



Dear Sir,

Date: 25-12-2021

I write to you to highlight the importance of including a few key messages regarding maintaining good health in the curriculum for students at various levels.

As you are aware inputs are already being given to students right from lower classes regarding the importance of good food, exercise, etc. Therefore, the attached note only seeks to emphasize the points that need greater attention.

I would be grateful if you could convey the note for kind consideration of Curriculum Formulation Committee. 3-S and our health society will be eager to render any assistance in this regard in the interest of public health.

With warm regards,

Aakash Arun

Secretary, 3S and Our Health

To,
Shri, Dharmendra Pradhan
Minister of Education
Government of India
New Delhi - 110001

Note on key concepts related to health for inclusion in the curriculum at various levels

1. Glycemic index of food: Right from lower classes, the need to avoid junk food is sought to be conveyed to students. However, the technical concept which would help the students to identify and distinguish junk food is not found to be clearly conveyed. The presence of refined sugar and maida could be pointed out as a way of identifying junk food. Also the technical factor of junk foods being of higher glycemic index could be pointed out. The glycemic index of food is critical for the population to know which is staring at a pandemic of diabetes and comorbidities. Inputs regarding glycemic index of food could be given in the High school or a little lower. The message may be suitably calibrated to be conveyed to students in all classes.

2. Insulation from advertisements: Most of the advertisements of products leading to child obesity and inculcation of unhealthy food habits are targetted at children in lower classes. If there is a specific input to students regarding the presence of such advertisements in their surroundings, they will be more aware to them when they encounter the same. This might be helpful in insulating or inoculating them against the same.

3. Melatonin and its role in sleep: The role of melatonin in providing good deep sleep and how watching the screen with full spectrum light affects the same will be an important input to students in high school. In lower classes they could be exposed to the link between avoiding screens after dark and having a good sleep in a more non-technical manner.

4 Sun Break: Having periodic exposure to sunlight even briefly during the day may be incorporated in the curriculum by mandating renaming the “Tea Breaks” and “shorts breaks” as sun breaks. Such a step at the school level will help in highlighting the

importance of natural lighting in preventing depression, Vitamin D deficiency, etc.

5. Role of insulin and fasting: The role of heightened insulin level in not allowing fat to burn and leading to obesity could be conveyed to students at the high school level. This could help them inculcate healthy habits of fasting from early days.

The message may be suitably calibrated for lower classes linking the same with traditional Indian way of life in which the last meal of the day would be before it is dark and regular fasting days were part of the day to day life. The above are some of the key inputs that may be considered. A concerted effort to identify the new age requirement of healthy living based on modern day realities needs to be factored into the curriculum drafting process. How systems on Artificial Intelligence are capable of drawing individuals into a less than healthy mental and physical state and how the free market commercial philosophy is unable to address such exploitation on its own should inform the manner in which society educates itself.