

# THE WHAT, WHY, AND HOW OF NCDs

## WHAT ARE NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES?

Non-communicable diseases, or NCDs, are conditions that are not infectious or non-contagious. This means you cannot catch them from someone else or spread them to others. NCDs can damage your health throughout your lifetime. Things like age and genes can affect NCDs' development, but certain lifestyle choices, like what you eat and how much physical activity you get, can also increase your risk of developing a chronic illness. Some examples of NCDs are type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO LEARN ABOUT NCDs?

Non-communicable diseases cause 41 million deaths globally each year.<sup>1</sup> With the right education and changes in behaviour, there is an opportunity to reverse that trend. Healthy habits can last a lifetime, especially when they are established early. The earlier your family can learn about the causes of NCDs and how to reduce their risk of developing them, the sooner they can begin to build a healthier future.

## HOW CAN I REDUCE MY FAMILY'S RISK OF DEVELOPING NCDs?

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the best way to reduce your family's chance of developing NCDs is to reduce the major risk factors.<sup>2</sup> The following list of recommendations can help your family make the healthiest choices possible.

- ❑ Make nutritious food choices.
- ❑ Be active.
- ❑ Don't smoke.
- ❑ For those over 21 years of age, if you drink alcohol, always drink responsibly and in moderation. Never drink and then drive.

Need more information about nutrition and activity guidelines? Check out the [Family Webpage \(www.FutureWellKids.com/Families\)](http://www.FutureWellKids.com/Families)!

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/noncommunicable-diseases>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.who.int/activities/preventing-noncommunicable-diseases>