Use pain killers with caution in the elderly

New Delhi, Dec 15, 2016: Non selective non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and new generation selective COX-2 inhibitors commonly used to treat inflammation are now linked to an increased risk of irregular heart rhythm called atrial fibrillation (AF), as per a Danish Research of 32602 patients at Aarhus University Hospital in Denmark.

In the study compared with non-users, new users (first drug within 60 days of diagnosis) showed 40% increased risk of AF with non-selective NSAIDS and 70% increased risk with COX-2 inhibitors. This means four extra cases of AF per year per 1000 new users of non-selective NSAIDS and seven extra cases of AF per 1000 new users of COX-2 inhibitors.

Padma Shri Awardee Dr. K.K Aggarwal, President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and National President Elect Indian Medical Association (IMA), stated that, “The risk is highest in the elderly, patients with chronic kidney disease or rheumatoid arthritis especially on COX-2 inhibitors. NSAIDS should be used very cautiously in older patients with a history of hypertension or heart failure. Painkillers, commonly known as NSAIDs are used to reduce pain and inflammation, but in the elderly population, they can increase the risk of heart failure and hypertension. These drugs can also cause indigestion, gastric ulcers and kidney damage.”

“Our liver and kidneys are responsible for eliminating drugs from the system once their therapeutic response has ceased. They are also responsible for detoxification of these external compounds. As we age, the detoxifying and clearance capabilities of these organs get diminished. This leads to increase in the toxic load, particularly in liver. This is the reason that tolerance to painkillers tends to decrease with advancing age. This can lead to health conditions and prolonged use has been linked with severe cardiovascular, liver and kidney damage. It is best to consult with a physician before taking pain relieving medications and stay away from self medication using over the counter painkillers”, added Dr. Aggarwal.

Always remember to say no to self-medication and use NSAIDs with caution in patients with a history of hypertension or heart disease.

--Ends—

About Heart Care Foundation of India

Initiated in 1986, the Heart Care Foundation of India is a leading National NGO working in the field of creating mass health awareness among people from all walks of life and providing solutions for India’s everyday healthcare needs. The NGO uses consumer-based entertainment
modules to impart health education and increase awareness amongst people. A leading example of this is the Perfect Health Mela; an annual event started in 1993 that is attended by over 2-3 lakh people each year. The Mela showcases activities across categories such as health education seminars and check-ups, entertainment programs, lifestyle exhibitions, lectures, workshops, and competitions. In addition to this, the NGO conducts programs and camps to train people on the technique of hands only CPR through its CPR 10 mantra for revival after a sudden cardiac arrest. They currently hold three Limca book of world records for the maximum number of people trained in hands-only CPR in one go. Keeping article 21 of the Indian Constitution in mind, which guarantees a person Right to Life, Heart Care Foundation of India has also recently initiated a project called the Sameer Malik Heart Care Foundation Fund to ensure that no one dies of a heart disease just because they cannot afford treatment.

For more information, please contact

Heart Care Foundation of India

Sanjeev Khanna-9871079105
Md Adib Ahmed- 9873716235
Email- media.hcfi@gmail.com