

## The 6E approach to a healthy life

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### Abstract

The increasing pandemic of metabolic disease has spurred us to focus on promotion of health and prevention of disease. Simple public health messaging is required to inform and motivate the public to follow evidence-based interventions which can help prevent metabolic illnesses and their complications. We present a catchy 6E framework which enjoins individuals to Eat well, Exercise well, Eliminate unhealthy behaviours/habits, Ensure adequate Entertainment, relaxation and sleep, practice Emotional control, and Eschew/avoid extremes. This message can be used at individual, family as well as public health levels, to spread awareness about healthy behaviours and lifestyle.

**Keywords:** Diabetes, metabolic syndrome, obesity, prediabetes, prevention, primary care, primary prevention

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### Introduction

Metabolic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, dyslipidaemia and obesity are increasing across the globe.<sup>1</sup> This has led to a heightened interest in the prevention of these conditions, as well as promotion of health. Multiple, and sometimes conflicting, messages, however, may confuse the public. Unwarranted hype on fad diets or restricted nutritional patterns, can create harm and worsen health outcomes.

There is a need to create concise, yet comprehensive messaging that can help spread awareness about health promotion. This is reflected in the concept of quinary prevention, which is defined as "Means of preventing health-related hearsay or misinformation, or its ill effects on the health of individuals".<sup>2</sup> In this communication, we present a 6E mnemonic that encapsulates the various domains of a healthy lifestyle.

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**Table:** The 6E strategy for good health.

- Eat well
- Exercise well
- Eliminate unhealthy behaviours/habits
- Entertainment, relaxation, sleep
- Emotional control
- Eschew/avoid extremes

### The 6E mnemonic

Table lists six basic principles of a healthy lifestyle. The rubric focuses on non-pharmacological aspects of health care, and expands the concept of lifestyle modification. It highlights the importance of personal choices (diet, exercise, healthy habits) and reinforces the need for 'balance' in life (entertainment, sleep, avoid extremes, emotional control). The six commands cover the entire biopsychosocial triad of health<sup>3</sup> (biomedical: diet, exercise; psychological: healthy habits, emotional control; social: entertainment). The last suggestion-eschew extremes- is relevant to all aspects of health and health care. One should avoid fad diets, excessive focus on any single modality of prevention/ management, and follow a balanced approach in life.

### Evidence Base

Nutrition and exercise are first line therapy for both diabetes and obesity. They are equally important for lipid management as well.<sup>4,5</sup> Emotions are well known to influence metabolic health, and stress management is considered an integral part of lifestyle optimization.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, adequate sleep is necessary to ensure optimal gluco-metabolic and baro-metabolic health.<sup>7</sup> Including entertainment in the 6Es reinforces the need for 24\*7 stress modulation and management.

### Summary

The 6E mnemonic can be used not only in primary diabetes management, but at every level of health care. A renewed emphasis on 'Elementary' interventions can help improve metabolic health in the vast majority of our fellow citizens. Such messaging should also improve trust and satisfaction with the medical profession.

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