The benefits of a vegetarian diet in keeping one’s blood pressure under control

A vegetarian diet comprises of high amounts of dietary fiber and antioxidants and is associated with decreased systemic blood pressure.

New Delhi, Dec 20, 2016: Hypertension is a major public health threat in India. It is a prominent risk factor for chronic diseases like diabetes, strokes and heart disorders.

As per recent studies, The ingestion of a vegetarian diet may reduce systolic blood pressure by 5 mmHg. A 5 mm reduction in blood pressure may reduce the risk of heart disease by 21%.

Padma Shri Awardee Dr. K.K Aggarwal, President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and National President Elect Indian Medical Association (IMA), stated that, “One major feature of a vegetarian diet that may affect blood pressure is the amount of dietary fiber that it contains. Multiple meta-analyses have shown that an increased consumption of dietary fibers reduces ones blood pressure. Vegetarians, in general, have lower blood pressure levels and a lower incidence of hypertension and other cardiovascular diseases. Experts postulate that a typical vegetarian’s diet contains more potassium, complex carbohydrates, polyunsaturated fat, fiber, calcium, magnesium, vitamin C and vitamin A, all of which may have a favorable influence on blood pressure.”

Other vegetarian options like soya products are also equally beneficial. Soya is good for controlling high blood pressure because it is naturally rich in potassium and low in sodium. Potassium and sodium are electrolytes, and a high-potassium, low-sodium diet promotes a healthy blood pressure. Even though soya is low in unhealthy saturated fat, some soya products are high in total fat and calories, and as a result will contribute to weight gain if you eat too much. Losing weight if you are overweight, or maintaining your current weight if you are already at a healthy weight, improves your chances of lowering your high blood pressure.

“When carefully planned and executed, a vegetarian diet including all major essential micro and macro nutrients can be very healthy and nutritionally holistic. It is advised to choose whole or refined grain products wherever possible. Opt for a lot of variety of fruits and vegetables along with non-fat dairy product varieties”, added Dr. K.K Aggarwal.

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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.

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