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A Silent Threat on Food – An Overview

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Opinion Article

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INTRODUCTION

Food serves as the major source of energy and due to the cross cultural activity food is now found in an abundant variety in the present world. Food can be obtained from various natural and other sources to meet the need of the huge human population and fulfill the nutritional need of our body. The food that is obtained from these sources is useful for providing nutrients, proteins, minerals and so on that is required for a body to maintain health ^[1-3].

Due to the abundance and variety of taste choice, time has come when we should be very careful in choosing the proper diet and food source for us. Greed for readymade and tasty food without caring about the proper nutrition value has become a threat to the human health in the modern civilized society. As a consequence, a large population across the globe is suffering from different life style diseases, which can be effectively controlled with little bit check over our regular food habit ^[4].

Intake of long duration preserved food also became the cause of concern, even after careful preservation and following a thorough scientific procedure, it has been observed that many a times we are not able save the food along with their nutrient values from spoilage or contamination ^[5]. Eating a food that has been contaminated is responsible for causing many types of disorders like diarrhea, emesis and so on.

HISTORICAL ASPECT

In ancient times, man used to hunt animals and fed on it and even he ate the raw leaves and fruits that are obtained from many plant sources. As days have passed, he learnt cooking his food along with adding various ingredients in it. In those days, man ate fresh food without preserving it. Due to use of fresh source, pesticide free and preservation free food, it can be said that the nutrient source in those days might remained more hygienic.

Such food habit may helped the ancient cultures to maintain a better health in a natural condition and aided in combating multiple disorders and diseases which we are facing very often today.

PRESENT TREND

Due to changes in the present life style, man started eating synthetic, unhygienic and preserved food, which is responsible for the cause of many disorders. If this still prevails, within a few years maximum number of people will suffer with the disorders like obesity, diabetes, hypertension, many cardiac associated diseases and cancer and similar diseases. These disorders cannot be cured except taking measures in order to prevent them by following the diet and exercises that are required for human health. Just due to better feel in the palate, we have started consuming several readymade synthetic foods which is very unhygienic and toxic.

MY OPINION

Unsafe food poses global health threats, endangering everyone. Infants, young children, pregnant women, the elderly and those with an underlying illness are particularly vulnerable. Food-borne diseases or food poisoning represent a growing public health problem of prime interest all over the world. According to EFSA 2011, even in societies with highly developed food safety

systems, such as the “farm-to-fork” in Europe and the “farm-to-table” in USA, a “weak link” can cause significant morbidity and mortality from foodborne illness. Millions of people fall ill every year and many die as a result of eating unsafe food. Diarrheal diseases alone kill an estimated 1.5 million children annually, and most of these illnesses are attributed to contaminated food or drinking water.

Unsafe food creates a vicious cycle of diarrhea and malnutrition, threatening the nutritional status of the most vulnerable. Food can become contaminated at any point of production and distribution, and the primary responsibility lies with food producers. Yet a large proportion of foodborne disease incidents are caused by foods improperly prepared or mishandled at home, in food service establishments or markets. According to different studies, the level of food contamination is related to the storage of foods at high ambient temperature for long periods of time and in the rainy season. Unclean utensils were also considered a source of food contamination.

Foodborne illnesses are usually infectious or toxic in nature and caused by bacteria, viruses, parasites or chemical substances entering the body through contaminated food or water. Foodborne pathogens can cause severe diarrhea or debilitating infections including meningitis. Chemical contamination can lead to acute poisoning or long-term diseases, such as cancer. Foodborne diseases may lead to long-lasting disability and death. Examples of unsafe food include uncooked foods of animal origin, fruits and vegetables contaminated with feces, and raw shellfish containing marine bio toxins. The world health organization suggests 5 main methods to keep food safe: Keep clean, separate raw and cooked foods, Cook thoroughly, Keep food at safe temperatures and Use safe water and foods. changes in basic food handling practices and personal hygiene can help us prevent food threats and eventually lead us to a better quality of life.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, intake of unhygienic and unhealthy preserved food is responsible for the cause of many disorders and diseases. In the present human society, several populations are suffering due this very reason.

So, proper importance should be given to intake of food without any negligence from every individual, otherwise, the people suffering from these disorders and diseases will keep on increasing throughout the world affecting the overall human population and we may even face a situation where we may have to be more cautious for food rather than any other cause of ill health. There should be proper educational programs and campaigns in order to prevent these by the governments and other agencies so that the present and future generation takes this issue seriously and act accordingly for a better health and future.

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