

Importance of Health for Middle Age Transgender Individuals

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Ageing is a natural phenomenon of the human life cycle. The time when a person is 40 to 60 years, it is the period of age beyond young adulthood but before the onset of old age. The Lancet considers midlife as starting from around age 40. This phase of life is marked by gradual physical, cognitive and social changes in individuals. The physiological and psychological changes experienced by middle-aged persons are well documented. Over all for few, career satisfaction focuses more on inner satisfaction. Emotional responses and retrospection vary from person to person in this age

Physiologically due to lower metabolic rate digestibility of the food eaten and its absorption, metabolism may also slow down. For proper energy expenditure physical activity is important. Hormonal imbalance may occur with ageing and proper eating and lifestyle changes are very significant to lead a healthy and active life.

Middle-aged adults may begin to show visible signs of aging. This process can be more rapid based on individual lifestyles. Changes might occur in the nervous system. Sensory sensitivity in middle-aged adults has been shown to be one of the lowest.

Increase in gastrointestinal disturbances, obesity, blood pressure, diabetes, osteoarthritis, varicose veins are few of the ailments transgender middle age individuals are prone. Transgender individual who are more prone to communicable diseases if not taken care non-communicable diseases.

Dietary guidelines for transgenders to follow

- It is better to include two cereals in one meal like rice and wheat or millets and rice.
- Whole grain cereals, brown rice, unpolished rice have higher nutritive value
- Flour should not be sieved for chapati as it reduces bran content.

- Germinated pulsed are more nutritious.
- Fruits should be eaten daily and taking juices should be avoided, since it losses vitamin C and fibre.
- Fish, preferably oily fish, should be included in the diet at least twice a week.
- Green leafy vegetables should be taken minimum of one serving per day.
- Five servings of colourful fruits and vegetables should be included in a day's diet to meet antioxidant requirement.
- Diet should be low in fat, saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol.
- Fried foods to be taken in minimum.
- Variety of foods should be used in the menu. No single food has all the nutrients.
- Use salt and sugar in moderation.
- Preferably each meal should consist of all the five food groups.
- Water should be taken in adequate quantities.

Use of processed foods should be restricted, since they contain food additives which are not healthy for long term usage.

Low fat, moderate carbohydrates, protein rich and high fibre foods will act as protective foods and help in immunity building. Transgender who belongs to lower socio-economic group can select good protein sources from cow pea, red gram and horse gram along with colourful seasonable vegetables and fruits should be included.

Physical activity plays very important role for transgender community in keeping non communicable diseases at bay, indulge on any kind of flexibility, cardio or endurance exercises or activity will help in building muscles. Every day indulgence in

physical activity will help in balancing weight and energy levels.

Stress causes many diseases. Disease causes stress to organs and first signs of dysfunction. Stress affects muscles, tissues, blood vessels and organs. It speeds up heart rate and respiration, raises blood pressure and body temperature and can interfere with metabolism, appetite, digestion, fertility and sleep. It can affect immune system and impair memory. It can make a person obese or undernourished. Stress can cause rheumatoid arthritis, osteoporosis, cancer, diabetes and heart disease.

Stress management is very important as the research shows that transgender communities are more prone to depression, mood swings and life-long stressed about their identity acceptance in society. The trauma and transition impact more psychologically. Self-help group and constant counselling may help in reducing stress levels. Meditation and yoga play very important role in relieving stress and having positive life style.

Thus, transgender individual should take care of their health and mental well-being at every stage of life to get less hospitalized and should try lead a quality life.

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