Press Release

Extreme obesity may shorten life expectancy

Study results necessitate the need to develop more effective interventions against the growing public health problem of morbid obesity.

New Delhi, Feb 8, 2017: Obesity in adulthood is associated with a striking reduction in life expectancy for both men and women. Known as a relatively uncommon condition in the older days, the prevalence of class III, or extreme obesity (BMI more than 40 kg/m²) is on the rise in India.

As per a new study, those who were obese with a BMI of more than 30 kg/m² at age 40 years lived 6 to 7 years less than those who were not. Those who were overweight with a BMI of 25 to 29.9 kg/m² at age 40 years lived about three years less, and those who were both obese and smoked lived 13 to 14 years less than normal-weight nonsmokers.

Padma Shri Awardee Dr K K Aggarwal, National President Indian Medical Association (IMA) and President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and Dr R N Tandon – Honorary Secretary General IMA in a joint statement said that, “Being overweight and obese, when analyzed together, are associated with increased mortality from diabetes and kidney disease. Obesity, when analyzed alone, is associated with increased cardiac mortality and cancers considered to be obesity-related (colon, breast, esophageal, uterine, ovarian, kidney, and pancreatic cancer), but not with mortality from other cancers or non-cardiac mortality. Being in the overweight category or class 2 obesity, is similarly shown to be associated with reduced mortality from cardiovascular and metabolic causes. In addition, being underweight is associated with increased mortality from non-cancer and non-cardiac causes. A much larger number of healthy years of life lost because of the chronic illness namely cardiovascular diseases and precipitated by obesity. Such striking results shed light on the need for greater efforts to stem the obesity epidemic.”

“Obesity and increased central fat are associated with increased morbidity in addition to mortality. Overweight and obese individuals have a higher relative risk of hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, and diabetes mellitus compared with normal weight individuals. The risk of hypertension and diabetes also increases with increasing BMI. It is important to practice preventive measures from as early as possible. Moreover, the unfortunate trend is not just restricted to certain individuals or groups. This is why the solutions and management measures need to target not only individuals,
but also the population as a whole”, added Dr. K.K Aggarwal.

Following tips should help in achieving and maintaining a healthy body weight:

✔ Skip carbohydrates once in a week.
✔ Eat more lean meats, fresh, leafy vegetables, and reduce the portions. Cut out excess sugars, salts, and fats. Drink more water to keep hydrated
✔ Combine a sweet food with bitter food (prefer aloomethi over aloomatar).
✔ Try adding a light dose of trifhala powder in your tea. It is a mild laxative that helps regulate metabolism. Drinking tea, whether it is ginger or green tea, and triphala helps with maintaining weight loss
✔ Walk, walk and walk. This is the best physical activity for your overall health.
✔ Consume green bitter items in foods such as karela, methi, palak, bhindi etc.
✔ Do not consume trans fats (vanaspati).
✔ Do not consume more than 80 ml of soft drink in a day.
✔ Do not consume sweets with more than 30% sugar.
✔ Avoid maida, rice and white sugar.

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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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