Press Release

Adopting a healthy lifestyle is key to reducing the burden of NCDs

- About 23% of those with NCDs are prone to premature death
- One should aim at increasing daily physical activity

New Delhi, 20 September 2017: As per recent statistics, about 61% of deaths in India are now attributed to non-communicable diseases. This includes heart disorders, cancer, and diabetes. Additionally, about 23% of those with these diseases are prone to premature mortality. As per the IMA, the situation is exacerbated by the fact that there is not much progress on the fight against these chronic conditions in the country. Due to rapid urbanization, India is experiencing an epidemiological transition moving away from a predominantly communicable or infectious to a predominantly non-communicable disease pattern.

Four risk factors responsible for the burden of NCDs are tobacco, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, and excessive consumption of alcohol. Some major metabolic risk factors include obesity, and raised blood pressure, blood glucose, and blood cholesterol levels. All these are behavioral risk factors and are modifiable through lifestyle changes.

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, “Modern and advanced technology has certainly made life easy and convenient for us – online shopping, online payments, accessing information, etc., all of which can be done from the comfort of our homes. What technology has done all of this at the cost of our health; we are less physically active now – sitting at a desk for a long time working on the computer, using social media on smart phones, watching TV or sitting in a meeting, all these activities promote sedentary behavior. The benefits of exercise on physical health as well as mental health are well-established and known to us all. But, the level of physical activity among all age groups has decreased, either due to lack of initiative or lack of safe open spaces. A heavy work schedule is often a deterrent to physical activity for many of us.”

NCDs are not only a health problem but a development challenge as well. They force many people into poverty as treatment for most of them is very expensive. They also have a large impact on undercutting productivity.

Adding further, Dr Aggarwal, said, “To control NCDs and promote physical activity, the IMA has proposed a campaign called ‘Move Move, and Move’. People should move around more often all
through the day in addition to getting regular exercise. It is good to indulge in a brisk walk for 80 minutes a week with a speed of 80 steps per minute.”

Many of these issues and the way forward will also be the key topics of discussion at the upcoming Perfect Health Mela being organized by HCFI, to be held from 4th to 8th October 2017 at the Talkatora Stadium in New Delhi. IMA is the knowledge partner for the event. It is a must visit for those interested in learning more about preventive health and well-being.

Here are a few simple ways to increase physical activity both at home and your workplace.

• Take the stairs as often as possible.
• Get off the bus one stop early and walk the rest of the way.
• Have “walk-meetings” instead of “sit-in” meetings.
• Walk to the nearby shops instead of driving.
• Stand up and walk while talking on the phone.
• Walk down to speak to your colleague instead of using the intercom/phone.
• Walk around your building for a break during the work day or during lunch.
• Buy a pedometer.

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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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