Press Release

Common symptoms that may indicate calcium deficiency: IMA

New Delhi: April 02, 2017: Calcium is important for maintaining strong bones. It also helps in blood clotting, early developmental growth and muscle contraction and relaxation. Calcium can be easily obtained from natural food sources like leafy vegetables, yoghurt, nuts and cheese. However, the majority of the Indians, specifically in the age group of 14-20 years suffer from calcium deficiency due to lack of efficient absorption.

Padma Shri Awardee Dr K K Aggarwal, National President Indian Medical Association (IMA) and President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and Dr RN Tandon – Honorary Secretary General IMA in a joint statement said that, “Calcium deficiency disease, also known as hypocalcemia, occurs when you don’t get enough calcium. It is crucial that people are educated about the effects of calcium deficiency on the overall health and wellbeing of people in the long run. Those suspected of suffering from calcium deficiency should not self-diagnose and treat themselves by consuming large amounts of calcium supplements. Instead, it is important that they consult their doctor and together devise a healthy eating plan supported by supplementation”.

The natural ageing process can cause calcium deficiency disease. Most of the calcium in your body is stored in your bones. As you age, your bones begin to thin or become less dense, increasing your daily calcium requirement.

It’s important that women, in particular, get their calcium levels checked in their middle age and take necessary supplementation for the decline in the hormone estrogen during menopause causes a woman’s bones to thin faster.

Other causes of calcium deficiency disease include malnutrition (starvation), hormone disorder hypoparathyroidism, premature delivery and malabsorption. Malabsorption is when your body can’t absorb the vitamins and minerals you need from the food you eat.

A few signs and symptoms of calcium deficiency that everyone should be aware of include:

**Muscle cramps:** Despite an adequate level of haemoglobin and sufficient water intake, if you suffer from regular muscle cramps, it could be a sign of calcium deficiency.
Low bone density: Calcium is required for mineralisation of bones to keep them strong, as we grow old. Therefore, low calcium levels directly affect the bone density and increases susceptibility to osteoporosis and fractures.

Brittle nails: Our nails need calcium deposits for maintaining their strength. Lack of calcium can make our nails brittle and weak.

A toothache: Given that about 99% of our body’s calcium is stored in our bones and teeth, calcium deficiency is bound to cause toothache and decay.

Menstrual cramps: Women suffering from calcium deficiency may face high levels of pain during menstruation given the crucial role played by calcium in muscle contraction and relaxation.

Low immunity: Calcium helps maintain a healthy immune system. The deficiency of calcium reduces body’s resistance against pathogen attack.

Neurological problems: Lack of calcium can cause neurological problems such as seizures and headaches that occur due to excess pressure on the head. A deficiency in calcium may lead to neuropsychiatric symptoms like depression, insomnia, personality changes and even dementia.

Palpitation: Calcium is required for your heart to function properly and in case, of a deficiency; your heart palpitation will increase to an abnormal speed and result in uneasiness too. Calcium helps the heart pump blood and enables the heart to contract well too.

If you are suffering from any of these symptoms, it is important to consult your doctor who will then advise a blood test to determine your body’s calcium levels. The cure to calcium deficiency includes consuming a high calcium diet and supplementation.

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About IMA: Indian Medical Association is the only representative, national voluntary organization of Doctors of Modern Scientific System of Medicine, which looks after the interest of doctors as well as the well being of the community at large. It has its Headquarter in Delhi and State / Terr. Branches in 30 States and Union Territories. It has over 2, 60,000 doctors as its members through more than 1765 active local branches spread across the country.

For further information please contact:
Sanjeev Khanna - 9871079105
Md Adib Ahmad – 9873716235
mediaimahq@gmail.com
IMA Public & Media Advocacy Cell