Risk Factors for Non-Communicable Diseases

1   When discussing non-communicable disease, what does the term 'risk factor' mean?

‐ Risk factors are things that increase the chance that a person will contract a disease, but do not cause the disease itself
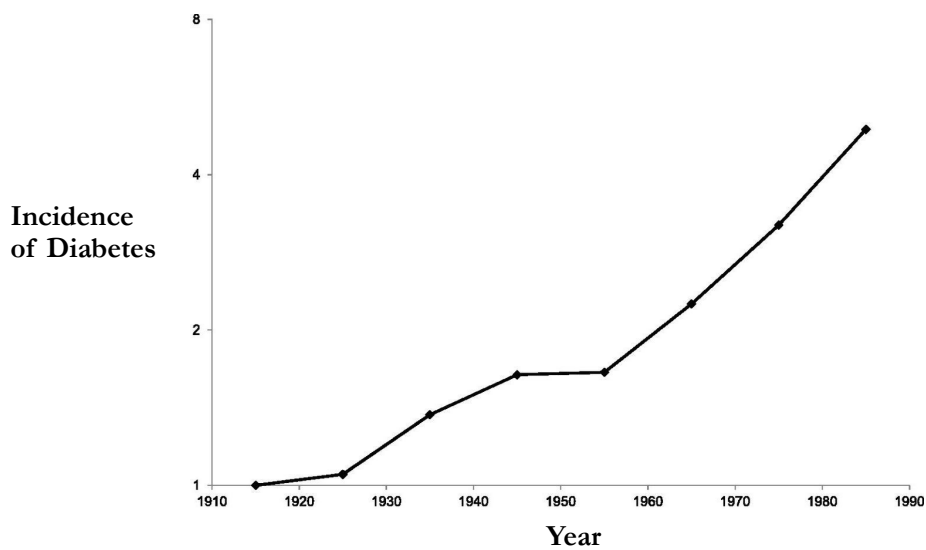
[1 mark]

2   Give two examples of lifestyle choices that can be considered risk factors for non-communicable diseases

- Poor diet, stress, lack of sleep or exercise etc

[2 marks]

3   Diabetes is non-communicable disease in which the body can't control the amount of sugar in the blood. The graph below shows how the incidence of diabetes has changed over time.

a) Describe the trend in this graph

‐ Positive correlation - the incidence of diabetes increases with time

[1 marks]

b) What might explain this trend?

‐ People may be doing less exercise
‐ Worse diets, e.g. more unhealthy high fat fast foods
‐ Better detection of disease etc

[2 marks]

c) Discuss how policy makers could stop or reverse this trend

- Awareness campaign, subsidise healthy food, tax unhealthy food, improve food labelling etc

[2 marks]

4   Give two examples of environmental factors that can be considered risk factors for non-communicable diseases

- Radiation e.g. from x-rays, asbestos exposure, exposure to carcinogenic compounds etc

[2 marks]

5   In the 1900's there was much debate about the health issues associated with smoking. However, we now know that smoking has significant health implications. Discuss how smoking affects our cells and the diseases it can cause.

- Smoking can damage our blood vessels and the cells lining our lungs
- It is associated with lung cancer, lung disease, cardiovascular disease, throat cancer, stomach cancer etc

[4 marks]

6   Diseases do not just affect the individual. Discuss how diseases can affect society at large

- Can impact close family and friends as they may have to support them with time and or money
- Less productive in work force
- Costs to NHS
- Can potentially spread disease to others
- Mark for structure of answers
- Many other relevant points

[6 marks]

[Total 20 marks]