Practice cough and flu hygiene this winter

As the winter onsets, it becomes imperative to adopt certain hygiene measures to prevent the spread of infections.

New Delhi, Dec 21, 2016: Winter is officially the cold and flu season. Cases of common cold, cough disorders and flu tend to increase during these months. Moreover, aerosol from cough can easily spread through moisture in the atmosphere and lead to frequent infections.

Padma Shri Awardee Dr. K.K Aggarwal, President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and National President Elect Indian Medical Association (IMA), stated that, “When you cough or sneeze, you tend to expel out respiratory waste, which can be droplets (larger than 5 microns) or airborne droplets less than 5 microns; both have different implications. Droplets remain suspended in the air only for a limited period and exposure of less than 3 feet is usually required for human-to-human transmission of droplet-borne respiratory organisms. In flu this can be up to 6 feet. The examples of droplet infections are patients with meningitis, influenza, rubella (German measles) etc.”

Examples of airborne droplet nuclei infections are TB, measles, chickenpox and SARS. Patients with these diseases require to be placed in an isolation room and all those people who are looking after these patients must use a safe N95 mask.

“Apart from hygiene practices, it is equally important to maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle to avoid contacting common winter infections. Vitamins, especially vitamin D intake in adequate amounts can cut the risk of upper respiratory tract infection in half. Viruses that cause foodborne illnesses tend to loiter on produce so, make it a habit to properly wash and boil vegetables like spinach and cabbage before cooking. Dry ambient conditions can also exacerbate respiratory tract irritation so try to keep the humidity level in your home between 30 and 50 percent. Moreover take advantage of ginger, garlic and honey; these products have potent immune strengthening properties”, added Dr. K.K Aggarwal.

Follow these simple good habit tips:

- Avoid unnecessary close contact with those who are sick and when you are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick to give yourself full rest and prevent spread of infections.
- Cover your nose and mouth.
- Wash hands more frequently with soap or antibacterial liquid.
- Avoid touching surfaces at public places.
- Avoid touching your face frequently.

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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