

An Annual Health Check-Up: Not Optional, But Essential

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Health is not merely the absence of illness—it is the foundation upon which we build our lives. On the occasion of World Health Day, this message is more relevant than ever. In today's fast-paced world, health often takes a backseat. Early warning signs such as fatigue, minor aches or disturbed sleep are frequently ignored, even though they may indicate underlying concerns. Prioritising health is no longer optional—it is essential.

Health encompasses both physical and mental well-being, each influencing the other. Chronic stress, poor diet,

sedentary habits and inadequate sleep contribute significantly to hypertension, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, while poor physical health can adversely affect emotional resilience and overall quality of life.

The way forward lies in conscious lifestyle modification. According to the World Health Organization, nearly 60–70% of non-communicable diseases can be prevented through healthier choices. A balanced diet, regular physical activity such as walking or cycling and 7–8 hours of quality sleep are critical pillars of good health.

Equally important is preventive healthcare. Many individuals seek medical attention only when symptoms appear, while others avoid check-ups due to fear, both leading to delayed diagnosis. Every individual above 30 should undergo annual health screening, including blood tests, blood sugar, lipid profile and evaluation of vital organ functions.

With cancer incidence rising and over 1.4 million new cases reported annually in India, early detection has become crucial. Preventive screening plays a paramount role. Blood markers and im-

aging such as ultrasonography help detect abnormalities at an early stage. For women, regular mammography and cervical screening (Pap smear) are essential, while oral and colon screening should be undertaken based on risk factors. In addition, men above the age of 40 should undergo Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) testing as part of routine screening. Together, these measures enable timely detection and more effective intervention.

Proactive health management is the key to better outcomes, because true progress begins with good health.