Press Release

Sleep apnea can put you at risk of heart disease

Up to 83% of people with heart disease also have sleep apnea. Sleep deprivation is also linked to a higher risk of heart disease.

New Delhi, Dec 08, 2016: Sleep apnea is a condition characterized by frequent pauses in breathing leading to uninterrupted sleep. A person suffering from severe sleep apnea may experience pauses in breathing five to 30 times per hour or more during sleep.

One in five adults suffers from at least mild case of sleep apnea, and it tends to affect more men than women. The most common type of sleep apnea is obstructive sleep apnea in which weight on the upper chest and neck contributes to blocking the flow of air leading to frequent wakefulness.

Padma Shri Awardee Dr. K.K Aggarwal, President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and National President Elect Indian Medical Association (IMA), stated that, “Over time, inadequate or poor quality sleep can increase the risk of heart disease. Short–term sleep deprivation is linked with high cholesterol, high triglycerides and high blood pressure. In sleep apnea, oxygen levels dip and the brain sends an urgent “Breathe now!” signal. That signal briefly wakes the sleeper and makes him or her gasp for air. That signal also jolts the same stress hormone and nerve pathways that are stimulated when you are angry or frightened. As a result, the heart beats faster and blood pressure rises — along with other things that can threaten heart health such as inflammation and an increase in blood clotting ability.”

The pauses in breathing during sleep apnea occur because the oxygen level in your body falls and excites receptors that alert the brain. The brain then takes up mechanisms to compensate for reduced oxygen levels. The problem is that these mechanisms persist even during the daytime leading to high blood pressure which is a major risk factor for heart disease, stroke, heart attack, and many other medical problems.

“CPAP- continuous positive airway pressure therapy can help patients with severe sleep apnea and can greatly reduce the chances of developing more serious health problems. sing CPAP regularly at night also helps the stress on your heart. If you have atrial fibrillation, CPAP may help control irregular heartbeats”, added Dr. Aggarwal.

The following tips can help to get a good night’s sleep:

- Get regular exercise of up to 30 minutes per day. However, avoid exercising right before bed.
- Limit your alcohol consumption as much as you can, too much alcohol interferes with sleep.
- Avoid caffeine before bed.
- Develop a pre-bedtime routine such as taking a warm bath, dimming the lights or having some herbal tea.
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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