

Chronic Disease Prevention & Control in the Americas



Monthly Newsletter of the PAHO/WHO Chronic Disease Program
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Editor's Note

The CARMEN Coat: Exemplifying Integrated Prevention and Control of Chronic Diseases and Risk Factors

In the photograph below, Dr. James Hospedales, chief of the [PAHO Noncommunicable Disease Unit](#), is wearing the CARMEN coat, to exemplify the approach of PAHO/WHO for integrated chronic disease prevention and control.

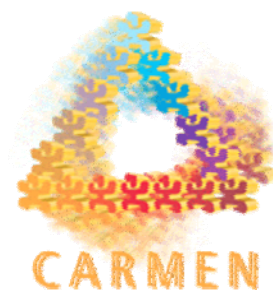


From left to right: Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, Director of PAHO; Dr. James Hospedales, Chief, Noncommunicable Disease Unit (wearing the coat); and Dr. Jarbas Barbosa da Silva, Area Manager, [Health Surveillance and Disease Management](#)

The idea of the coat arose out of a conversation with PAHO Director Mirta Roses, who noted the need for an effective way to communicate the many resources and tools that make up the basket of chronic disease prevention and control interventions. She cited the example of the *mascate*, the itinerant Brazilian vendor who wore a large coat with its many pockets filled with various items for sale.

The CARMEN coat communicates the key elements of a **comprehensive, integrated approach** for chronic noncommunicable diseases (CNCDs), as all the components need to be implemented for the maximum and most cost-effective impact. Also, even though one may work in one area, e.g., diet and physical activity, this is a shared risk factor and connected to other risk factors and dimensions of the problem and the response, e.g. policies, surveillance, and treatment. The coat sports the various logos and symbols from PAHO/WHO initiatives and tools that combat the growing epidemic of chronic diseases. The coat is dyed **orange** the international color for the fight against chronic diseases and risk factors.

Centrally featured on the coat is the [CARMEN](#) logo, representing the network of countries and partners in the PAHO Region who are working together to implement chronic disease prevention and control programs based on, or congruent with, the



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[Regional Strategy and Plan of Action for an Integrated Approach to the Prevention and Control of Chronic Diseases.](#) The strategy itself is illustrated on the coat through a reproduction of the document's cover (see at right).



Also featured is the logo of the [WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control](#), the main instrument available for policy change addressing tobacco, a major risk factor for most chronic diseases. This logo is included on the CARMEN coat to illustrate the importance of tobacco control policies in the fight against chronic diseases.



The coat also sports the PAHO-designed **Veggie Man** logo, symbol of the PAHO campaign against obesity, [Get Moving America!](#), which is aligned with the [WHO Diet and Physical Activity Strategy](#). The campaign promotes diets high in fruits, vegetables, and fiber, along with physically active lifestyles, which are known to promote health and prevent many chronic diseases. **Alcohol consumption** is also included in the Regional Strategy.



Other logos on the coat represent PAHO/WHO initiatives aimed at reducing cardiovascular diseases, cancers, and diabetes, the most common chronic diseases in this Region. These include:

→ **Cervical Cancer Prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean**



→ **Alliance for Cervical Cancer Prevention (ACCP)**



→ **Breast Health Global Initiative (BHGI)**

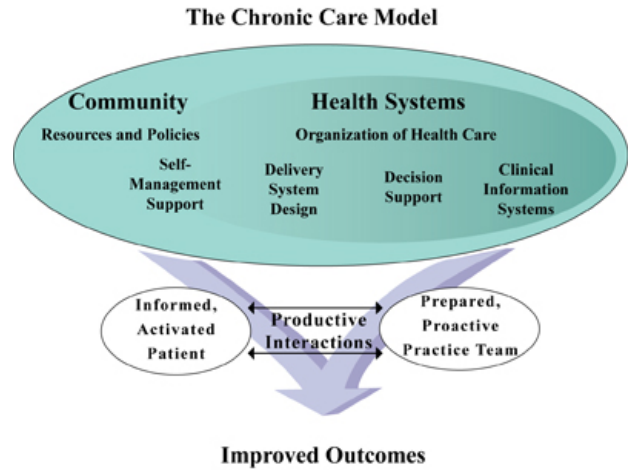


→ **Diabetes Declaration of the Americas (DOTA)**

→ **Central American Diabetes Initiative (CAMDI)**



Also on the CARMEN coat is the logo for the WHO **Chronic Care Model**, aimed at enhancing health outcomes by improving the coverage and quality of care of people living with chronic diseases. This logo signifies the importance of reorienting health services to better address the care needs of those suffering from chronic diseases.



