IMA to organize Aao School Chalen Project on September 5th

Focus to be laid on the importance of inculcating good health practices at a young age to prevent lifestyle diseases in the future

New Delhi, September 4, 2017: The Indian Medical Association (IMA) is all set to organize its second 'Aao School Chalen' programme this Teachers’ Day on September 5. Last month’s initiative was successfully conducted across over 200 schools.

According to statistics, about 60% of the country’s population is below the age of 45 including the sub-group of school children. The health and well being of the country's young people is not a matter of luck and neither is it a chance or random event. It must be a planned outcome. Under IMA’s Aao School Chalen Project, the 5th day of every month has been designated to imparting public health education in schools. IMA Branches at a National level have been asked to adopt schools and deliver lectures on matters of public health in their morning assemblies. The topic for this month is fighting obesity at a young age to prevent common lifestyle diseases in the future.

Childhood obesity is increasing worldwide at an alarming pace. India has not been spared either. Factors contributing to this are the consumption of an unhealthy diet - eating foods high in fats, sugar and salt (junk food, processed food) and a sedentary lifestyle. Today, TV, internet, computer and mobile games have taken precedence over outdoor sports making children at a much higher risk of obesity.

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, "Prevention of lifestyle diseases must start in childhood itself. Schools shape the lives of their students and have a very important role to play in this battle against childhood obesity in creating health awareness among children. Healthy habits in childhood lay a foundation for a healthier adulthood. The IMA Aao School Chelen project aims at inculcating healthy habits in students from the very onset.”

Adding further, Dr Aggarwal, said, “School health is very important as schools are not just centers that impart formal education, but also influence overall development of a child. To enjoy good health during adulthood, healthy lifestyle including hygiene habits must be inculcated in childhood
itself. School health education programmes can help reduce health risk behaviors such as tobacco use, poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, drug and alcohol use.”

All IMA members have been asked to visit their old school or any nearby school during the school assembly and interact with students and teachers to sensitize them on issues of public health importance. It need not be a long-drawn talk, but a short talk of 10 to 15 minutes.

A few tips for school children:

- Respect the Laws of Nature and eat seasonal and locally grown fruits and vegetables
- Each day ensure that you consume food items that span all seven colors and six tastes
- Avoid refined carbohydrates (white sugar, white maida and white rice)
- Reduce the consumption of salt by 40%
- Whenever you get an opportunity walk or move.
- There are no medicinal advantages of consuming tobacco in any form. It only causes harm
- While eating out always remember the basic formula—Heat it/Cook It/Boil it/Peel It or Forget it.
- Get up at the same time every day
- Don’t forget to practice yoga and meditation on a regular basis
- Do not miss your mid-day meal and don’t skip mid-day workouts as they expose you to the sunlight that your body needs for proper functioning

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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.

For further information please contact:
Sanjeev Khanna - 9871079105
Md Adib Ahmad – 9873716235
mediaimahq@gmail.com
IMA Public & Media Advocacy Cell