

## **A HEALTHY WOMAN FOR A HEALTHY NATION - Dr Nikhat Shaikh**

We all want people everywhere to live healthy, happy, and productive lives. And in the past few years significant progress on global health has been made. Yet millions of women and children around the world still don't have access to simple solutions to protect their health such as vaccines, adequate nutrition, and skilled midwives. In 2013, an estimated 6.3 million children under the age of 5 died, and 289,000 women died of complications from pregnancy and child birth.

Women's health and child care is therefore still neglected. In order to ensure that women and girls have the place in society they deserve they need to have the opportunity to realize their right to health. For this to be achieved there is a need to be proactive in the work of our own communities to fight discrimination and not underestimate the significance of gender barriers and discrimination. We must value the health and lives of women and girls if we want to see our nation prosper. Improving the health of women and children is not only the right thing to do, it is also a smart thing to do. Everyone deserves to be healthy, and healthy families lead to healthy communities and a more stable world.

Following are the daily health related tips for a healthy woman right from a child to her menopausal age, which may help to reduce malnutrition, prevent anemia, and improve access to Quality of Life.

### **Advice for a mother to maintain the health of female child:**

Female Child's health includes physical, mental and social well-being. To enhance her feeling of love, eat together as a family as often as possible.

Most parents know the basics of keeping children healthy, like offering them healthy foods, making sure they get enough sleep and exercise and insuring their safety. It is also important for parents to have regular checkups of their kids with their health care provider. These visits are a chance to check your child's development. They are also a good time to catch or prevent problems. Regular visit to a doctor for consultation about general health checkup, vitamin supplements and age wise nourishment – are necessary.

### **Daily Health tips for teenage girls:**

Eating a healthy diet is very important for teenage girls, especially when they have a great desire to look their best. An ideal diet plan for teenage girls is one which helps them be in shape without depriving them of nutrition that leaves them feeling hungry and weak. Breakfast for a teenage girl should have adequate proportions of protein, carbohydrates and fats. The usual combinations of foods such as cereal with milk and peanut butter, or bread with toast are good choices. The meal should also contain whole grain products. Teenage girls should eat three meals every day which should include vegetables and fruits, or baked snacks instead of fried and some time they may enjoy low fat snacks between meals. Pertaining to the need of teenage girls, vitamin D and calcium are more important because of the need for building bone mass. That is why all healthy diet plans for teenage girls should include low fat milk. It is also important for teenage girls to have sufficient amount of iron due to monthly menstruation cycle bleeding, which may cause iron deficiency anemia. Beans and spinach are some healthy iron rich foods that should form a part of their diet.

### **Healthy Diet Tips for Working Women (Fertile Forty Female)**

Many times, working women due to their busy schedules seem to forget to have a healthy diet and tend to munch on unhealthy food items during their working hours. This should be avoided and replaced by healthy and homemade lunch so that in the future diseased related complications can be avoided. Working woman should also try to limit the excessive amount of tea or coffee during working hours. A good, healthy breakfast, light lunch and a peaceful light dinner will help in enhancing the QOL of working women.

### **Basic Dietary Guidelines for Menopausal Women:**

Cessation of menstruation is a natural cycle of woman and it can't be stop or changed, but healthy and good quality nutrition can help prevent or ease certain conditions that may develop during and after menopause. During menopause it is necessary to eat a variety of foods to get all the basic nutrition based supplementation. Guidelines for nutrition based supplementation are as follows:

- Eat and drink two to four servings of dairy products and calcium-rich foods a day. Calcium is found in dairy products, fish with bones, broccoli, and legumes. Aim to get 1,200 milligrams calcium per day to prevent the osteoporosis.

- Eat at least three servings of iron-rich foods a day. Iron is found in lean red meat, poultry, fish, eggs, leafy green vegetables, nuts, and enriched grain products. The recommended dietary allowance for iron in older women is 8 milligrams a day to prevent anemia and its related malnutrition.
- Eat foods high in fiber, such as whole-grain breads, cereals, pasta, rice, fresh fruits, and vegetables. Most adult women should get about 21 grams of fiber a day to prevent constipation and stomach related problems.
- Eat at least one or more fruit and 2 cups of vegetables each day as antioxidant to prevent early aging.
- As a general rule, drink eight glasses of water every day. That fulfills the daily requirement for healthy adults.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Use sugar and salt in moderation.
- Take calcium, Iron and Vitamins Supplements
- Try to get between 30 and 60 minutes of physical activity each day. Short sessions of movement throughout the day add up.
- Include physical activity in your daily routine. Walk as a family before or after meals.
- Be active in the home. For example, you can dust, vacuum, garden, or walk the dog. These activities are good ways to burn calories.

**Conclusion:**

A nation cannot develop without healthy women. Modification in lifestyle specially in diet and sleep may help to live longer and happy life. Taking care of women and girls is taking care of our nation

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