Press Release

Effective management of summer induced heart problems

*With the onset of summer, heart patients are at increased risk of heart failure due to excessive dehydration and heat exhaustion*

New Delhi, March 26, 2017: With the onset of summer, more and more cases of heat-induced disorders are being reported in tropical countries like India. The commonest forms of these disorders are: dehydration, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Given that excessive dehydration and exhaustion can trigger atrial fibrillation and can also precipitate stroke and heart failure in individuals with pre-existing cardiac disorders, raising mass awareness about precautionary measures is crucial.

A healthy body temperature is maintained by the nervous system. As the outside temperature increases, the body tries to maintain its normal temperature by transferring heat. Sweating and blood flow to the skin help us keep our bodies cool. Most healthy people tolerate these changes without missing a beat. However, people with damaged or weakened hearts, or older people whose bodies don’t respond as readily to stress as they once did, have a much harder time, and may succumb to heat stroke.

Padma Shri Awardee Dr KK 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, “Seasonal changes can hamper our health if adequate precautions are not taken particularly by high-risk individuals. People living with high blood pressure, diabetes, cardiac arrhythmias, and elderly patients are more likely to experience problems due to excessive heat during the summer months. Various medications like beta-blockers, ACE-inhibitors, calcium channel blockers that are prescribed to heart patients can also amplify the body’s response to excessive heat. Patients must consult their doctors if they exhibit common symptoms of a heat stroke including altered consciousness, high grade fever, and dry armpit and not passing urine once in 8 hours. One must never stop medicines on their own, as discontinuation of the same can significantly increase the risk of cardiac problems.”

“Excessive heat can lead to dehydration, which makes the blood thick and can precipitate a heart attack in patients with uncontrolled blood pressure or diabetes. Exhausting summers can result in the deficiency of body fluid (up to 6 to 8 litters) and sodium or salt. Hence, to combat excessive heat...
it is advised to drink plenty of water, consume fruits and eat light meals that are easy on your stomach,” added Dr K K Aggarwal.

**Some tips to prevent summer induced health problems:**

- Drink plenty of water, fluids and consume fruits
- Try to stay away from direct sunlight for long time
- Wear light coloured and light weighted clothes as it may trap less heat against the body
- Intense and outdoor exercises must be avoided
- Avoid consumption of alcoholic and caffeinated beverages as they increases the risk of dehydration due to their diuretic property’
- Elderly people and those taking anti-allergic medicaments must stay away from heat

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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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