Prime Minister inaugurates the Al Waab Health Center

Minister of Public Health attends the opening of the state-of-the-art health facilities that will cater to 35,000 patients by 2019

Catherine W Gichuki
Doha

The health care sector in Qatar continues to expand in terms of infrastructure and services. Recently, the Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) opened yet another state-of-the-art facility, the Al Waab Health Center, which can cater to 35,000 patients by 2019 from the nearby areas.

The health center was inaugurated by the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior HE Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa al Thani. The Prime Minister was accompanied by the Minister of Public Health HE Dr Hanan Mohammed al Kuwari and PHCC Managing Director Dr. Mariam Abdul Malik.

The Al Waab Health Center will cater to patients from Al Waab, Azziziya, Mehairja, Fareej Al Soudan 54 and 55, Maamoura 43 and Fareej Al Nasser areas.

In a statement the Minister of Public Health said, “The opening of the Al Waab Health Center is part of the large expansion plans in the health infrastructure, which include the opening of primary health care centres in different parts of the country ensuring that all residents receive high-quality care in health facilities close to their homes in order to achieve our health strategies that emphasize primary care as a key focus of the health care model.”

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Caring for your vision

Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) has recently advised the people on how to care for eyes. Dr Badria Ali Mohamed al Maliki, Assistant Director of Continuing Care at PHCC, said: “Long term continuity of care is an essential element of treatment for any eye conditions and this requires regular follow up supported by other specialists who may be needed.”

Loose weight to avoid or manage chronic diseases

Obesity is a serious problem in Qatar and weight loss is essential to avoid or manage chronic diseases and conditions associated with obesity, such as diabetes, pre-diabetes, high blood pressure, and osteoarthritis. Specialists at Hamad Medical Corporation have said that obese patients should consult with their doctor before beginning a weight-loss journey.
HMC’s Hazm Mebaireek General Hospital brings care closer to the Industrial Area Community

HEALTH CHECK TEAM

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AMAD Medical Corporation (HMC) has recently reached another milestone as Hazm Mebaireek General Hospital (HMGH) welcomed its first patients bringing care closer to the Industrial Area.

The hospital’s internal medicine clinics welcomed outpatients ahead of its official opening in the coming months.

Located in the heart of the Industrial Area of Doha, the Hazm Mebaireek General Hospital will join HMC network of specialist and community hospitals after its full opening. It will be dedicated to caring for adult males living and working in the Industrial Area.

By bringing care closer to where it is needed in the community, HMC’s newest hospital is expected to relieve some of the pressure on other hospitals and clinics, particularly emergency services at Hamad General Hospital and Al Waqra Hospital.

Offering a range of outpatient clinics and clinical support services, the new hospital will also provide inpatient care, surgical services and emergency care. These services will become operational in phases during the coming months.

HMC’s Chief of Healthcare Facilities Hamad al Khalifa said that when fully operational, Hazm Mebaireek General Hospital will offer a range of services and facilities that will help to meet the healthcare demands of Qatar’s growing population.

“Late last year His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al Thani officially opened HMC’s three new Medical City hospitals, significantly expanding our ability to care for patients. I am extremely proud that we can now build upon this success as we start to see patients at Hazm Mebaireek General Hospital,” he said.

According to Al Khalifa, HMGH will offer the same high standard of facilities, services, and care seen at all Hamad’s hospitals. It will provide adult males - from Qataris to expatriate labourers - with the best possible care right here in the heart of the Industrial Area community.”

Acting CEO of Hazm Mebaireek General Hospital, Wilson Ross, said the opening of outpatient clinics at the new hospital is the result of many years of careful planning and hard work. He said it is the first step towards the hospital becoming fully operational.

“In the coming months, we look forward to opening more services and are extremely proud to have been able to welcome the first patients to our wonderful new facility. We believe this hospital will truly change the lives of the people living and working in the Industrial Area by providing them with care right here in the community. This new hospital builds upon our commitment to provide patients with easier access to care and an improved patient experience. Additionally, we are working closely with Primary Health Care Corporation and Qatar Red Crescent colleagues to ensure the journey between primary and secondary care is as smooth and seamless as possible.”

Executive Director of Hazm Mebaireek General Hospital, Hussein Ishaq, reinforced the significance of having a hospital located in the heart of the Industrial Area.

“HMC has been the leading healthcare provider in Qatar for nearly 40 years and this new hospital will ensure we continue to provide world-class care for generations to come. Once fully operational, HMGH will have a major positive impact on health services in Qatar, and in particular for patients located in the Industrial Area. These patients will no longer need to travel to Doha for care, and the new hospital will also help to reduce the burden on our busy hospitals in Doha.”

