

# Planet Green

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## 3rd Annual Public Seminar on Women Health

### Young girls, women urged not to use weight loss formulas without evidence of effectiveness



Health experts have expressed their strong reservations about marketing gimmicks and bombardment of advertisements claiming weight loss of 20 pounds within 20, 30 or 40 days. They warned women and young girls to avoid using such formulas which are usually in liquid forms without proper evidence of effectiveness as laboratory tests have confirmed it contains drug ingredients used for diabetes and thyroid.

They were speaking and sharing their experiences during 3rd public seminar on women health organized by National Forum for Environment & Health (NFEH) here in a local hotel. Seminar was attended by a

large number of young girls and women.

Speakers included Dr. Nyla Zahid, Oncologist, Liaquat National Hospital, Dr. Nosheen Fatima, Head of Department and expert of Osteoporosis, Dr. Ziauddin University Hospital, Hakeem Syed Abdul Ghafar Agha, Consultant and author of book "Hakeem ka Dasterkhan," Nausheen Shahzad, Psychiatrist, Executive Director, Neuropsychology Centre Pakistan and Founder Chairperson Neuropsychology Society of Pakistan, and, family physician and television anchor Dr. Shahzad Ali.

Among others, Chairman NFEH Dr. Kaiser Waheed, President NFEH Naem Qureshi, Chairman Pakistan Pharmaceutical

Manufacturers Association (PPMA) Saeed Allahwala, Director Trade and Culture, Italian Development Committee Fatima Zara Malick, Omam Muzammil from Drug and Poison Centre of a local pharmaceutical (PharmEvo), Commander Anti-Narcotics Force Sindh Brig. Abu Zar, known cooking expert Ms. Rahat, Project Head and Secretary General NFEH Ruqiyia Naem and Project Coordinator NFEH Mariam Nadir also spoke. Karachi Commissioner Shoaib Sidiqi attended the last session of seminar as chief guest.

Family physician Dr. Shahzad Ali said that quacks and other irrelevant people are playing marketing gimmicks with general public and putting bombardment of their products advertisement in mass media which must be stopped by the media houses owners and relevant health ministries all over Pakistan. "People especially young girls and women are becoming their easy target to sale their products claiming to reduce their weight by 20 pounds in just 20, 30 or 40 days and this is not true," he stressed.

He shared his personal experience and told that after watching regular advertisements, he went to one of such clinic and purchased their product which was in liquid form. "Later I sent this liquid to ascertain its ingredients in laboratory and I was shocked to read report. There were ingredients of medicines used for diabetic and thyroid patients," he told.



## View of the Stalls



Dr. Shahzad Ali said that use of such products can reduce weight but for a limited time and patient get back its double after it. "They are playing havoc with lives of people. Such formulas can cause kidney and liver failure and other medical complications for its users. This should be immediately banned on mass media and in localities, he urged.

Dr. Nyla Zahid of LNH talked about breast cancer prevalence and management. She said that women after age of 40 have higher risk of developing breast cancer, however, now patients with younger age are also being reported in various medical centres.

Dr. Nosheed Fatima delivered her talk about osteoporosis and urged young girls and women to take care of their sibling right from childbirth as this disease is actually caused by malnutrition since childhood. She stressed to increase intake of milk, vitamin D and calcium from younger age which will delay osteoporosis.

Psychiatrist Nausheen Shahzad talked about denial and social issues of breast cancer. "Woman suffering from breast cancer should accept the reality and gain their will power. She should exactly know about stages of her disease and keep their

kids and family members informed upto some level about her situation. Such woman should take more responsibility of things by herself and try not to blame other family members of her disease as this will help her to be on her feet," she stressed.

Hakeem Syed Abdul Ghaffar Agha said that qualified hakeem can also be very effective physician to treat minor to major diseases by using natural herbs which is very cost effective as well.

Known cooking experts Ms. Rahat stressed cleanliness in kitchen and while cooking. "You should wash your hands with moderately hot water with soap and use nail brush before even touching vegetables and other items in kitchen. You should keep separate meat, beef or chicken from vegetables to avoid spread of germs and check date of expiry on all edible items," she told.

Director Trade and Culture, Italian Development Committee Fatima Zara Malik shared her experience of being in Italy and learning art, culture and other physical trainings. "In foreign as well, young girls and women are keen to keep their body in shape and slim. For this, they used to go for regular physical exercises as it is the only long term solution. I myself have

received training of how to keep myself fit and slim," she told.

Women should avoid using products displayed in ads for losing their weight and keeping body in shape rather focus on regular physical exercises and balanced diet, she added.

Chairman PPMA Saeed Allahwala said that issue of spurious drugs is more prevalent in China, India and Bangladesh as compared to Pakistan. "Important thing is this that one should take medicine only after having a valid prescription and confirm date of expiry on all medicines to avoid complications," he stressed.

Chairman NFEH Dr. Kaiser Waheed told that this forum is struggling to play its part for healthy society and raising awareness among general public about health and environmental issues. "Recently with the help of Commissioner Karachi Office, corporate sector and Forest Department, NFEH has planted more than 30 million saplings in different areas of Karachi to improve our environment," he told.

Karachi Commissioner Shoaib Siddiqi joint last session for a while and expressed its gratitude for organizing public awareness seminar by NFEH. He assured for his full cooperation as well. ■

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