Finally, the [STEPS](#) logo represents the Pan American / WHO stepwise surveillance system for chronic diseases and risk factors, which is currently being scaled up in PAHO's member countries.



The CARMEN coat will be worn during meetings and other events to promote the concept of integrated chronic disease prevention and control and to raise awareness about the many PAHO/WHO tools and resources that are available to further this approach. The team has plans to produce more coats, as well as polo shirts, for use in the field. [Contact the team](#) if you would like to have one.



Members and Managers of the PAHO Chronic Disease Team

Regional Developments

International Summit on Nutrition and Health

- In Chile, 200 people die every day from poor diet and physical inactivity. Half of these deaths could be avoided with a healthy diet. Obesity, nutrition, and sedentary lifestyles concern everyone.
- PAHO's last regional obesity survey showed an increase in obesity attributable to poor diet and physical inactivity—especially among children in urban areas.
- In adults over 65, 80% of all deaths occur from poor diet.
- Just one 30-minute walk every day can safeguard health and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease by 80%.
- Riding a bicycle just three hours a week can help avoid heart attacks and reduce cardiovascular disease.



More than 1,000 participants from countries around the world attended the [First International Summit on Nutrition and Health](#), on 24–25 March 2008, in Valparaíso, Chile. The summit was organized by the Chilean Ministry of Health ([MINSAL](#)) and sponsored by PAHO/WHO. Dr. Juan Manuel Sotelo, PAHO/WHO representative in Chile, praised the Chilean government's efforts to reverse the current trend in obesity. "The level of enthusiasm and commitment shown by government to solving this problem has been remarkable," he said. Below are highlights of the meeting (see also [Ministry of Health summit website](#)).



Chilean health authorities, PAHO officials, and international experts at the Health and Nutrition Summit in Valparaíso, March 2008

Objectives

- ➔ Analyze and examine the strategies to prevent and control obesity in Chile.
- ➔ Forge partnerships with the public and private sectors and civil society.
- ➔ Develop policies to reduce chronic diseases related to poor diet, obesity, and physical inactivity.

Expected Outcomes

- ➔ Identify alternatives to promote healthy eating and active living.
- ➔ Improve problem-solving mechanisms.
- ➔ Promote evidence-based decision-making for better public policies.

Key Points

- In the past, the country has conducted successful campaigns to eliminate polio, tuberculosis, diarrhea, and infectious diseases in general. Now the tables have turned and **focus is on eliminating chronic disease.**
- **Chronic disease is the world's leading cause of death**, with 60% of these deaths closely related to poor diet and a lack of physical activity. Topping the list is high pressure, followed by tobacco, high cholesterol, and obesity. Yet 80% of all cardiovascular disease, strokes, and type 2 diabetes is preventable.
- **Obesity is on the increase in Chile** and steps must be taken to combat it. The government's objective is to reduce obesity from 10% to 7% by 2010.
- Among the strategies developed by the Ministry of Health (MINSAL) are the **EGO campaign** (Global Strategy against Obesity / [Estrategia Global contra la Obesidad](#)) and the **Plan for Health Promotion**. Both are currently being applied in 338 communes, roughly equivalent to 98% of the country.



- Several **large-scale interventions** have been carried out as health promotion and obesity prevention programs, both in the schools and in communities. The country is now evaluating them, having implemented them after Chile was selected as a **pilot country for the Americas** at the 2004 World Health Assembly, at the same time that the [Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health](#) was approved.
- Special focus was placed on **everyday life in cities**: how to encourage and facilitate physical activity in healthier urban environments with spaces and adjustments made to promote healthier lifestyles?
- Additional focus was placed on the **role of the media** in taking up the gauntlet to spread the news and educate the public on how to make healthier choices, using their clout to benefit the entire country.

