Press Release

Prolonged neck and back pain should not be ignored
Incorrect posture and sedentary lifestyle are two major causes of back problems today

New Delhi, 22 October 2017: Recent research indicates that about 20% of youngsters today suffer from some form of back and spine problems, with a majority of such people falling the age group of 16 to 34 years.¹ The prevalence of these disorders has been found to be more pronounced in the cities of New Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Pune.² The IMA indicates that it is not prudent to ignore back and neck problems. With timely treatment, the pain can be resolved by understanding the root cause of the problem.

Stress and lack of exercise are factors that can make the spine vulnerable to injury. This is exacerbated by driving on poor and potholed roads in cities. The spine is most important for accomplishing simple, daily activities such as sitting, standing, bending, and lying down. It is therefore, important to protect it and keep it healthy.

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, "Spine is one of the most marvelous parts of the human anatomy. A string of 33 bony blocks are held together by ligaments and tendons and supported by large muscles. The spine protects our spinal cord and the nerve roots to safely relay messages to and from the brain to various parts of the body. The spine is so designed that it helps in flexibility, strength, and mobility; and helps a person with his/her daily life. Two most important reasons for spine problems are prolonged working hours and lack of exercise. The roads in the cities are also not too kind to this part of the body, with constant jerks from potholes affecting the spine in a major way. It is imperative to keep the spine healthy as it is the backbone of a healthy body."

Some symptoms of back and spine problems include weight loss, elevated body temperature (fever), inflammation (swelling) on the back, pain down the legs and below the knees, urinary incontinence, difficulty in urinating, fecal incontinence, and numbness around the genitals.
Adding further, Dr Aggarwal, said, “Keeping the right amount of curvature in the back takes pressure off the nerves and will reduce back pain. If you experience fatigue or pain when you wake up in the morning or after you’ve been sitting at your desk for a couple of hours, it may be an indication that your posture is not right.”

The following tips can help in preventing back and spine problems.

- **Get moving** Physical activity helps in keeping the joints fluid. A person who is not physically active is more susceptible to back problems.
- **Eat healthy** If you maintain good eating habits, you not only will maintain a healthy weight, but you also will not put unnecessary stress on your body.
- **Sleep sideways** The best position for sleeping is on your side. If you are sleeping on your stomach, put a pillow under your lower abdomen to help take stress off your back.
- **Correct your posture and avoid stress** The importance of good posture cannot be overlooked in preventing back problems. Additionally, stress can you to tense your muscles, and constant tension of this kind can cause back pain. Thus, it is important to find ways to reduce stress.

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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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