Women above the age of 65 need to take extra care of their health

Some simple and basic preventive lifestyle steps can help stave off health issues as you age.

New Delhi, March 07, 2017: Older women are more likely than men to have chronic, or ongoing, health conditions – such as arthritis, high blood pressure, and osteoporosis. Women are also more likely to develop multiple health problems.

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, “Most common problems encountered in women after 65 are cardiovascular disorders and arthritis. Hypertension and thyroid problems are a close second. To avoid CVD related adverse health outcomes, take low dose aspirin routinely to prevent heart attack and stroke related paralysis. Aspirin has been shown to prevent both heart attacks and stroke in this age group. The upper dose of aspirin for high-risk women is 325 mg per day. Consult your physician regarding this. Moreover, staying proactive about health becomes imperative as one ages. Even if you feel perfectly healthy, you should see your doctor at least once a year for a checkup. Take all medicines as directed, and tell your physician if it seems to be causing any problems or side effects.”

“Diet is the most effective determinant to healthy aging. Try to aim for at least 2 servings of fruits and vegetables daily. Don’t miss out. Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables. Go for deep colors: dark green, bright yellow and orange choices like spinach, leafy greens, carrots and oranges are extra nutritious. Choose fiber-rich whole grain bread, rice, and pasta instead of the white maida and white rice. Pick less fatty meat, like chicken, and low-fat milk, cheese, and yogurt”, adds Dr K K Aggarwal.

The following golden rules should be kept handy:

1. You must exercise a minimum of 30 minutes per day. Moreover, those who need to lose weight or maintain a healthy body weight are advised to engage in 60 to 90 minutes of moderate-intensity activity on most, or preferably all, days of the week.
2. Consume a heart-healthy diet rich in fruits, whole grains and fibre. Limit your intake of alcohol and sodium.
3. Reduce the amount of saturated fat in your daily diet to less than 7 percent of calories.
4. Women at very high risk for heart disease should try to lower their LDL (“bad”) cholesterol to less than 70 mg/dL.
5. Hormone replacement therapy, selective estrogen receptor modulators, antioxidant supplements such as vitamins C and E should NOT be used to prevent heart disease.
6. Folic acid should also not be used to prevent cardiovascular disease.
7. Eat oily fish or some other source of omega-3 fatty acids like walnut, flaxseed or spinach at least twice a week.
8. You should not only quit smoking but should also explore other options such as counselling, nicotine replacement or other forms of smoking cessation therapy.
9. Monitor your blood pressure: It is also the most common cause of kidney damage. The normal blood pressure level is 120/80. Between this level and 129/89, you are considered pre-hypertensive and should adopt lifestyle and dietary changes. At 140/90 and above, you should discuss the risks with your doctor and monitor your blood pressure level regularly.
10. Keep your brain cells engaged. Do word puzzles, number puzzles, jigsaw puzzles or anything that interests you. Make sure you keep challenging your brain by trying new things.

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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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