



INTERNATIONAL & NATIONAL STANDARDS & PRACTICE GUIDELINES
WHO=World Health Organization & its divisions & collaborating partners.
HHS=Dept of Health & Human Services & its divisions & collaborating partners.

THE 3 THINGS—WHO & HHS GUIDELINES

"The 3 things" is a participatory health education approach based on WHO and HHS evidence-based guidelines. Although first published in 2005, it is even more critically important today:

The WHO reports that over-nutrition now surpasses under-nutrition as the leading cause of death even in low-income communities.

"Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) are by far the leading cause of death in the world today, and their impact is steadily growing... This largely invisible epidemic is more serious in low and middle-income countries, where 80% of all NCD deaths occur.

The main causes of NCDs are known. A small set of common risk factors is responsible for most of the major NCDs: unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and tobacco use. Elimination of these modifiable risk factors would prevent 80% of premature heart disease, 80% of premature stroke, 80% of type 2 diabetes and 40% of cancer."

The epidemic continues to worsen in the US as well. CDC reports that over **68%** of US adults are now overweight or obese. The American Heart Association reports: "Today, about **one in three American kids and teens** is overweight or obese, nearly triple the rate in 1963...Among children today, obesity is causing a broad range of **health problems that previously weren't seen until adulthood**. These include **high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and elevated blood cholesterol levels**. There are also psychological effects: Obese children are more prone to low self-esteem, negative body image and depression."

Both national and international guidelines report that the higher the Body Mass Index (BMI), the higher the risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, breathing problems, dementia, osteoarthritis, cancer and numerous other conditions.

These BMI related diseases have now increased to **epidemic levels in developing as well as developed countries**. For example, the *Lancet* (June, 2011) reported that **nearly 10%** of adults **world-wide** now have **diabetes**, and the prevalence of the disease is rising rapidly.

The [WHO Policy Brief: Preventing chronic diseases, designing and implementing effective policy](#) also emphasizes the importance of the above approach for children as well as adults: "The growing epidemic of chronic disease is due to tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and other risk factors...Chronic disease risk accumulates throughout the life course, and risk factors are often established in childhood and adolescence. Consequently, chronic disease prevention must focus on promoting healthy diet, physical activity, and tobacco abstinence from an early age..."

Skills-based chronic disease education should include participatory learning experiences that address nutrition, the benefits of physical activity, and the health consequences of tobacco use. Such programmes can be implemented with limited resources, and may be highly beneficial in reducing chronic disease risk factors among young people."

"The 3 Things" approach is based on WHO/HSS guidelines and meets all of the above requirements. It addresses the most important causes of preventable deaths and suffering in nearly all communities, urban or rural, developed or developing, world-wide, and is essential for children as well as adults.

For additional evidence-based national and international reports and guidelines see: Sections 3 A&B, 38, 39 and 41 of the HEPFDC in all the above languages on the [DOWNLOAD FREE](#) page.
[HHS Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#) and related sites.
[WHO Nutrition for Health and Development](#) and related WHO links

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