

Short Communication

Perceived Indian Food V/s Lifestyle Diseases: A Double-Edged Sword

Monika Kawadia

GoForHealthyDiet, India

Abstract

Traditional Indian food is rich in nutrient-dense ingredients like whole grains, legumes, spices, and fermented foods that support overall health. However, modern dietary shifts, including processed foods, excessive sugar, and unhealthy fats, have contributed to the rise of lifestyle diseases like obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. This article explores the impact of dietary patterns on health, comparing traditional Indian eating habits with modern food choices. It highlights research-backed insights on preventing lifestyle diseases through balanced nutrition, mindful eating, and healthy modifications in Indian cuisine. By reintroducing whole foods, maintaining portion control, and adopting active lifestyles, individuals can harness the benefits of Indian food while avoiding diet-related health risks.

Keywords: Healthy diet, junk food, lifestyle diseases, hypertension, diabetes, fibre rich food

***Correspondence**

Ms. Monika Kawadia

monika.kawdia23@gmail.com

goforhealthydiet blog writer, Former Dietitian at Apex Hospital, Jaipur

Received: 24 January 2025 - Accepted: 27 February 2025 - Published: 21 March 2025

Citation for the paper: Kawadia M. Indian Food V/s Lifestyle Diseases: A Double-Edged Sword. International Journal of Nutrition & Lifestyle 2025; 5(1): 23 - 26. DOI: 10.69859/ijnl.2025.v5i1003



Copyright: © 2025 by the authors. Licensee: Research Thrive Publications. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Introduction

Indian cuisine is known for its diverse flavors, rich spices, and traditional cooking techniques. However, with changing dietary habits and urbanization, the link between Indian food and lifestyle diseases has become a topic of concern. While traditional Indian food offers numerous health benefits, modern adaptations and processed alternatives contribute to health risks such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. This blog explores the impact of Indian food on lifestyle diseases and provides insights into maintaining a healthy balance.

The Traditional Indian Diet: A Nutritional Powerhouse

Historically, Indian food was well-balanced, consisting of whole grains, legumes, fresh vegetables, fermented foods, and healthy fats. Here are some key benefits:

- **Rich in Antioxidants and Anti-Inflammatory Properties** – Spices like turmeric, ginger, and garlic have medicinal properties that reduce inflammation and boost immunity ([Source: NCBI](#))^[1]
- **Fiber-Rich Grains and Pulses** – Whole grains like millets, brown rice, and lentils support gut health and lower the risk of diabetes
- **Fermented Foods** – Probiotic-rich foods like curd, idli, and kanji promote digestive health and strengthen immunity
- **Healthy Fats** – Traditional oils like mustard oil, ghee, and coconut oil, when used in moderation, provide essential fatty acids and improve metabolism.

Modern Lifestyle and the Rise of Lifestyle Diseases

Despite the health benefits of traditional Indian food, the increasing consumption of processed and fast food has led to a surge in lifestyle diseases:

- **Refined Carbohydrates and Sugars** – Excessive consumption of white rice, refined flour (maida), and sugary sweets contributes to obesity and type 2 diabetes ([Source: WHO](#))^[2]

- **Unhealthy Cooking Methods** – Deep frying and excessive use of oils in dishes like samosas, pakoras, and puris increase bad cholesterol levels
- **High Sodium Intake** – Pickles, papads, and processed foods contribute to hypertension and cardiovascular diseases (Source: Harvard School of Public Health)^[3]
- **Lack of Physical Activity** – With urbanization, sedentary lifestyles have increased, further worsening health outcomes

Balancing Indian Food for a Healthier Lifestyle

To enjoy Indian food while reducing health risks, consider these dietary adjustments:

- **Opt for Whole Grains** – Replace white rice and refined flour with whole wheat, millets, and brown rice
- **Increase Vegetable Intake** – Incorporate more fiber-rich vegetables in every meal to aid digestion and weight management
- **Use Healthy Cooking Techniques** – Prefer steaming, grilling, and sautéing over deep frying
- **Control Portion Sizes** – Be mindful of serving sizes, especially when consuming calorie-dense food
- **Limit Sugar and Salt** – Reduce the intake of processed sweets and salty snacks
- **Stay Active** – Complement a healthy diet with regular physical activity to maintain overall well-being.

Conclusion

Indian food, when consumed in its traditional form, is one of the healthiest diets in the world. However, the shift towards processed and high-calorie foods has led to a rise in lifestyle diseases. By making mindful choices, incorporating whole foods, and adopting healthier cooking methods, we can enjoy the richness of Indian cuisine without compromising our health. Indian food can be both a health booster and a risk factor for lifestyle diseases. Traditional Indian diets are rich in antioxidants, fiber, and healthy fats, promoting well-being. However, modern-day modifications, including refined carbs, excessive sugars, and unhealthy cooking methods, contribute to obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. By making healthier choices and embracing traditional dietary wisdom, we can enjoy the best of Indian cuisine while preventing lifestyle-related illnesses.

References

1. National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI): <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>
2. World Health Organization (WHO): <https://www.who.int/>
3. Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/>