Press Release

Women with demanding jobs are 40% more at risk of heart attack, stroke

Women worried about losing their jobs had higher blood pressure, cholesterol and body weight, all major risk factors for heart diseases.

New Delhi, Feb 24, 2017: Women who work in high-strain jobs have a higher risk of heart attack, stroke and bypass surgery than women whose work in less strenuous environments.

Women’s Health Study involving over 17,000 participants and spanning over 10 years of data has shown that women with demanding jobs are 40% more likely to have a heart attack or stroke. Stressful positions were defined as those with demanding tasks and little authority or creativity. Women with demanding jobs and little control over how to do them were nearly twice as likely to have suffered a heart attack as women with less demanding jobs and more control.

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 that, “Stress can harm by releasing "fight or flight" hormones, spurring inflammation and raising blood pressure. Women in such workplaces often report being fearful of losing their jobs and also show an increase in heart-disease risk factors, such as high blood pressure, higher cholesterol and being overweight.”

“The resultant stress may precipitate inflammation in the coronary arteries, leading to blood clots that can eventually trigger a heart attack. Moreover, stress also puts a restrain on heart-healthy habits, such as optimal exercise, a good diet, not smoking, and proper healthy sleep. Women with high-stress jobs should pay extra attention to their lifestyle and try to weed out stress creating factors”, added Dr K K Aggarwal.

High strain is defined as high demand and low control. There are many scenarios where this hold true—caring for children, aging parents, or other relatives while running a household and working outside the home — often with limited resources. It is important that one must not let these situations get overwhelming.

Following are some work-stress management tips:
1. Limit intrusions (such as work-related e-mails) on your life outside of work.
2. Practice relaxation techniques, like meditation and deep breathing.
3. Limit bringing your office work home.
4. Regular exercise pares down your risk of developing some deadly problems, including heart disease and stroke.

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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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