Minister of Public Health attends the opening of Al Waab Health Center

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 »

Dr Abdul Malik said, “At its heart, primary health care is about caring for people, rather than simply treating specific illnesses. PHCC as the first point of contact in Qatar health care system aims to provide comprehensive, accessible, community-based care that meets the health needs of individuals throughout their life. This of course is in line with not only the new National Health Strategy but following the leadership of the Amir HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al Thani in driving forward Qatar National Vision 2030 to ensure that we are promoting health to sustain a prosperous society.”

PHCC Executive Director of Operations Dr Samya Ahmad al Abdullah said, “We aim to cater to all our patients’ needs, bringing a team of highly qualified and trained staff, as well as our unique family medicine model, enhancing patient experience and enabling easier access to all of PHCC’s different health services. We are proud of these facilities, and we encourage everyone in the catchment area to register.”

Al Waab Health Center Manager Dr Maha Saif al Mesallam said, “We want to give the best quality of service to our patients.”

Physicians lead at the health center Dr Elham al Emadi said that family medicine is a new programme started by PHCC whereby each doctor will have specific number of patients and those patients will follow-up with that specific physician. “We have continuity of care so that the patients do not need to repeat their history and background to different doctors every time they visit the health centre. The doctor will be fully responsible to that patient.”

The new health centre offers an array of services, including women’s wellness and maternity clinics, Well baby and vaccination clinic, non-communicable disease clinic, smoking cessation clinic, and a travel clinic for health advice and travel vaccinations. It will also offer ‘Smart-health’ check-ups, dietitians, a dental clinic, physiotherapy, optometry and audiology, among other services.

The health center operates between 7am to 11pm.
Health Minister attends “Together We Make A Difference” seminar on Qatar’s Public Health Strategy initiatives

The seminar was attended by all health sector partners and stakeholders involved in the implementation of health initiatives in the State of Qatar, including HMC, Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC), Medical Services in the Ministry of Interior, Qatar Armed Forces and Qatar Petroleum, as well as the private health sector.

Ministry of Public Health (MoPH)

Director of Public Health Department Dr Sheikh Mohammed bin Hamad al Thani, emphasized that strengthening Qatar’s governance, laws, regulations, performance management and health indicators is required for successful work within the framework of public health services and functions. “Qatar ranks 13th on Legatum Prosperity Index (LPI) in the world’s best health systems in 2017 and we hope to be among the top ten countries in the world in the next few years,” he said.

“Achieving the goals of the National Health Strategy and the objectives of Qatar’s Public Health Strategy will lead to a healthier life and enhance the well-being of all at different stages of life,” Sheikh Dr Mohammed al Thani said.

“Cooperation between the health sector and related stakeholders will be at the highest level to support successful public health activities, ensuring progress towards realizing the Qatar National Vision 2030.”

The National Health Strategy 2018-2022 thoroughly covers all other health-related strategies in the State of Qatar, including the Qatar Public Health Strategy. The National Health Strategy includes seven priority population groups and five system-wide areas. Twelve national leaders have also been appointed to serve as specialized committees for the implementation of the National Health Strategy.

Efforts are being made to strengthen constructive cooperation with all partners to ensure optimal implementation of the strategy as well as to ensure that their implementation is consistent with other health strategies – especially the National Health Strategy.

Hamad Jassim al Hammer

He stressed that efforts are being made to strengthen constructive cooperation with all partners to ensure optimal implementation of the strategy as well as to ensure that their implementation is consistent with other health strategies – especially the National Health Strategy – with an emphasis on empowering people and educating them about healthy lifestyles and access.
Caring for your vision

How to care for your vision

Schedule yearly comprehensive exams. Eye care should begin early in life. Early detection and treatment is the best way to maintain good vision at any age.

Protect against Ultra Violet (UV) rays. Long-term exposure to the sun poses significant risk not just to your skin, but to your eyes as well. It is vital to wear sunglasses, choosing a pair that blocks more than 95 percent of UV-A, and more than 99 percent of UV-B radiation.

Give your eyes a break from digital device use. Research suggests that some of us are spending up to 7 hours a day using computers or other digital devices such as tablets and smartphones. This constant eye activity increases the risk of sight complications, causing dry eye, eyestrain, headaches, neck and/or backache, and fatigue. PHCC recommends a break every 20 minutes, (take a 20 second break and look at something 20 feet away).

Maintain a healthy diet. As part of a healthful diet, eat five servings of fruits and vegetables daily—particularly the leafy green variety. Six nutrients—antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthin, essential fatty acids, vitamins C and E and the mineral zinc—have been identified as helping to protect eyesight and promote eye health.

