IMA proposes first day of every month as Blood Donation Day

Pledges to make India a 'Blood Donation Surplus' country from a 'Blood Donation Deficient' country

New Delhi, 10 June 2017: According to a recent analysis of government data, India has shortage of 35 tanker-trucks of blood required for medical procedures. While this is definitely a cause for concern, what is even more alarming is that in some states, excess of blood is leading to wastage. Data also indicates that India has 2,708 blood banks. However, 81 districts still lack one.

With this as the backdrop, the IMA has urged that there is a need to create a culture of regular donations. Giving blood every three months will increase blood supply as well as blood safety. Many IMA branches regularly organize blood donation camps and the Association has proposed dedicating the first of every month as the Blood Donation Day.

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, "It is a normal practice to observe national days once a year. However, we propose IMA days to be monthly days starting with blood donation day. Starting 1st July, which also happens to be Doctors Day, we plan to make this a regular feature and take a pledge to make India a 'Blood Donation Surplus' country from a 'Blood Donation Deficient' country. Let these mega activity camps be 'Voluntary donation, only for components'. Let the collected blood save multiple lives and not one life only."

The IMA has set a target of saving one lakh lives by the 1st of July through blood components. It has also directed all state and local branches to organize blood donation camps across the country for which NACO and the National Blood Transfusion Council have assured full support.

Adding further, Dr Aggarwal, said, "It is important to create awareness, increase sensitization, and organize more blood donation camps to match the shortage of blood in the country. Donors need to be acknowledged appropriately so that more people get encouraged to donate blood. There are also many myths surrounding blood donation such as people with high cholesterol, diabetes or hypertension cannot donate blood, or that donating blood could lead to infections as attention is not paid on hygiene and safety in hospitals or that people on medication cannot donate blood. These can be removed only through awareness generation among the masses."
Here are some things to keep in mind for donating blood.

- It is important for a person to have stable blood pressure, haemoglobin, and weight to be deemed fit for blood donation.
- Eat something light before donating blood. Avoid consumption of alcohol or smoking the night before.
- Drink enough water or other fluids. This will help you stay hydrated as the fluids get retrieved in 24 hours post blood donation. Do not consume aerated drinks or carbonated beverages.
- Do not exercise or perform any strenuous physical activity after donating blood as there are high chances of suffering from dizziness.

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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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