

Bad diets responsible for 11 million premature deaths globally per year

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Unhealthy diets are responsible for 11 millions preventable deaths globally per year, according to a major study conducted by the Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). But the biggest problem is not the junk we eat but the nutritious food we don't eat, say researchers, calling for a global shift in policy to promote [healthy diets](#) [1].

The paper is the most comprehensive analysis on the health effects of diet ever conducted, says the IHME. Dr Christopher Murray, a director of the IHME and one of the authors, said: "This study affirms what many have thought for several years – that poor diet is responsible for more deaths than any other risk factor in the world."

"This research reveals the extent of the impact of unhealthy diets on our health and is a call to action to governments everywhere to prioritise solutions to address this single leading cause of death and disability" says Katie Dain, CEO of NCD Alliance.

"Addressing high salt intake, low intake of whole grains and low intake of fruits has the potential to save millions of lives every year. The data reveal that consequences of poor diet affect people regardless of age, sex, and sociodemographic factors or their place of residence: all people are at risk and no country can afford to neglect this threat to health and development."

The study found that **eating and drinking better could prevent one in five deaths around the world**. Although diets vary from one country to another, eating too few fruits and vegetables and too much sodium (salt) accounted for half of all deaths and two-thirds of the years of disability attributable to diet.

Populations around the world are increasingly exposed to foods and diets that augment NCD risks. Improving diets requires population-based, multi-sectoral and culturally relevant approaches.

[Read the full study here](#) [2].

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