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Industry Reacts to Fit India

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Technology has reduced our physical ability and has robbed us of our daily fitness routines: PM



The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi recently launched the Fit India Movement and urged the people of the country to make fitness their life style.

The Prime Minister said that 'Fit India Movement' should become a national goal and its aspiration. In an effort to inspire the nation, the Prime Minister said that Fit India Movement may have been started by the government but it is the people who have to lead it and make it a success. Success is related to fitness, success stories of all of our icons from any field of life have a common thread- most of them are fit, have a focus on fitness and are fond of fitness."

He also highlighted the impact the technology on health and said, "Technology has reduced our physical ability and has robbed us of our daily fitness routines and today we are unaware of our traditional practises and lifestyle which could keep us fit. With time, fitness has been relegated a lower priority in our society. Earlier a person used to walk or cycle for kilometers, today mobile apps have to tell us how many steps we walked."

Industry Reactions:

Savitha Kuttan, CEO, Omnicuris

Changing lifestyle habits, characterized by long periods of immobility, increase in stress levels, convenience food and lack of exercise, are taking a toll on children and adults producing an increased number of passive and overweight youngsters with lifestyle diseases. Inculcating preventive health practices among youngsters will go a long way into preventing the incidence of non-communicable diseases, which are responsible for 61% of all deaths in the country. The focus should be more on health rather than healthcare. Getting 150 minutes of aerobic activity every week can improve your heart health, increase your insulin sensitivity, increase blood flow to the brain, relieve stress, and keep your bones and joints healthy. Identifying lifestyle changes and integrating the physical activity in day to day lifestyle will make it more sustainable. Corporates should encourage their employees to use healthier options on commuting to work like cycling and as part of 'Fit India Movement' government should also develop appropriate infrastructure.

K Ghosh, Chief Administrative Officer, Jindal Naturecure Institute

Sedentary Lifestyle has emerged as a leading risk factor for several lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease as well as cancer. In fact, the rise in the incidence of non-communicable diseases in India as also the world clearly coincides with a shift towards sedentary lifestyles. Given this situation, the Prime Minister's initiative to launch a nationwide movement for fitness is a welcomed move. It also indicates a shift in the government's approach to preventive healthcare. Incorporating at least 30 minutes of exercise in our daily lives must be a healthcare priority and can go a long way in boosting preventive healthcare.

Apart from increasing awareness, the government must initiate measures to make physical exercise and sport a regular feature for all students in schools, colleges, and universities. In fact, all students must be incentivized to adopt a physical weight-age for sports in their mark-sheet in marks and assessments. This will not only quell the rising burden on obesity among adolescents but will also prepare a generation that takes fitness seriously. Cutting consumption of junk food and incorporating yoga in our daily lives must also be made a priority of this campaign. A more active and aware young citizen of India will help curb the rising incidence of NCDs.

Rajesh Ranjan, COO, WISH

The National Health Policy 2017 proposed a paradigm shift from selective primary care to assured comprehensive primary care focusing on complete physical, mental and social well-being emphasizing on wellness and well-being through promotive and preventive health measures designed towards keeping individual and communities healthy.

India's dual burden of malnutrition is characterized by the coexistence of under nutrition along with overweight and obesity, or diet-related non-communicable diseases, within individuals, households and populations, and across the life course. As per WHO 2016 statistics, NCDs are estimated to account for 63% of all deaths in India.

Sedentary lifestyle and less physical activity is leading to several health risks. An ICMR report shows that physical inactivity is very common and around 54.4% people were found inactive in India. Exercise is one of the most important aspects of preventive care. With rising medical costs, any activity that minimises morbidity risks, improves individual health and impacts economic productivity should be mandatory to one's lifestyle. Overweight people exhibit abnormal cardiovascular function, and obesity predisposes people to lifestyle diseases, like hypertension, type 2 diabetes and other cardiovascular diseases. Degradation of autonomic markers, such as reduced baroreflex sensitivity and heart rate variability, lead to lifestyle diseases. Studies have shown that 150 minutes of exercise per week, consisting of moderate and vigorous physical activity along with resistance training, can reduce mortality risk by 30%, and also decrease the risk of depression, diabetes, stroke, and cancer. People should incorporate regular exercise in their daily lifestyle to prevent the occurrence of metabolic and cardiovascular dysfunction.

Neha Rastogi, Co-Founder and COO-Agatsa

The launch of the Fit India Campaign can be a potential game changer as far as the quality of life in India is concerned. Today, lifestyle diseases such as like diabetes, hypertension, and heart problems are becoming prevalent in the younger population as well. Prevention through lifestyle changes and awareness can help avert them. As a technology-driven healthcare innovator, Agatsa has already endeavoured to address this area by making user-friendly, portable and affordable diagnostic devices that enable people to monitor their heart health and take steps to lead healthier lives preventively. The Fit India Campaign will further help promote the importance of fitness – and as mentioned by the hon'ble Prime Minister, being fit is a direct contributor to success, for an individual and the nation. Regular health checkups including ECG, etc. are also important for maintaining one's overall health. We hope that this attitude alongside availability of high-tech preventive healthcare devices will truly make India fitter and better!

Meena Ganesh, Co-Founder, MD & CEO, Portea Medical

We welcome the launch of the Fit India Campaign by the hon'ble Prime Minister! As he rightly pointed out, lack of fitness and awareness about healthy lifestyle and dietary habits has been a major contributor towards the disease burden in the country. The conventional healthcare approach has also veered largely towards treatment and not prevention. A fit lifestyle can not only lead to long-term health gains but also keep diseases at bay. At Portea, we are in alignment with this philosophy and by leveraging latest technologies and healthcare innovations, we have been steadily working towards creating a preventive healthcare approach in the country! Now that the government has adopted it as a mass campaign, we are confident of an attitudinal shift towards fitness in the country!

Dr Shankar Narang, COO, Paras Healthcare

Lack of physical activity is today a major risk factor for a number of deadly diseases including heart disease, cancer, hypertension, obesity as well as diabetes. According to the World Health Organization, 1 in four adults globally is not active enough while more than 80% of the world's adolescent population in insufficiently active. The role of physical inactivity in India's growing NCD epidemic cannot be understated. In fact, physical inactivity is being increasing being recognized at the "new smoking" when it comes to increasing risk for diseases. In this light, the Prime Minister's move to launch a 'Fit India movement' is highly welcome and worth appreciating. The movement must focus on creating greater opportunities for all sections of population to adopt physically active lifestyles. An hour of sports and physical activity every day must be made mandatory in schools. At the same time, workplaces must also be encouraged to join the movement by dedicating 30 minutes of their daily space to some sort of physical exercise. It has been observed that lack of safe public spaces such as parks and walking spaces are a significant factor that deter a number of people especially women from venturing out and exercising. It is important for the urban planners to include safe public spaces in all areas while also creating safe roads and infrastructure for cycling. We hope this campaign also helps generate the requisite awareness among people about the need for adopting physical activity.

Vishal Gondal, Founder & CEO, GOQii

Fit India is a pioneering movement by our honourable Prime Minister, a powerful advocate of healthy living himself. This initiative will truly benefit the majority of the Indian population. We, at GOQii, are deeply excited to share the same vision as PM Shri Narendra Modi, and extend our complete support in making 130 crore Indians healthy. Finally, as the focus shifts from curative to preventive healthcare, it will open doors for more research and development, and several new initiatives. In order to make Fit India Movement a success, I urge all players, right from startups to corporates to collaborate and embark on this journey, empower themselves and others to be fit and healthy.