Prevalence of thyroid disorders increasing in India

Women more likely to get affected, with increased risk of various side effects in pregnant women

New Delhi, 07 July 2017: According to a recent report, about 32% of Indians suffer from various kinds of thyroid disorders including thyroid nodules, hyperthyroidism, goiter, thyroiditis, and thyroid cancer. The most prevalent form of thyroid disorders across the country is sub-clinical hypothyroidism, which is a milder form of hypothyroidism and what is more alarming is that it is a silent disease. It is often diagnosed by chance. Subclinical hypothyroidism is defined as serum thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) above the upper reference limit in combination with a normal free thyroxine (fT4).

Thyroid diseases are more prevalent in women and can cause many problems including weight gain and hormonal imbalance. The chances of men suffering from thyroid disease are comparatively lesser.

In the developed countries, the prevalence of thyroid disorders is about 4% to 5%.

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, "Hypothyroidism can affect all organ systems. Genetics has a major role in determining thyroid hormones and TSH concentrations as well as susceptibility to autoimmune thyroid disease. Those with a family history are likely to be predisposed to thyroid abnormalities. Therefore, it is imperative for a person to be aware of their family’s medical history. If left untreated, hypothyroidism can cause elevated cholesterol levels, an increase in blood pressure, cardiovascular complications, decreased fertility, and depression. In pregnant women, this condition can increase the risk of premature birth, low birth weight, and miscarriage."

Adding further, Dr Aggarwal, said, "The need of the hour is to reach out and create awareness among people about the causes, symptoms, treatment, and importance of testing for thyroid problems. This is particularly significant for women as the incidence of acquiring this disease is more in them. Pregnant women or those planning to conceive should get themselves checked to ensure that their thyroid functions are normal."
Here are some tips for those living with thyroid disorders.

- **Eat healthy** Hypothyroidism is linked to weight gain. Thus, a person with this condition can find it difficult to lose weight. Consume a diet rich in fibre and low in fat to maintain a healthy weight.
- **Exercise** Although it may be difficult to get moving in those with a sluggish thyroid, it is a good idea to push yourself to do some physical activity.
- **De-stress** Stress is known to exacerbate thyroid disorders. Do something to reduce those stress levels. It could be yoga, meditation, dance, or anything.

-Ends-

**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
hsgima@gmail.com
IMA Public & Media Advocacy Cell