Participants

Special recognition was given to international guests at this summit, in view of their expertise and extensive knowledge. Participants included prominent public authorities, international experts, internationally and locally renowned public figures, and representatives from a broad variety of sectors, e.g. health, education, and nutrition:

- Dr. Soledad Barría, Minister of Health of Chile; Dr. Jeannette Vega, Under Secretary of Health (*Ministerio de Salud* / [MINSAL](#))
- Dr. Juan Manuel Sotelo, PAHO/WHO Representative in Chile ([OPS-Chile](#))
- Dr. Guido Girardi, President of the [Senate Health Commission](#), Chile
- Dr. Pekka Puska, Director General of the [National Public Health Institute](#) of Finland
- Dr. James Hospedales, Chief, [PAHO Noncommunicable Disease Unit](#)
- Dr. Enrique Jacoby, PAHO Regional Advisor on [Nutrition](#)
- Dr. Derek Yach, Director of Global Health Policy, Pepsi-Cola Corporation ([PEPSICO](#))
- Dr. Neville Rugby, Director, Policy and Public Affairs, International Obesity Task Force ([IOTF](#))
- Mark Adrian Hanson, Director, Institute of Developmental Sciences, University of Southampton ([SOTON](#))
- Mary L'Abbé, [Office of Nutritional Sciences, Health Canada](#)
- Philippe James, Professor of Nutrition, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine ([LSHTM](#))
- Dr. Ricardo Uauy, President, International Union of Nutritional Sciences ([IUNS](#))
- Senator Dr. Mariano Ruz-Esquide
- Dr. Tito Pizarro, Institute of Nutrition and Technology (*Instituto de Nutrición y Tecnología* / [INTA](#)), University of Chile ([UChile](#)).
- Representatives of the National Health Fund (*Fondo Nacional de Salud* / [FONASA](#), or the country's health system), National Playground Council (*Junta Nacional de Jardines Infantiles* / [JUNJI](#)) and the National Council on School Aid and Scholarships (*Junta Nacional de Auxilio Escolar y Becas* / [JUNAEB](#)) of the Ministry of Education (*Ministerio de Educación* / [MINEDUC](#)), among others

Information Resources

Stopping the Rising Tide of Chronic Diseases: Everybody's Epidemic

This article by Víctor Hugo Durán in the PAHO e-zine

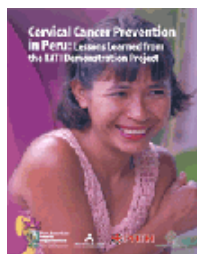
[Perspectives in Health](#) (31 March 2008) provides a

concise but comprehensive overview of the chronic disease epidemic and efforts to combat it: "Chronic diseases used to be considered 'disease of the rich,' but not anymore. Developing countries are facing a tsunami of deaths and illness due to cancer, heart disease, stroke and diabetes. The good news is that most of it can be prevented."



New Evidence from Peru's Cervical Cancer Demonstration Project

New results from the [TATI project](#) in Peru, a cervical cancer demonstration project, are in press in the [International Journal of Gynecology and Obstetrics](#). The article shows that cryotherapy is an effective treatment for cervical precancerous lesions and that it can easily be administered by general practitioners in primary care settings following visual inspection screening. In the TATI project, cryotherapy effectively cured 418 (88%) women diagnosed with precancerous lesions. It also showed that the advantage of using cryotherapy treatment following visual inspection screening is that precancerous lesions can be resolved at the primary-care level without the need for sophisticated equipment or highly specialized



medical personnel. The approach ensures that women receive immediate treatment and reduces the chance that women were lost to follow-up care, which is a common problem in the traditional screening program that refers women to secondary-level care centers.

New Diabetes Guide for Latin America

The Latin American Diabetes Association (*Asociación Latinoamericana de Diabetes* / [ALAD](#)), in collaboration with PAHO, has published its new Spanish-language [diabetes guidelines](#). Compiled by experts in the vanguard of diabetes and endocrinology, it is meant to serve as a fundamental tool for health personnel at all levels of care. It provides clinical protocols as a vital elemental in CNCD care, emphasizing continual care and collaboration between patients and healthcare staff, jointly formulated therapeutic objectives, with a focus on



education and nutrition, with the goal of improving the quality of life of both patients and their families and increasing the life expectancy of people with diabetes. This Spanish-language guide complements the [English-language guide](#) published last month by the Caribbean Health Research Council ([CHRC](#)), with PAHO collaboration, in conjunction with a [hypertension guide](#) (covered in last month's issue; but the above links now go to their own web pages).



STOP THE GLOBAL EPIDEMIC OF CHRONIC DISEASE

PROMOTE. PREVENT. TREAT. CARE

The PAHO/WHO Chronic Disease Program invites the readers of this newsletter to submit contributions on activities related to chronic disease in the Americas. Send contributions (1-3 paragraphs) to Dr. James Hospedales (hospedaj@paho.org) with copy to Pilar Fano (fanopili@paho.org) and Suzanna Stephens (stephens@paho.org). Letters to the Editor should be addressed to Silvana Luciani (lucianis@paho.org). Instructions and criteria can be found on the homepage for this newsletter at the web link below: