Healthcare is the next big space witnessing revolutionary transformation. With globalization more people have become aware of the hazards of unwholesome diet and the importance of keeping fit and healthy. Also healthcare accessibility to all is becoming a reality and there are many trends that are all set to change the healthcare landscape.

According to a report published by management consulting firm McKinsey, around 20 per cent of healthcare organizations will achieve productivity through the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology by 2020. “Augmented reality refers to any technology that overlays computer-generated image onto images of the real world. Google Glass is an example of an augmented reality technology. The razor-sharp accuracy of AR will adequately assist...
in all the augmented reality surgery practices. This way the procedures which were not at all possible before will become quite easy to perform,” says Tejbir Singh, CEO & Co-founder, AffordPlan. Likewise, blockchain technology - a distributed and immutable record of digital events that is shared peer to peer between different parties - is gaining ground.

“With technology becoming smarter and portable, burden on hospitals will significantly reduce with advanced healthcare services like ICU and chemotherapy becoming available at home. This year will also see more empowered and informed patients owing to customized patient support programs to help patients get more information about their disease, make informed decisions for treatment options, disease management and status monitoring, have 24*7 access to paramedics and doctors through online services and remote monitoring technology,” says Dr. Gaurav Thukral, COO, HealthCare atHOME. According to Statista, the wearable market is promising, as the number of connected wearable devices increases worldwide. Dr Bhaskar Rajakumar, CoFounder & COO, Mediknit.org says, “Data collection has improved to a large extent across all healthcare organisations, which will help shape up newer innovations. Technologies like Internet of Things working on preventive, palliative and assistive care and Artificial Intelligence working helping improved learning and diagnostic skills of doctors are trending.” Prashant Sharma, Managing Director, Charnock Hospital avers, “With the rise of the Internet of (Medical) Things (IoMT), mobile and wearable devices can be used to identify the risk factors and provide preventative treatment to patients. Healthcare providers are implementing IoT-based asset tracking and inventory management systems in hospitals. This is expected to improve patient’s safety, staff satisfaction and operational
efficiency.”

Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs) are rising at a tremendous rate in India, now accounting for 53 per cent of the disease burden and 60 per cent of all deaths in India. “A smartphone based diagnostic platform is even more useful in rural areas as there are no labs or facilities to take tests. Right now, when samples are sent to larger cities, reports come only two-three days later and important time is lost to treat the patient,” says Aayush Rai, Co-Founder, Inito.

In accordance with the WHO initiative of Universal Health Coverage, governments are implementing efficiency-based reimbursement models to reduce financial burden associated with healthcare services without compromising quality of care. Dr. Pradeep Mahajan, Regenerative Medicine Researcher, says, “We are seeing digitization of medicine with advances in areas such as molecular medicine, genetics, robotics, telemedicine, etc. and biological modalities (regenerative medicine, cell based therapy etc.) are finding their way into mainstream therapeutics.” Accessibility of health care, through an integration of above mentioned advances and technologies, to individuals from all strata of the society (rural and urban) is the main goal.

Pritika Singh, CEO and Director Strategy and Planning, Prayag Hospital explains, “An important trend that has caught on are superior insurance market stability and the launch of many educational programmes with materials tailored to patients’ needs, which now ensure new initiatives to increase world-class facilities for patients.” Rekha Dubey, CEO, Aditya Birla Memorial Hospital, Pune, adds, “This year will witness a decrease in the cost of treatment. With the new FDA regulations and reduction in cost of stents and implants, many advance medical treatments will become cheaper. Hospitals will be offering the same treatment at lower costs delivering the same value to sustain themselves.”

The buzzword is biosimilars and out of $1.2 trillion global pharmaceutical sales, 75 per cent of pipeline drugs are of biological origin. “To match the complexity of human body and diseases getting tougher from day to day, the only solution is to harness the tremendous powerhouse of living cells. They are trained and programmed to produce the proteins of our interest and beat the disease in its own game. Drugs for critical cancer, immune-disorders, cardiac diseases and genetic disorders are being developed as Novel Biological Entity (NBE) to tackle these ailments decisively, with minimized collateral damage,” says Debayan Ghosh, President & Founder, Epygen Biotech.

GOVERNMENTS ARE NOW IMPLEMENTING EFFICIENCY-BASED REIMBURSEMENT MODELS
Group.

According to the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), medical tourism in India is projected to be a US$9 billion opportunity by 2020. Currently, medical tourism industry is pegged at US$3 billion. “Over the period of last few years, India has emerged as one of the leading nations among the popular medical tourism destinations. This is primarily because of two major reasons – the affordable cost of medical treatment and quality of medical service and expertise available at the top-notch hospitals within that price range,” says Tapesh Singhal, Director, LDG India. In terms of technology, India is one of the most advanced nations with all the start-of-the-art medical equipment. Take an example, a cardiovascular surgery in the United States costs around Rs. 80 lakh, whereas in India it is between Rs. 4-5 lakh. “With Chennai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad leading the medical tourism market, south India is becoming a hub for medical tourism for patients from foreign lands. Kolkata, Mumbai and Delhi are also following suit,” says Swadeep Srivasatava, Managing Partner and Chief Belief Officer of IndiaVirtualHospital. According to one estimate there are more than two lakh patients travelling to India every year for medical care. Dr. Shankar Narang, Chief Operating Officer, Paras Healthcare, says, “Patients come to us for bypass surgeries, valve replacement surgeries, knee replacements, hip replacements, metabolic surgeries and others. India is viewed as one of the key destinations for medical tourism and attracts patients from over 50 countries worldwide.”

The old adage ‘You are what you eat’ could never hold truer than today. Lifestyle diseases are becoming commonplace but healthy eating habits are not as restrictive as many people imagine. Mehar Rajput, Nutritionist, Fitpass advises, “Get more of whole grains – at least half your grains should be whole grains such as barley, oats, amaranth and quinoa. Limit refined grains and added sugar and include green, orange, red, yellow and purple produce.”

After an overnight fast of about eight hours, the first foods that go into your body are major determining factors of your health. Later, salads, high in fiber, will quench your hunger and keep problems like acidity away. With zero calories and high nutrient value, they will help you lose excess weight too. Nutritionist Nikhil Chaudhary adds, “According to research seeds and nuts which provide healthy fats, are the only foods which have clearly shown to increase in lifespan. Make seeds like chia, flax, walnuts, almonds, sunflower, pumpkin, coconut and sesame all a part of your daily diet.”

Most of the health problems like High Cholesterol, type 2 Diabetes and Fatty Liver can be resolved by proper diet and lifestyle changes. The important thing is to understand that nutrition is not rocket science but is to get to the basics and roots of simple cooking. “Eat every two hours and even if you cannot eat ever so often then consume healthy drinks. It helps sustain energy through the day. Do not skip meals as this would lead to muscle breakdown and loss and hence compromise immunity. Eat lean protein thrice a day as it helps to maintain body tone. Consume three litres of water daily. Exercise regularly with a balance of weight training and cardio. Eat fruits in the first half of the day and always carry nuts like almonds plus walnuts and unsalted peanuts,” advises nutritionist Karishma Chawla of Eat Rite 24x7.