

GNC research reveals India's health perception disconnect

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New Delhi: GNC, a leading nutrition and supplement brand, has announced its report, which finds a disconnect between perception and reality of health and wellness among Indians. Most Indians view their health as acceptable or excellent (70%) and describe themselves as balanced eaters (69%) – yet their lifestyle habits reveal a contradictory picture with 44% of respondents admitting to rarely or never exercising and being negligent eaters.

“While the consequences of Indians’ lifestyle and current choices are widely known, as are the benefits of a balanced diet and exercise, our research finds a clear disconnect between how we view our healthy lifestyles versus our actual behavior,” said Shadab Khan, CEO, GNC India. “There is currently a form of ‘collective delusion’ when it comes to health and fitness; the vast majority of Indians believe themselves to be fit and healthy, while their daily behaviour suggests precisely the opposite.”

Specifically, while the majority (68%) of survey respondents agree obesity directly or somewhat contributes to a person’s overall health, a proportionate number of respondents admit to eating fast food at least twice a week (47%) – with 15% consuming take-away food daily, and 41% eating fresh fruit only once a week or less. These negative eating habits spike during holidays and festivals, with 36% of respondents admitting to indulging in extra sweets and 26% disrupting their regular eating patterns.

India’s state of health has long been a source of concern, as 72 million Indians are currently

diagnosed as diabetic – making the country the diabetes capital of the world according to the International Diabetes Federation. The health delusion illustrated within GNC’s findings shed light to the cause behind this epidemic.

“There is a need to educate consumers about the benefits and significance of adequate nutrition, regular sleep and recovery, and exercise,” said Khan. “According to our research, work colleagues (for 29% of respondents) and close family (27%) remain the most trusted and influential purveyors of health and lifestyle information. We at GNC believe the conversation needs to shift and become a collaborative effort to create awareness and drive India toward a healthier future,” he said.

Additional findings include:

? No priority to exercise: Approximately one in five respondents admit to never undertaking any exercise; if presented with a lift and a flight of stairs, 27% of Indians would always use the lift and 28% would be prepared to climb only one flight of stairs, before turning to the lift.

? A lack of sleep: Only 36% received at least seven hours of uninterrupted sleep twice per week or less, and 29% rarely or never feel refreshed or energized in the mornings – which aligns with Fitbit findings that India is the most sleep-deprived county with average sleep hours of around 6.55 hours.

? Vitamin D deprived: The GNC survey also revealed that more than half (58%) of respondents spend less than two hours per day in natural sunlight.

GNC India gathered results through face-to-face interviews with 1,440 individuals in the ten cities of Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Chandigarh, Jaipur, Chennai, Delhi, Lucknow and Bangalore during February 2018.