A World Asthma Day initiative

Press Release

Asthma attacks can be managed by an individual

Asthma cases in India higher than TB and HIV combined; creating awareness is the need of the hour

New Delhi, 01 May 2017: Statistics indicate that Asthma affects about 300 million people globally with about 250,000 people around the world dying prematurely due to this condition. About 80% of asthma deaths occur in low-income countries. It has been estimated that asthma will grow by more than 100 million by 2025. The picture is not too good in India either which has 20 million asthmatics with the burden higher than TB and HIV combined. With asthma cases grossly under-diagnosed and under-reported due to lack of knowledge among the general population, the condition is only likely to exacerbate.

As in every year, the first Tuesday in May this year too, is being observed as the World Asthma Day. With the theme "You can control your asthma", the day this year aims at increasing awareness on asthma among people, and reiterate that this condition can be controlled with medication.

Speaking about asthma and the theme this year, 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 "Every year, the World Asthma Day focuses on a certain theme. This year, it is about the patients managing asthma symptoms on their own. The patient must take initiative to stop/control their attacks, and till this happens, asthma deaths and hospitalizations cannot be reduced. On this World Asthma Day, we need to shatter all barriers, help raise awareness about the condition, and support those who are affected in any way possible."

Asthma is a chronic respiratory disorder triggered by allergic reactions. It leads to breathing difficulties as a result of narrowing of the bronchial passage, which is responsible for carrying oxygen to the lungs. Asthma can have two affects: swelling in the lungs due to accumulation of mucus in the airways; and inflammation due to tightening of the muscles around the airways.

Adding further, Dr Aggarwal, said, "Asthma is non-communicable. It is the duty of every individual to support asthma patients and remove the social stigma associated with it. One can support and help an asthmatic individual by creating awareness about the disease among the general public."
population; accompanying the person to the hospital when in need; and ensuring that he/she takes proper medications on time."

Every person with asthma can take small steps to keep their symptoms at bay.

- Take your medications daily without fail.
- Visit the doctor regularly.
- Take only the prescribed medicines.
- Take precautionary measures to avoid any triggers.
- Always carry an inhaler with you and never feel shy to use it in public.
- Inform the doctor if any other health ailment is bothering you.
- Lastly, don’t take much stress and try to remain calm and happy.

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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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