Controlling cholesterol levels can help regress heart disease

New Delhi, January 31, 2017: High blood cholesterol is one of the major risk factors for heart disease. In fact, the higher your blood cholesterol level, the greater your risk for developing heart disease or having a heart attack. When there is too much cholesterol (a fat-like substance) in your blood, it builds up in the walls of your arteries. Over time, this buildup causes "hardening of the arteries" so that arteries become narrowed and blood flow to the heart is slowed down or blocked. The blood carries oxygen to the heart, and if enough blood and oxygen cannot reach your heart, you may suffer chest pain. If the blood supply to a portion of the heart is completely cut off by a blockage, the result is a heart attack.

Typically if someone is diagnosed with cardiovascular ailments when they are below the age of 55 years (men) and 65 years (women) they are believed to be suffering from premature heart disease. “In such patients, the prevalence of dyslipidemia, a condition characterized by high cholesterol levels without any evident symptoms is about 75-85%”, said Padma Shri Awardee Dr KK Aggarwal – National President Indian Medical Association (IMA), President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and Dr RN Tandon – Honorary Secretary General IMA.

A few points, which each one of us must know about cholesterol, include:

- High blood cholesterol itself does not cause symptoms; so many people are unaware that their cholesterol level is too high.
- Cholesterol lowering is important for everyone--younger, middle age, and older adults; women and men; and people with or without heart disease.
- Lipid profile means measuring total Cholesterol, Triglycerides, LDL, HDL, VLDL and Non HDL Cholesterol. VLDL cholesterol is calculated by dividing value of triglycerides by five. LDL cholesterol is calculated by total cholesterol – HDL cholesterol – VLDL cholesterol
- A standard serum lipid profile consists of total cholesterol, triglycerides, and HDL-cholesterol and rest are calculated values.
- Foods of plant in origin contain no cholesterol. Almonds and nuts contain no cholesterol.
- Food liquid at room temperature contains unsaturated fat. Food solid at room temperature is either saturated or a transfat.
• Transfat increases bad cholesterol and reduces good cholesterol. Saturated vanaspati ghee increases bad cholesterol but does not reduce good cholesterol levels in the body.
• A 1% rise in cholesterol levels can raise the chances of heart attack by 2%. 1% reduction of good HDL cholesterol increases the chances of suffering from a heart attack by 3%.
• One yellow of an egg contains cholesterol equivalent to 10 tea spoon full of butter.
• Regular exercise can increase the levels of good cholesterol in your body.
• Keep your total cholesterol lower than 160mg%. LDL is bad cholesterol and should be kept as low as possible, keep it lower than 80 mg/dl. HDL is good cholesterol, keep it more than 40mg%
• Lipid profile is done on 8 -12 hours fasting (no calories) to minimize the influence of postprandial hyperlipidemia. Fast for 12 hours to get accurate readings of LDL ("bad" cholesterol), HDL ("good" cholesterol), and triglyceride levels. Avoid drinking alcohol for at least 24 hours before the test.
• Serum total and HDL-cholesterol can be measured in fasting or nonfasting individuals. There are only small clinically insignificant differences in these values when measured in the fasting or non-fasting state. So for calculation of Non HDL cholesterol no fasting is required.
• Having suffered from a flu or another illness shortly before the blood test can have a dramatic effect on ones cholesterol levels.
• High levels of alcohol or carbohydrates taken in the last week can raise triglyceride.
• An underactive or overactive thyroid can affect cholesterol levels.
• If there is a strong family history of heart disease, first Lipid profile should be done at the age of 5. If lipid profile is normal, is should be repeated every 5 years.
• Blood lipid levels may exhibit mild seasonal variation with a peak in total cholesterol level in the winter and a trough in the summer. Amplitude of seasonal variation of total cholesterol concentration is 3.9 mg/dL in men and 5.4 mg/dL in women.
• The total cholesterol can vary by 4 to 11 percent within an individual due to multiple factors including stress, minor illness, and posture.

-Ends-

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