Use proper lighting. Eye strain can often be caused by excessively bright light either from harsh indoor lighting or outdoor sunlight; your lighting should be about half as bright as that typically found in most offices.

How to prevent children from eye trauma

CATHERINE W GICHUKI

There are many childhood eye diseases and most of them are treatable if diagnosed early. However, if left untreated, it can lead to permanent defective vision or blindness.

For trauma, prevention is better than treatment. A child can get direct eye trauma that most of the time causes complete or partial visual loss.

Eye trauma injuries in children can happen in school, at home or while playing. Hamad Medical Corporation’s (HMC) Specialist Ophthalmologist and a member of the organizing committee for the HMC’s World Sight Day, Dr Deena Safwaan said, “Eye trauma in children is very common, but the good news is that most eye injuries can be prevented. Our team dedicates a lot of time toward providing education in schools about common eye injuries and prevention measures, particularly among primary school children.”

Eye trauma in children is caused by sharp objects, fireworks, glass or chemicals.

This is how you can prevent your child from eye trauma:

◆ Choose safe toys for children according to their age and avoid toys with sharp edges.
◆ Keep sharp kitchen tools out of children’s reach.
◆ Supervise children when they play.
◆ Do not allow children to play with fireworks.
◆ Keep cleaning substances away from children.

Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) has recently advised the people on how to care for eyes.

Dr Badria Ali Mohamed al Malki, Assistant Director of Continuing Care at PHCC, said: “Long term continuity of care is an essential element of treatment for any eye conditions and this requires regular follow-up supported by other specialists, who may be needed. At PHCC we want to ensure that patients are routinely examined, diagnosed, cross referred and treated by a specialist team if necessary, making access very easy and convenient for patients from across the region.”

To book an appointment for an eye test at PHCC, visit your registered health center.

HEALTH CHECK TEAM

DOHA

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Good mental health equals psychological well-being

HEALTH CHECK TEAM

GOOD mental health is related to psychological well-being and has an impact on general health, according to the National Health Strategy Lead for mental Health and Well-being.

According to him while at least one in five adults and one in ten children globally will have a mental health condition, usually only about 25 percent of these individuals receive continuous treatment.

"Stigma, based on insufficient or incorrect information, is a barrier to getting help," he said.

To mark the World Mental Health Day, themed, 'Young people and mental health in a changing world', MoPH collaborated with other health care providers and stakeholders including the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Ministry of Transport and communications, Hamad Medical Corporation, Primary Health Care Corporation, Sidra Medical, Naufar, Qatar University, Qatar National Library and Weyak to raise awareness about mental health issues and the impact on general health and well-being.

At an event organised at the Qatar National Library recently, participants learnt how mindfulness, good nutrition and safe internet practices can help them to stay healthy. "Through the collaboration with so many other public sector partners, who are helping to arrange educational and informative community-based events, we will fulfill an important goal set out in our National Mental Health Strategy to address stigma surrounding mental health. But more importantly, we will help vulnerable members in our society feel more confident to reach out and seek help."

MoPH's Sheikh Dr Mohamed al Thani said, "Each of our partners has specialist knowledge in a particular area and will contribute valuable information that will help our efforts to eliminate the stigma around common conditions such as depression, anxiety, and other emotional disorders.

He added that 'Improved Mental Health and Wellbeing' is one of the seven national priority focus areas of Qatar's National Health Strategy 2018-2022. Our strategic goal is to support increased community awareness about mental health illness and services, and reduced stigma surrounding mental health.'

MoPH Acting Executive Director of National Mental Health Programme Susan Clelland, said, "The best way to deal with stigma is through sharing facts and encouraging a better understanding of mental health issues, including identifying the causes, where to get help, and ultimately recognising that in many cases there are underlying medical conditions that need to be addressed."

According to World Health Organisation (WHO), "Adolescence and the early years of adulthood are a time of life when many changes occur, for example changing schools, leaving home, and starting university or a new job. For many, these are exciting times. However, it can also be times of stress and apprehension. These feelings can lead to mental illness, in some cases, if not recognized and managed."

The expanding use of online technologies, while undoubtedly bringing many benefits, can also bring additional pressures, as connectivity to virtual networks at any time of the day and night grows."

Facebook posts can help predict users’ depression diagnosis

LANGUAGE people use in their Facebook posts can predict a future diagnosis of depression as accurately as the tools clinicians use in medical settings to screen for the disease, suggests new research.

"Social media data contain markers akin to the genome," said one of the researchers Johannes Eichstaedt from University of Pennsylvania in the US.

