

DIET AND NET LOO (U) SERS

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Cyber surfing lets you to literally surf in 'another' world. Your assumed and presumed world! At one click of a button, you can have a whole lot of information ranging from Jurassic world to the space world! But as you say good things come in small and packages and well; internet information is not a small package but it's like those stars in the galaxy which can never be counted. So half baked information is always dangerous. Numerous studies have highlighted its harmful effect on physical, mental, psychological and social well being and all this is related to food and nutrition somewhere at the core.

There is simple evidence that using of internet brings about poorer nutritional knowledge. Ranging from as simple as weight loss and weight gain diets to as complicated as renal failure and liver failure diets, people tend to follow the 'googled' information and end up in more trouble than before. If your cyber surfing has revealed that black coffee is good for increasing your metabolic rate and you can lose weight easily, then you start consuming several cups of the same and one not so fine day lay on the floor half dead....why? What happened...Oh you didn't see the 'other side of the coin'..it increases blood pressure, it may lead to anxiety as several cups increasing your caffeine consumption! Now the doctor wonders who the hell told this teenager to have so many cups of black coffee? His 'dadi' or his 'nani'..no it's the 'cyber dani!'.

Take another example of a 'low carbohydrate diet' for diabetic patients. Patients love to believe on their 'googled' up information rather than what the nutritionist is advising them. They insist on having a 'zero carb diet', now; what is that? Oh you don't know doctor, no carbs and only proteins and a little fat is going to cure my diabetes!, Tell me please, which food does not have carbohydrates, literally no food! The right message is carbohydrates from complex sources which also add lots of fibre to your diet rather than simple sources which are fibre less and also shoot up your sugar levels. It becomes tough to convince the patients and think about it that how many people have an access to a good dietician or a nutritionist? Rest are all 'googled' up! Then excess of protein might harm their kidneys since prolonged diabetes mellitus usually ends up in kidney problems! And these patients are inviting this another disease in advance! So again an age old adage comes in mind-'neam hakim khatra jaan'... and this is the exact role 'cyber dani' is playing!

Coming to the other side of this cyber surfing, the person is so lost in the internet that the evergreen song...'tum din ko kaho raat ham raat kahege' sounds so true!, yes they don't come to know about timings, discipline takes a toss and so does their eating pattern and routine. There is no such thing called breakfast, mid morning break, lunch, evening break and dinner timings....only snack times all the while with some beverage which happens to be most of the time some cola or sweetened sodas.

Children's preference to unhealthy food and poor eating habits including consumption of presweetened breakfast, fast-food , sugared high-fat & high salt snacks and soft drinks can be attributed to 'no family time' but only 'internet time'. They have virtual internet friends but loose their 'real' friends which is their immediate family!

It is a well known fact that children using internet while eating meal consume fewer amount of fruits , vegetables and juices and more of stress busters(considered by them) like pizzas , burger's, samosa's , pakora's ,carbonated soft drinks. The high frequency of skipping dinner could be related to snacking. More frequent snacking was observed in high-risk Internet users than no risk Internet users. Thus high-risk Internet users have improper dietary behaviors that could impact their growth and development.

Studies reveal that high-risk Internet users drank and smoked more and had a poorer quality diet and higher frequency of meal skipping than no risk Internet users. Why? Because of no time zone and anxiety which is created by net surfing.

So it's high time we all give ourselves a wakeup call whether we are parents, teachers, students, friends and family. It has to be a joint effort by all of us to use the man made intelligent discoveries intelligently, not like morons and end up in a health disaster for ourselves and the future generations because come what may , the age old things cannot be changed and one of them is; 'WE ARE WHAT WE EAT'