On the day after Christmas, pay attention to your heart health

New Delhi, Dec 25, 2016: Every year December 26th heralds one of the most dangerous days of the year for people vulnerable to cardiac problems, including heart attacks, arrhythmias, sudden cardiac death and heart failure.

Studies indicate that heart-related deaths increase by nearly 5% during holidays, perhaps because patients delay seeking treatment for heart attacks and also because hospital staffing patterns change. A recent study found quiet ER on Christmas Day with a sudden surge on December 26. It was also found that daily visits to hospitals for heart failure increased by 33% during the four days after Christmas.

Padma Shri Awardee Dr. K.K Aggarwal, President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and National President Elect Indian Medical Association (IMA), said “The tendency to over-indulge during the winter and festive months can have severe health implications on people. It is important to educate people about the importance of following a healthy diet, getting regular exercise and staying away from alcohol for a healthy heart. It is essential that people limit the consumption of food high in trans fats, sugar and salt and replace them with fresh fruits and vegetables to stay healthy”.

Winter is anyway known to be notorious for heart attacks, heart failures, and arrhythmias. Cold weather is hard on the heart. Blood vessels constrict, which raises blood pressure. Blood also clots more readily. Frigid temperatures increase strain on the heart, and too much physical exertion can worsen the burden and trigger a heart attack. Alcohol if consumed in excessive amount during Christmas can trigger atrial fibrillation, a form of irregular heartbeat. If it persists, atrial fibrillation can end up with stroke.

But cold weather isn’t the only culprit. After Christmas Day, many people confuse the signs of a heart attack -- like shortness of breath or chest pains -- with indigestion from a heavy dinner. If you’re having a heart attack, studies show that you must not wait longer than 12 hours to be treated. It is essential if people at high risk of heart attacks notice any unusual symptoms; they consult their doctor to rule out any emergency.

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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.

**For more information, please contact**

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