Press Release

Bad posture leading to increased spinal problems in Indian youth

*Prolonged sitting and standing can put a lot of pressure on joints and muscles*

**New Delhi, 25 August 2017:** Recent statistics indicate that every fifth Indian in the age group of 20 to 30 suffers from different kinds of spinal ailments. What is alarming is that the incidence has increased by 60% in the Indian youth. As per IMA, wrong posture and other lifestyle issues are responsible for an increase in spinal problems in youngsters, which until a decade ago were only common among senior citizens.

Postural dysfunction or “poor” posture is one where the spine is positioned in unnatural positions. The curves are emphasized which puts stress on the joints, muscles, and vertebrae. This prolonged poor positioning leads to a build-up of pressure on these tissues. Although physiotherapy can help solve this problem, it is important to correct one’s posture at the outset.

Speaking about this, **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, “Sitting for a long time in the same position can put pressure on the back muscles and spinal discs. Further, slouching can over-stretch the spinal ligaments and strain the spinal discs causing major pain in the back and neck. Prolonged standing also has its own health implications. Keeping the body upright needs a lot of muscular effort. Standing for a long time leads to pooling of blood in the legs and reduces active circulation of blood. This accelerates the onset of fatigue causing pain in the leg, back, and neck muscles.”

Sitting continuously for more than four hours in a day is harmful to the spine and back. If not addressed on time, this can further cause permanent damage to the cervical spine causing lifelong pain.

Adding further, **Dr Aggarwal**, said, “Apart from wrong posture at work, prolonged use of mobile phones is another major cause of spinal problems today. Keeping the right amount of curvature in the back takes pressure off the nerves and will reduce back pain. If you experience fatigue or pain when you wake up in the morning or after you’ve been sitting at your desk for a couple of hours, it may be an indication that your posture is not right.”

Here are some tips to prevent spinal problems:
• Exercise and get moving. Physical activity helps in keeping the joints fluid. A person who is not physically active is more susceptible to back problems.
• Eat right. If you maintain good eating habits, you not only will maintain a healthy weight, but you also will not put unnecessary stress on your body.
• Sleep sideways. The best position for sleeping is on your side. If you are sleeping on your stomach, put a pillow under your lower abdomen to help take stress off your back.
• Maintain correct posture and avoid stress. The importance of good posture cannot be overlooked in preventing back problems. Additionally, stress can you to tense your muscles, and constant tension of this kind can cause back pain. So find ways to reduce stress.

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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.

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