COVID-19 and NCD risk factors

OBESITY

Obesity increases the risk for becoming severely ill from COVID-19. In a study in France,[1] the odds of developing severe COVID-19 were seven times higher in patients with obesity. Promoting healthy diets to maintain nutritional well-being is more important than ever in the fight against COVID-19.

SMOKING

In a meta-analysis,[2] **smokers were 1.5 times more likely to have severe complications from COVID-19** and had a higher mortality rate.

ALCOHOL

Alcohol impairs the body's ability to fight infections such as COVID-19.[3] Even a single heavy drinking session can measurably reduce immune function. Intoxication can also interfere with taking precautions against infection.

PHYSICAL INACTIVITY

Physical activity provides multiple short- and long-term health benefits, including improving the immune system, stress and anxiety.[4] **Physical activity is also associated with prevention of heart disease, hypertension, diabetes and overweight and obesity, which are risk factors for severe COVID-19 disease.**[5]

POLLUTION

A relation between exposure to air pollution and mortality from COVID-19 has been hypothesized.[6] **Air pollution compromises lung function, which increases the risk for vulnerability to respiratory infection, including COVID-19.**

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UN INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE ON NCDs
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COVID-19 and NCDs

DIABETES

A systematic review[7] indicated that **people with diabetes were up to three times more likely to have severe symptoms or die from COVID-19**, and the situation is likely to be worse for people with uncontrolled diabetes.[8]

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

A meta-analysis showed that **hypertension, cardiovascular and cerebrovascular disease increased the odds for severe COVID-19** by 2.3, 2.9 and 3.9 times, respectively.[9] Another meta-analysis indicated that hypertension increased the risk of mortality from COVID-19 by 3.5 times.[10]

RESPIRATORY DISEASE

In a meta-analysis, **patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) were at increased risk of severe complications or death from COVID-19.**[11] A study in the United Kingdom suggested that the presence of respiratory disease, including asthma, increased patients' risk of mortality from COVID-19.[12]

CANCER

Cancer patients are more likely to experience severe COVID-19.[13] A study in Wuhan, China, showed that the **mortality rate from COVID-19 was significantly increased in patients with cancer and was particularly high among those with blood cancers.**[14]

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