Press Release

Indians at higher risk of heart disease due to genetic variations

- *Heart disease does not indicate only heart attack*
- *There are different types of heart diseases one should be aware of*

New Delhi, 27 November 2017: A recent study has indicated that about 35% to 40% Indians carry a set of genetic variations putting them at a higher risk of acquiring heart diseases. The carriers of a set of genetic variants in the chromogranin A (CHGA) gene called ‘CHGA promoter haplotype2’ may be at higher risk for cardiovascular and metabolic disorders. This haplotype is found more frequently in those of South Asian origin. Heart diseases are striking young and old Indians alike and this disease is slowly turning out to be a silent killer.

Apart from this genetic susceptibility, what exacerbates the situation is the kind of lifestyle people have today. Increasing dependence on processed food, lack of physical activity, and stress are all contributing factors. One often confuses heart disease with a heart attack. However, heart diseases are of many different types and it is important to be aware of them and the risk factors.

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, “Every individual must be aware of the different forms of heart diseases and the associated symptoms. Some of these include Coronary Artery Disease – hardening or narrowing of the coronary artery; Cardiomyopathy – disease of the cardiac muscle due to several reasons; Angina – chest pain caused due to less blood flow to a part of the heart muscle; Valvular Heart Disease – disease affecting one or more of the four valves of the heart; Congenital Heart Disease – heart structure malformation at birth; Cerebrovascular Disease – disease of the blood vessels that supply blood to the brain; Rheumatic Heart Disease – damage to the heart muscles and valves due to rheumatic fever; Heart attack – permanent damage to the part of the heart muscle to which blood supply was cut off; and Heart failure- reduction in the heart’s pumping power.”

Most of these heart conditions are leading causes of death in both men and women. What exacerbates the problem is a lack of awareness among people about the symptoms as well as their risk factors.
Adding further, Dr Aggarwal, said, “Among one of the myths surrounding heart diseases is that the risk can be lowered with vitamins and supplements. However, there is no scientific evidence that these supplements prevent or treat heart diseases. The key here is to eat a wide variety of nutritious food which includes all 6 tastes and 7 colors and get natural vitamins and supplements. This is to be supplemented with other lifestyle changes.”

Some tips to avert the risk of heart diseases are as follows.

- Avoid smoking or quit the habit altogether.
- Aim at getting 30 minutes to 1 hour of exercise at least 5 days a week.
- Eat a heart-healthy diet rich in fibre. Avoid saturated fat in any form.
- Manage stress through meditation and activities such as yoga.

-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
mediaimahq@gmail.com
IMA Public & Media Advocacy Cell