Press Release

Lead poisoning can cause debilitating effects in both adults and children
This condition accounts for about 0.6% of the global disease burden

New Delhi, 05 November 2017: As per a recent government rule, all household paints should have lead less than 90 ppm (parts per million) and their label should say as much. This rule was intended to regulate the amount of lead in household and decorative paints. As per a study conducted on household paints, it was found that over 30% of them contained lead levels above 10,000 ppm. The target back then was 1000 ppm for lead in paints. However, the limit was later lowered to 90 ppm, following international best practices.

Lead poisoning is one of the most common diseases of toxic environmental origin and accounts for about 0.6% of the global burden of disease. Lead is used in many products such as lead-acid batteries for motor vehicles, pigments, paints, solder, stained glass, lead crystal glassware, ammunition, ceramic glazes, jewellery, and toys, as also in cosmetics and traditional medicines.

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, "Lead is a cumulative toxin and can affect multiple parts of the human body. Young children suffering from lead poisoning can suffer lasting damage to their health. Adults exposed to increased amounts of lead can suffer from high blood pressure and even kidney damage in the longer run. Exposure of pregnant women to this toxin can cause many complications such as miscarriage, stillbirth, premature birth and low birth weight and malformations. Lead does not have any role in the functions of the human body. Thus far, there is no established safe level of exposure to lead as well. Water supplied for drinking through lead pipes or those joined with lead solder contain traces of the mineral as well. Apart from health problems, lead also have numerous negative effects on the environment."

Most people exposed to low levels of lead do not show any symptoms. Those who suffer from lead poisoning also often have symptoms that are non-specific and cannot be differentiated. Some such generalized signs include nausea, vomiting, and gastrointestinal problems.

Adding further, Dr Aggarwal, said, “Asthmatics should avoid entering a freshly painted room. Instead of using paints that can be harmful opt for organic paint or environmentally friendly paint..."
such as real milk paint or other natural paint made from natural ingredients. Long-term exposure to household paints has led to the medical diagnosis of Painter’s syndrome to describe the effects that solvents used in synthetic paints can have on those exposed to them in the medium and longer terms.”

Some health tips to prevent exposure to lead are as follows.

- It is important to counsel women about the effects of pica during pregnancy.
- Children should get a healthy diet rich in iron, calcium, and vitamin C. They should be given four to six small meals during the day.
- Remove shoes before entering the house as lead can be brought into the living space from outside areas.
- Encourage and promote hand washing. It is a simple yet very effective preventive measure, especially during a child’s crawling and hand-to-mouth stage.
- Buy only lead safe toys and items for infants and toddlers.
- Clean play areas and toys regularly.
- If a house has lead pipes, use the initial water from pipes for other purposes such as watering plants or flush toilets.

-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