

COVID shows different response based on people's immunity acquired through nutrition: Harsh Vardhan

ANI

By Priyanka Sharma, New Delhi, Aug 19: As healthy food and nutrition plays a key role in combating morbidity, Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan on Wednesday said that people of the same household have been showing different responses to COVID based on their immunity acquired through nutrition.

While announcing the 'Eat Right Challenge' to strengthen food safety in the states, Vardhan said that about 61.8 per cent deaths from non-communicable like diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular complications, etc are directly or indirectly related to a faulty diet. Even communicable diseases like tuberculosis disproportionately affect people who are undernourished, he said. Vardhan said "196 million are victims of chronic hunger while another 180 million suffer from obesity. 47 million children have stunted growth while another 25 million are wasted. 500 million are deficient in micro-nutrients and 100 million suffer from food-borne diseases," highlighting the pressing need for the campaign in India with a population of 135 crore people.

This movement will sharpen our focus towards prioritising food, nutrition and awareness about our eating and dietary habits to prevent and address these challenges, he added.

This will also bring into sharper focus the problem of food wastage and disposal of food, Vardhan said and deliberated the importance of Poshan Abhiyaan, Anaemia Mukt Bharat and Fit India movement.

The health minister presided over an online orientation workshop organised by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) as part of its Eat Right Challenge. He also launched FSSAI's 'Eat Right India' Handbook and the website eatrightindia.gov.in to help various stakeholders scale-up 'Eat Right India' initiatives across the country.

FSSAI recently announced the Eat Right Challenge, an annual competition for 197 districts and cities to strengthen the food safety and regulatory environment, build awareness among the consumers and urge them to make better food choices. Rita Teotia, Chairperson, FSSAI and Arun Singhal, CEO, FSSAI were also digitally present at the occasion.

Food safety commissioners and district officials of the 197 cities and districts participated in the event.