctor and complete the full course to prevent antibiotic resistance. 6. **Keep your hands clean**: Wash your hands regularly with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to prevent the spread of diseases. 7. **Stay informed about your health**: Regular check-ups can help catch health problems early, making them easier to treat. 8. **Eat a balanced diet**: Focus on whole foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. Limit your intake of processed foods, sugars, and saturated fats. 9. **Set a good example for children**: Teach kids the importance of healthy habits by modeling them yourself. 10. **Stay up-to-date with health guidelines**: Follow recommendations from reputable health organizations to stay informed about the latest health trends and best practices. By incorporating these simple tips into your daily life, you can significantly improve your overall well-being and reduce your risk of chronic diseases. Energy Intake Guidelines for a Healthy Diet Promoting Healthy Diets Amidst a Sea of Sugary Treats The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in collaboration with the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), adopted a comprehensive framework to promote diversified, safe, and healthy diets at all stages of life. Following ICN2, the World Health Organization (WHO) has been instrumental in supporting countries in implementing the commitments made during the conference. In 2018, WHO approved its 13th General Programme of Work (GPW13), which will guide the organization's efforts from 2019 to 2023. One of the key priorities identified in GPW13 is the reduction of salt and sodium intake, as well as the elimination of industrially produced trans-fats from the food supply. WHO has developed a roadmap, known as the REPLACE action package, to help countries accelerate their actions to eliminate these harmful substances. The REPLACE package was launched by WHO to support Member States in taking necessary steps to eliminate industrially produced trans-fats. The package includes a set of policy options and strategies to promote diversified, safe, and healthy diets. In addition to reducing salt and sodium intake, GPW13 also highlights the importance of limiting sugar consumption and promoting potassium-rich foods. WHO has developed guidelines for these nutrients, including an upper limit for sugar intake and recommendations for potassium intake. The organization's efforts to reduce unhealthy food consumption are part of its broader strategy to promote healthy lives and well-being for all at all ages.

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