"With surprisingly similar methods to those used in genomics, we can comb social media data to find these markers. Depression appears to be something quite detectable in this way," Eichstaedt said.

For the study, published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), the researchers identified data from nearly 1,200 people consenting to share Facebook statuses and electronic medical-record information. They then analysed the statuses using Machine Learning techniques to distinguish those with a formal depression diagnosis.

The researchers found their algorithm could accurately predict future depression.

To build the algorithm, the researchers looked back at 524,292 Facebook updates from the years leading to diagnosis for each individual with depression and for the same time span for the control.

They determined the most frequently used words and phrases and then modelled 200 topics to figure out what they called "depression-associated language markers."

Finally, they compared in what manner and how frequently depressed versus control participants used such phrasing.

The researchers learned that these markers comprised emotional, cognitive, and interpersonal processes such as hostility and loneliness, sadness and rumination, and that they could predict future depression as early as three months before first documentation of the illness in a medical record.
Al-Ahli Hospital – Doha, Qatar

Pulmonology & chest Department

Diagnosis and treating the following:

- Disease of the upper and lower airways.
- All types of infectious, inflammatory and malignant lung diseases.
- Pulmonary manifestation of other systemic diseases.
- Vaccination antiviral and antibacterial.
- Diagnosis and treatment of allergy and Bronchial asthma.
- Pulmonary vascular disorders.
- Diagnostic and therapeutic procedures.
- Full Pulmonary Function Tests.
- Fully equipped Sleep Laboratory.
- Smoking cessation specialty.
- Early diagnosis of lung trauma.
- Bronchoscopy and lung biopsies.
- Diagnosis and treatment of Pulmonary embolism.
UNDER the supervision of a specialised team from Al Ahli Hospital, “Hemya” Al Ahli Healthy Nutrition Center, the first of its kind service in Qatar, is dedicated to the community and delivers a unique diet programme to the door step of guests. The dietitians develop a healthy diet plan for each guest based on their anthropometric measurements and nutritional requirements.

Hemya Manager Afia’a Mohammed al Masri said, “Hemya” diet programme aims to assist people in balancing their calorie intake, maintaining an adequate nutrition and managing weight related body variables or nutritional- related risk factors. Our aim is to deliver ultimate calorie-controlled meals to your door step. It is a unique diet in your way.”

The team at “Hemya” is staffed with five other dietitians namely: Vedaiyan Jayanthi, Hania Kreidieh, Amani Hilal Al-Najjar, Assma Alsamail, and Farah Kalakech. They together get an average of 150 appointments with guests at clinics, whether referred from a physician, or self-referred (Walk-in). The team of trained expert dietitians guides the guests to a healthy living regardless of their nationality, food preferences and eating habits. The Dietary Department always aims to work to the highest professional standards and use evidence-based practices to develop new effective therapies in a holistic way.

“Hemya”, is committed to provide high quality and healthy foods to his guests, the meals provided are as per the nutritional standards and personal preferences. It provides standardized therapeutic diets as an intervention in the treatment process according to the nutritional status of guests and as a part of the well-being services.

This centre also helps in-house and visiting guests carry out dietary prescriptions according to the principles of therapeutic nutrition and dietary management through clinics. “Everyone requires basic essential nutrients from all food groups, nutrients are carbohydrates, protein, fat, vitamins, and minerals. Yet the determination of the right amount of each nutrient is very essential, especially during illness when the requirements of individual vary depending on the disease and health condition,” said Afia’a, Chief Dietitian at the Al Ahli Hospital.

Upon visiting, clinical dietitians analyse body composition of the guest. They collect details related to the condition such as medical history, family history of health complications, lifestyle habits and food preferences of the guest and design a tailor-made diet plan. They also provide nutritional and diet counseling for guests with medical conditions including obesity for all age groups, hypertension, dyslipidemia, gastrointestinal diseases, metabolic disorders, and Hormonal imbalances and food allergies.

They also assess and give proper dietary guidelines for the bariatic procedures.

“We emphasize on the importance of overall mental and physical well-being and healthy lifestyle of our guests. The team sees all types of cases in need of a diet plan. Some guests get self referred and others are referred by doctors within our hospital and from hospitals and medical centers outside Al Ahli. Our services can be suitable for children from three months until adults of 70 years old. Depending on the guest’s condition and needs we design the diet plan,” said Afia’a.

“The food is prepared with very low amount of natural sugar, fat and sodium. Our chefs daily prepare a wide range of recipes with fresh ingredients from different world cuisines in collaboration with the dietitians,” she added.

