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Increasing Urbanisation in Tribal States of Northeast India: Implications for the Prevalence of Chronic Diseases

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ABSTRACT This chapter is concerned with the prevalence of non-communicable chronic diseases (NCDs) such as obesity, hypertension, diabetes mellitus and coronary heart disease (CHD) due to nutrition transition and increasing urbanization in developing countries in general and in India in particular. It briefly describes the present position of rural-urban migration during 1991 to 2001 in India with special reference to tribal states of Northeast India. Considering the increased risk of NCDs in populations with rapid urbanization and nutrition transition, it is speculated that urban populations in tribal states of Northeast India will have a greater risk of NCDs, especially in the next decade or so. Increasing rural-urban migration along with changes in dietary and physical activity patterns may predispose many individuals (especially low-birth-weight individuals) to obesity, type 2 diabetes, hypertension and other risks of NCDs. An attempt has also been made to discuss the evolutionary perspectives of nutrition transition that may help us understand the increasing prevalence of NCDs.