

Nutrition and the epidemiologic transition in Indonesia

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Abstrak

The process of economic development and industrialization has historically involved fundamental changes in the social and economic organization of populations. These changes are taking place today in Indonesia, and their effects are dramatic-infectious disease rates are declining, population size is increasing, and the population is growing older. Additionally, the many lifestyle changes we associate with development will also mean the rates of chronic disease will likely increase. Changing consumption patterns are the primary culprits for this transition. Increased tobacco use will cause significant increases in heart disease rates, lung cancer and many other cancers. The dietary transition towards a high fat, low fiber, high animal-food based diet that typically accompanies development will also make a significant contribution to the increased of chronic disease. The costs of the epidemiologic transition are many. The epidemiologic transition will mean a great loss of life and many of the deaths will be premature (i.e during the otherwise productive years of life). The direct cost of treatment for the sick will be very large. Additionally, it is not clear that the agriculture sector's response to increased demand for livestock based foods will be an environmentally or economically sustainable proposition for Indonesia.