Anyone can create their menu daily based on dietitians’ recommendations via the website www.HEMYA.com.

“Follow-up and assessment is essential in every case. We follow up and assess every guest two weeks after the diet plan is introduced. We check how the person has adapted to the plan, and monitor any negative or positive outcomes, then we do the necessary changes with the needed advises and instructions to help the guest achieve the best results and to follow the plan more efficiently,” she added.

The outpatient clinic is open from Saturday to Thursday 8am to 7pm.

In-house dietary services at the Al Ahli Hospital include daily visits to guests where the dietitian gives nutritional education and individualized healthy dietary plan, nutrition support team also approaches and supervises therapeutic meals preparation.

Different types of therapeutic diets are planned for in-house guests at Al Ahli Hospital, based on their specific needs.

“We do assess and screen guests upon admission. We do daily visits to our in-patients. Special diet plans are made for every patient based on their condition. We do follow-up and give guidance to those guests who are at high risk even after discharge,” said Afia’a.

Other activities held by dietitians include participating in different media platforms and provide nutritional education; participating in public nutrition awareness and screening programmes to serve the community; and conduct and attend conferences, workshops and special educational teaching programmes with multidisciplinary team.
N obstetrics specialist at Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) says most women will not require a caesarian delivery (C-section) but she notes it is important that expectant mothers prepare themselves, particularly emotionally, should their doctor advice that a surgical birth is necessary. She says a caesarean section is recommended in around 30 percent of deliveries across HMC’s maternity hospitals.

Senior Consultant and Head of the Feto-Maternal Medicine Unit at the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department at HMC’s Women’s Wellness and Research Center (WWRC), Dr Najat Khenyab said, “Sometimes there are medical reasons that make a C-section the best option for a woman and her baby. In many cases, we know in advance that a C-section will be required and the woman is able to prepare herself. However, there are times when an emergency C-section becomes necessary and knowing what to expect can help make the situation less stressful for a woman and her family.”

A cesarean, or C-section, is the surgical delivery of a baby and involves making incisions in the mother’s abdominal wall and uterus. While many C-sections are planned in advance due to a woman developing pregnancy complications or having had a previous C-section, Dr Khenyab says in some cases it doesn’t become obvious until labor is well underway that a caesarean is required.

“It is important to note that a C-section is a major surgery and is not necessary, nor recommended, in most pregnancies. There are a number of reasons why a woman may need an emergency C-section, including fetal or maternal distress, maternal hemorrhage, placental abruption, or a prolapsed umbilical cord, but this is not an elective procedure. Being advised that a C-section is necessary can be very emotional and traumatic event for many women. So it is important that pregnant women and their families are prepared if a C-section is recommended,” Dr Khenyab notes.

A caesarean is generally a safe procedure, but like any type of surgery, it carries a certain amount of risk.

According to Consultant Maternal-Fetal Medicine at the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department at WWRC, Dr Saw-san al Obaidly, possible complications of a cesarean delivery include blood clots, excessive bleeding, and the potential for damage to internal organs.

“Major complications relating to cesarean delivery are wound infections, post-partum hemorrhage, blood clots, reaction to anesthesia, injury to pelvic organs, and increased risks during future pregnancies,” she highlights.

She adds that pregnant women who have delivered a baby through a cesarean section are generally at higher risk of potential complications, noting that health risks increase with each subsequent C-section.

“The risk of placenta previa (when a baby’s placenta partially or totally covers the mother’s cervix — the outlet for the uterus) in women who have had one C-section is 10 in 1,000 cases, compared to 28 in 1,000 cases for women who have had three cesarean deliveries. Placenta previa can cause severe bleeding during pregnancy and delivery,” she states.

According to Dr Al Obaidly, the risk of placenta accreta (a serious pregnancy condition that occurs when the placenta grows too deeply into the uterine wall) in women with placenta previa and no cesarean deliveries is three to four percent, compared to 50 to 67 percent in women who have had more than four cesarean deliveries. She says both of these placental disorders increase the risk of hemorrhage and the need for a blood transfusion and hysterectomy (operation to remove a woman’s uterus).
Loose weight to avoid or manage chronic diseases

Catherine W Gichuki

Obesity is a serious problem in Qatar and weight loss is essential to avoid or manage chronic diseases and conditions associated with obesity, such as diabetes, pre-diabetes, high blood pressure, and osteoarthritis.

Specialists at Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) have said that obese patients should consult with their doctor before beginning a weight-loss journey and having a Body Mass Index (BMI) equal to or greater than 30 is a major risk factor for a number of chronic diseases.

