**Press Release**

**Vitamin D supplements can help cut the risk of asthma attacks**

- **Over 20 million people in India suffer from asthma**
- **Airway sensitivity both rural and urban areas has gone up due to many factors**

**New Delhi, 09 October 2017:** As per a recent study, taking oral vitamin D supplements in addition to standard asthma medication causes a 30% reduction in asthma attacks requiring treatment with steroid tablets or injections, in those with mild-to-moderate asthma. As per the findings, there was a 50% reduction in the risk of people experiencing at least one asthma attack requiring hospitalization or visit to emergency Dept with vitamin D supplementation. Vitamin D is thought to protect against attacks triggered by viral upper respiratory infections by boosting immune responses and dampening down harmful airway inflammation.

A chronic lung disease that inflames and narrows the airways, asthma causes recurring episodes of wheezing, chest tightness, shortness of breath and coughing. The coughing often occurs at night or early in the morning. About 15 to 20 million people in India have asthma, and some studies even put this number at 30 million.

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 important to understand the working of airways to understand asthma. The airways are tubes that carry air into and out of the lungs. In people with asthma, these airways are inflamed, which makes them swollen and very sensitive. Due to this, the airways react strongly to certain inhaled substances, which causes the muscles around them to tighten. As a result, the airways become narrow causing less air to flow into the lungs. The cells in the airways might make more mucus than usual. All these can result in asthma symptoms, which can occur each time the airways are inflamed. Asthma attacks are also known as flare ups or exacerbations.”

Adding further, Dr Aggarwal, said, “Airway sensitivity is going up among people in both rural and urban areas due to sustained exposure to a combination of triggers. Asthma requires continuous medical care and those with moderate-to-severe asthma must take long-term medicines such as anti-inflammatory drugs. These should be taken every day to prevent symptoms and attacks. Short-term medicines such as inhaled short-acting beta2-agonists are also used for quick relief of asthma symptoms.”
Here are some tips to prevent asthma.

- Follow your care plan diligently. Asthma needs regular monitoring and following your prescribed medication schedule can help you manage symptoms to a great extent.
- Identify what triggers an attack. It could be anything from outdoor allergens and irritants to household dust and mites.
- Monitoring your breathing and identifying a possible attack can also help you in taking medications and precautions in a timely manner, thus avoiding flare ups.
- Getting vaccination for influenza and pneumonia can prevent asthma flare ups.

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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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