

Act Today - Say No to Chronic Diseases

*Come and
join me!*



This flyer explains what chronic diseases are and what you can do to reduce your risk of developing chronic diseases.

Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland (ECCQ) is a charity and non-governmental organisation representing the needs and interests of people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities in Queensland. ECCQ Chronic Disease Program provides vital culturally appropriate and translated information, education and support through face to face, telephone and online platforms to the community about chronic disease prevention and self-management.

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If you need more information, contact ECCQ Chronic Disease Program at **07 3844 9166** or **www.eccq.com.au**

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Ethnic Communities
Council of Queensland

What are chronic diseases?

Chronic diseases are long lasting conditions that often begin and proceed slowly. They have multiple causes that vary overtime. These include factors such as:



Genetic (people with a family history of Diabetes are more likely to have pre-diabetes and develop Diabetes, etc.)



Lifestyle (smoking, lack of exercise, poor diet, stress, etc.)



Environmental (air pollution, heavy metals, and various endocrine disrupting chemicals, etc.)

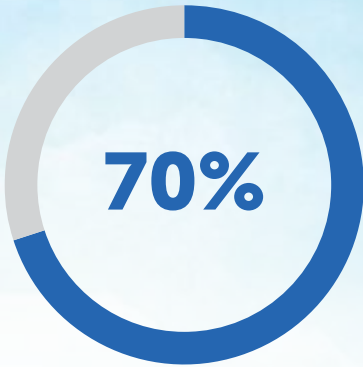


Physiological (blood pressure, blood cholesterol, glucose tolerance, immune status, etc.)

The main types of chronic diseases are cardiovascular diseases (like coronary heart disease), cancers, chronic respiratory diseases (such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma), chronic kidney disease and diabetes.

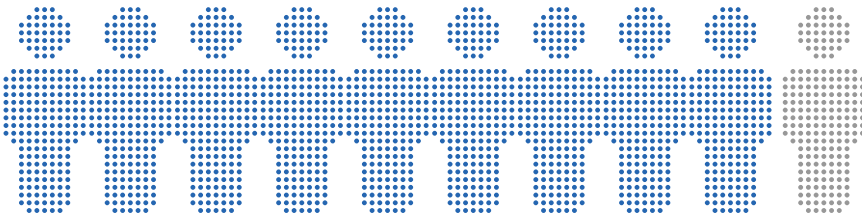
Who is at risk of chronic diseases?

Anyone can be affected by chronic diseases regardless of their age or where they were born.



Every year, **41 million** people die from heart attacks, stroke, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, diabetes or a mental disorder. That's more than **70% of all deaths worldwide** (WHO report, 2020).

In **Australia**, chronic conditions accounted for around **9 in every 10 deaths** in 2015 (ABS, 2017).



What can you do to prevent chronic diseases?

1. Choose healthy foods and drinks

- A balanced diet of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, and low-fat dairy products is important at any age (Australian Dietary Guidelines).
- Try to use less oil and salt when cooking.
- Eat less fast food.
- Drink 8 glasses (2 litres) of water throughout the day.
- For people who are overweight, you may be able to prevent or delay diabetes by losing 5 to 7 percent of your starting weight (The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology, 2015).



2. Get regular physical activity

- For adults, try to do at least **30 minutes of moderate physical activity** (e.g. brisk walking, gardening or bicycling) for at least **5 days a week** (Australia’s Physical Activity and Sedentary Guidelines for Adults).
- Doing any activity is better than doing none. Try dancing, swimming, yoga, martial arts, Zumba, Taichi, walking, running, badminton, soccer or any activities that you enjoy.



3. Stop smoking

- Stop smoking lowers the risk of serious health problems, such as heart disease, cancer, type 2 diabetes, and lung disease, as well as premature death—even for long time smokers (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020).
- Take the first step and call Quitline on 137 848 or call TIS on 131 450 if you do not speak English and need to be connected to an interpreter.



4. Avoid drinking too much alcohol

- Over time, excessive drinking can lead to high blood pressure, various cancers, heart disease, stroke, and liver disease (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020).
- By not drinking more than 2 standard drinks per day with alcohol free days in between, you can reduce these health risks.



5. Get enough sleep

- Insufficient sleep has been linked to the development and poor management of diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and depression (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020).
- Adults should get at least 7 hours of sleep daily and try to sleep and wake up at consistent times.
- Some ways to help you sleep better are:
 - listening to relaxing music,
 - reading a book,
 - meditating and deep breathing,
 - get a comfortable bed, pillow and mattress,
 - limit your caffeine consumption late in the day and
 - reduce your exposure to television, smart phone, iPad and other electronic devices.



6. Reduce Stress

- Stress increases the risk for Diabetes especially in overweight individuals, since psychological stress alters insulin needs (Salleh M. R., 2008).
- Chronic stress can lead to plaque build-up in the arteries (atherosclerosis) especially if combined with a high-fat diet and sedentary living (Salleh M. R., 2008).
- Some activities you can do to reduce daily stress include exercising (going for a walk, swimming, etc.), spending time with friends and family, reading a book that you like, meditating, volunteering or speaking with a health professional.

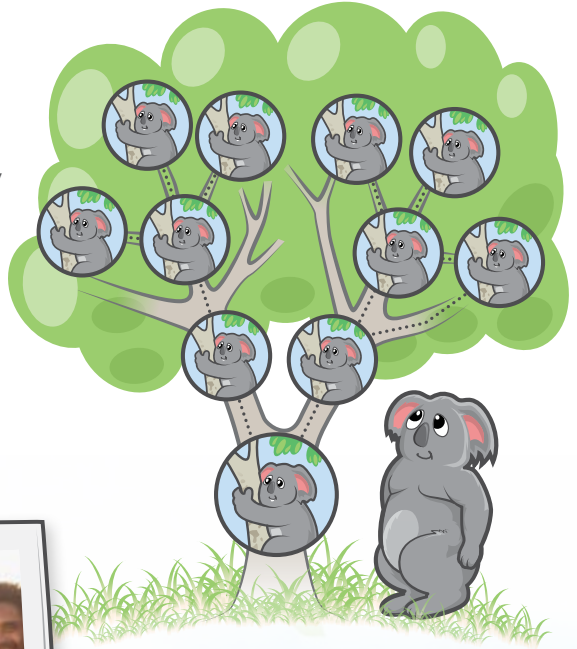


*I can do it,
so can you.*



7. Know your family history

- If you have a family history of a chronic disease, like cancer, heart disease, diabetes, or osteoporosis, you may be more likely to develop that disease yourself. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020).
- Share your family health history with your doctor or health care worker, who can help you take steps to prevent these conditions.





8. Have regular health checks

- Visit your doctor regularly to check your blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol level and/or for preventive services (cancer screening service, Pre-diabetes or Diabetes testing, Heart health check, etc.);
- Enrol into chronic disease prevention programs such as the My Health for Life program delivered to eligible Queenslanders by Healthier Queensland Alliance. Contact ECCQ Chronic Disease Program if you want to join a program that is conducted in your language or simplified English. This program provides a basic chronic disease health check, followed by on-going chronic disease prevention workshops to help you reduce your risks of developing chronic diseases.



References

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