HMC’s Qatar Metabolic Institute consultant Dr. Marwa Gomaa Hussein Mokhtar said, “Individuals with a BMI greater than 30, which approximates to 30 pounds of excess weight, are at risk of developing serious health problems. Once an individual understands what factors are contributing to weight gain, a healthcare professional can help them set appropriate weight loss goals.”

She said that the longer a person remains obese, the more significant obesity-related risk factors become. “The causes of obesity are complex. There may be many interrelated factors, such as genetics, lifestyle, diet, underlying health conditions, and how an individual’s body uses energy.”

According to Dr. Mokhtar, understanding and making lifestyle changes isn’t always easy but it is the key to long-term weight loss and the greater the degree of weight loss achieved, the greater the health benefits. “All of our weight loss programmes emphasise lifestyle modifications, specifically adjustments to the type and quantity of food consumed and the incorporation of physical activity. Lifestyle changes are the mainstay of weight loss treatment and are important for the long-term maintenance of weight loss.”

“Qatar ranks 13th on Legatum Prosperity Index in the world’s best health systems in 2017 and we hope to be among the top ten countries in the world in the next few years”

Dr. Marwa Gomaa Hussein Mokhtar

Making healthier choices when selecting meals and beverages is a simple way to effectively increase weight loss. Soda, juice, and energy drinks are often loaded with sugar and extra calories and can contribute to weight gain over time.”

Reem al Saadi

HMC Director of Dietetics and Nutrition

Reem al Saadi said that dietary changes are an essential part of the weight loss equation. She added that one of the first steps in successful weight loss is to become educated about food choices. “Making healthier choices when selecting meals and beverages is a simple way to effectively increase weight loss. Soda, juice, and energy drinks are often loaded with sugar and extra calories and can contribute to weight gain over time.”

She added that people should have knowledge about foods which includes learning how to read food labels and following recommended portion sizes that can help people make better decisions about what they eat. “All packaged foods have nutrition labels but many people do not know how to read them. It can be confusing because food labels can display nutrition claims that are misleading. Knowing how to read food labels is especially important for those who have health conditions, such as high blood pressure or high cholesterol.”

The serving size and number of servings per package section of a nutrition label show how many servings are in the package and how big a serving is, which is generally listed as ‘cups’ or ‘pieces’. In addition to listing the energy (kilocalories/calories) within a serving size, the nutrition label also contains information on protein, total fat, saturated fat, carbohydrates, sugar, protein, sodium, and fiber. Nutrition labels also include information about food allergens, such as nuts, gluten, and milk. “The most important numbers to look for on a food label are portion size, portions per package, total fat, trans and saturated fat, sugar, sodium, and fiber. One of the biggest misconceptions people have about losing weight is that they can eat freely, in any amount, for instance, a food that is labelled as low fat or diet.”

She however said that calorie restriction is the cornerstone of any weight loss programme and people should not be obsessive about counting calories but it is necessary to know the calorie content of various foods and the recommended calorie intake for weight loss; and this number will vary from person to person depending on age, height, weight, and lifestyle.

Kids with autism 50% more likely to be obese: Study

Children with developmental delays, including autism spectrum disorder (ASD), are up to 50 per cent more likely to be overweight or obese compared with the general population, a study says.

Among children with ASD, those with a higher degree of impairment and more severe symptoms were at even greater risk of developing obesity by age five, showed the findings published online in The Journal of Pediatrics.

“These findings make it clear that monitoring these children for excess weight gain at an early age is critical, and that prevention efforts should be expanded to include not just children with ASD, but those with other developmental diagnoses, as well,” said the study’s lead author Susan Levy from Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, US.

The study included nearly 2,500 children between the ages of two and five years old. This age group is especially relevant, since it is an important window for early obesity prevention.

The research showed that children with ASD were 1.57 times more likely to be overweight or obese than the general population. Children with developmental delays were 1.38 times more likely to be overweight or obese.

The risk for obesity was even more pronounced in children with severe ASD symptoms, as they were 1.7 times more likely to be classified as overweight or obese than children with mild ASD symptoms.
Seed oils better for lowering cholesterol: Study

Oils obtained from seeds such as sunflower, rapeseed, safflower and flaxseed could be more beneficial in lowering bad cholesterol, known to damage arteries, and increase the risk of heart diseases and strokes, new research claims.

Many of the previous studies have established that mono- and polyunsaturated fats are better for blood lipids than saturated fats swapped out one food source at a time, making it hard to tell which of a plethora of vegetable oils might be most beneficial.

However, the study, led by Lukas Schwingshackl, a researcher at the German Institute of Human Nutrition, indicated that solid fats like butter and lard are the worst choice for LDL. The best alternatives are oils from seeds.

