Beware of monsoon illnesses, says IMA

Precautionary measures and eating the right food is ideal to avoid the onset of diseases

New Delhi, 05 July 2017: The hot summers are gradually giving way to the monsoons, and along with them many diseases and reduced immunity as well. There are many diseases associated with the monsoons such as malaria, dengue, Chikungunya, jaundice, and gastrointestinal infections like typhoid and cholera. Apart from these, viral infections like cold and cough are also common.

The water that gets collected due to rain becomes a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Another common observation during this period is the contamination of drinking water which gives way to diarrhea and gastrointestinal infections. Walking in dirty water during the rainy season also leads to numerous fungal infections, which affect the toes and nails.

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 "The rains not only bring with them the much-needed respite from heat but also a number of diseases. Patients with chikungunya typically have extreme joint pain. Dengue, if not adequately managed, can be fatal in 1% to 4% of the cases. Chikungunya can cause chronic debilitating joint pains that can sometimes last for years. Management of dengue involves fluid resuscitation and not platelet resuscitation. If enough fluids are given, mortality can be reduced. The mortality period usually starts when the fever subsides. Misusing anti-fever medicines can precipitate bleeding in dengue patients."

Diabetic patients should ensure that they take care of their feet and be aware of infections affecting the toes and nails. Feet should always be dry and clean and it is better to avoid walking in dirty water. Those with asthma should take precautions to prevent dampness and growth of fungus (mold) in and around the house.

Adding further, Dr Aggarwal, said, "During the rainy season, underground worms come to the surface and contaminate vegetables. In the presence of a weak digestive fire, this can cause gastric disturbances. Therefore, it is also better to avoid any community lunches and marriages in this season. Eat light foods and consume barley, rice, and wheat. Water should be boiled before use and consume warm food. Adding ginger and greens to your daily diet is a good idea."
Additionally, skin care is also an important factor to consider in this season. The skin needs extra pampering because temperatures drop and the wind and rain can put strain on the skin. Dandruff is very common in the monsoon due to humidity and overgrowing of malassezia furfur fungus. Breakouts, acne, and bacterial infections also get aggravated by wet clothes. Fungal infections like ringworms are common in areas like the armpits, groin, and between the toes.

Here are some other things to follow during this season.

- Consume hygienic food
- Keep the hands and feet clean
- Do not allow water to stagnate
- Dry your hair after bath
- Increase consumption of Vitamin C

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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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