"Sunflower oil, rapeseed oil, safflower oil and flaxseed oil performed best," Schwingshackl said.

"Some people from Mediterranean countries probably are not so happy with this result, because they would prefer to see olive oil at the top. But this is not the case," he noted.

For the study, published in the Journal of Lipid Research, the team conducted a meta-analysis of 55 studies that assessed the effects of consuming the same amount of calories from two or more different oils on participants’ blood lipids.

They compared the effect of two or more oils or fats on patients’ low-density lipoprotein (LDL), or bad cholesterol or other blood lipids like total cholesterol, High-density lipoprotein (HDL) or good cholesterol, over at least three weeks.

Safflower oil showed the highest surface under the cumulative ranking curve (SUCRA) value for LDL-cholesterol (LDL-C) (82 per cent) and total cholesterol (90 per cent), followed by rapeseed oil (76 per cent for LDL-C, 85 per cent for TC).

Conversely, palm oil (74 per cent) had the highest SUCRA value for triacylglycerols (TGs), and coconut oil (88 per cent) for HDL-cholesterol (HDL-C).

Despite limitations in the data, our findings are in line with existing evidence on the metabolic effects of fat and support current recommendations to replace high saturated-fat food with unsaturated oils, Schwingshackl noted.

Quit smoking to reduce the risk of premature heart disease

HAMAD Medical Corporation’s (HMC) Tobacco Control Center Head Dr Ahmad al Mulla has warning of the link between smoking and premature heart disease in young people. He says young smokers are more than eight times more likely to have a major heart attack compared to non-smokers.

According to Dr Al Mulla, HMC’s Tobacco Control Center receives a number of referrals each month from the Heart Hospital for patients under the age of 40 who have blood clots and blockages in their arteries. He says smoking is a major risk factor for coronary heart disease, a condition in which plaque builds up inside the coronary arteries.

Coronary heart disease occurs when arteries that carry blood to the heart muscle are narrowed by plaque or blocked by clots. Chemicals in cigarette smoke cause the blood to thicken and form clots inside veins and arteries and blockage from a clot can lead to a heart attack and sudden death.

HMC Smoking Cessation Specialist Dr Jamal Abdullah says all patients who seek the services of the Tobacco Control Center undergo a full assessment, including a complete medical history and related evaluations. As part of the assessment, clinicians talk to patients about available treatment options and caution them about the impact smoking has on their health and the importance of quitting. He says in addition to smoking cigarettes, popular forms of tobacco use among young people in Qatar include electronic cigarettes, chewing tobacco (Swedish Snus), and a tobacco product mixed with aromatic leaf and bark herbs (Midwakh or Dokha). He says many young people think these alternatives are less harmful than tobacco cigarettes.

But these products can be more dangerous, he warns. While smoking is a leading cause of heart attacks and heart disease, many of the risks can be reversed simply by quitting smoking. The Tobacco Control Center continues to receive a large number of requests from new patients wanting to quit, indicating a desire among most of the people to stop smoking and to protect their health from the adverse effects of tobacco use.
Diabetes may be detected 20 years before diagnosis: Study

Early signs of Type-2 diabetes can be detected 20 years before diagnosis, according to a new research. Researchers from Aizawa Hospital in Japan found that increased fasting glucose, higher body mass index (BMI) and impaired insulin sensitivity were detectable 10 years before the diagnosis of diabetes as well as prediabetes. As the vast majority of people with Type-2 diabetes go through the stage of prediabetes, our findings suggest that elevated metabolic markers for diabetes are detectable more than 20 years before its diagnosis, said Hiroyuki Sagesaka, lead researcher from the varsity.

According to present studies, diabetes can be detected 20 years before its diagnosis unlike the previous research which suggested that risk factors like obesity and elevated fasting glucose may be present up to 10 years before someone is diagnosed with the issue.

In the beginning of the study, 27,392 non-diabetic individuals had a fasting glucose and average blood glucose (HbA1c) measured and were followed until a diagnosis of Type-2 diabetes or prediabetes.

Over the study period, 1,067 new Type-2 diabetes cases were identified. Of the 15,778 individuals with normal blood glucose at the initial health exam, 4,781 developed prediabetes and the same abnormalities, although to a milder degree, that were present at least 10 years before diagnosis of prediabetes, the findings revealed.

Because trials of prevention in people with prediabetes seem to be less successful over long-term follow up, we may need to intervene much earlier than the prediabetes stage to prevent progression to full blown diabetes, Sagesaka said.

The research has important implications given that an estimated 425 million adults (aged 20-79 years) were living with diabetes in 2017, and this is predicted to rise to 629 million by 2045.

The study was presented at European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD) Annual Meeting in Berlin in Germany.

Diabetes linked to deaths from alcohol, accidents, suicide: Study

People with diabetes are more at risk of deaths from alcohol-related factors, accidents or suicide, than non-diabetics, a study has found.

The increased risk of death from these causes may be related to the mental health of patients, which may be adversely affected by the psychological burden of living with and self-treating this debilitating disease, with potentially serious complications.

“We know that living with diabetes can lead to a mental-health strain. Having to monitor their glucose levels and inject themselves daily with insulin has a huge impact on daily life; simply eating, moving and sleeping all affect blood glucose levels,” said Leo Niskanen, Professor at the University of Helsinki in Finland.

“This strain combined with the anxiety of developing serious complications like heart or kidney disease may also take their toll on psychological well-being,” he added.

Type-1 and Type-2 diabetes are highly prevalent global diseases, causing millions of deaths every year. However, more recently diabetes has been linked to an increased risk of depression, but how poor mental health may affect patients with diabetes has not been fully investigated.

For the study, published in the journal European Journal of Endocrinology, the team assessed suicides, alcohol-related, or accidental causes of deaths on over four lakh people with or without diabetes.

“The study highlighted a need for effective psychological support for people with diabetes. If they feel like they are under a heavy mental burden or consider that their use of alcohol is excessive, they should not hesitate to discuss these issues with their primary care physician,” Niskanen said.

Long work hours may hike women’s diabetes risk by 70%

Women who work for 45 hours or more a week may be associated with nearly 70 per cent increased risk of diabetes as compared to men or women who worked for 30 to 40 hours a week, a study has found. Longer-working men however did not face this risk. While it is an observational study, the researchers noted that the reason may be because women might work longer hours, when all the household chores and family responsibilities are taken into account, the researchers said.

Long working hours might also prompt a chronic stress response in the body, so increasing the risk of hormonal abnormalities and insulin resistance. Interestingly, the length of the working week wasn’t associated with a heightened risk of the disease among men. If anything, the incidence of diabetes tended to fall; the longer a man’s working week was, the results showed.

“Considering the rapid and substantial increase of diabetes prevalence worldwide, identifying modifiable risk factors such as long work hours is of major importance to improve prevention and orient policy making, as it could prevent numerous cases of diabetes and diabetes-related chronic diseases,” said the team including Mahed Gilbert-Ouimet from the Research Center of the Quebec University Hospital – Laval University, in Canada.

For the study, published in the journal BMJ Open Diabetes Research and Care, the researchers tracked the health data of 7,065 workers aged between 35 and 74 years for a period of 12 years. Based on weekly working paid and unpaid hours, the participants were grouped into four time bands: 15–34 hours; 35–40 hours; 41–44 hours; and 45 or more hours.

The results showed that overworking among women was associated with 63 per cent of higher risk of diabetes among women where as incidence of diabetes in men was found mainly among older age groups, and those who were obese. Global estimates indicate that 439 million adults will be living with diabetes by 2030 — an increase of 50 per cent on the figures for 2010. In 2015 alone, diabetes cost the global economy $1.3 trillion.
The health care sector in Qatar continues to expand in terms of infrastructure and services. Recently, the Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) opened yet another state-of-the-art facility, the Al Waab Health Center, which can cater to 35,000 patients by 2019 from the nearby areas.

The health center was inaugurated by the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior HE Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa al Thani. The Prime Minister was accompanied by the Minister of Public Health HE Dr Hanan Mohammed al Kuwari and PHCC Managing Director Dr. Mariam Abdul Malik.

The Al Waab Health Center will cater to patients from Al Waab, Azziziya, Mehairja Fareej Al Soudan 54 and 55, Maamoura 43 and Fareej Al Nasser areas.

In a statement the Minister of Public Health said, "The opening of the Al Waab Health Center is part of the large expansion plans in the health infrastructure, which include the opening of primary health care centres in different parts of the country ensuring that all residents receive high-quality care in health facilities close to their homes in order to achieve our health strategies that emphasize primary care as a key focus of the health care model."

SMOKING IN CLOSED PUBLIC SPACES IS PUNISHABLE BY LAW

According to Article 17 of Law No. 10 of 2016 on the control of tobacco and its derivatives:

Without prejudice to any more severe penalty stipulated in any other law, a penalty of not less than one thousand (1000) Riyals, not exceeding three thousand (3000) Riyals shall be imposed on anyone who smokes cigarettes or tobacco or its derivatives, or permits smoking in closed public places where smoking is prohibited.

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