



A Healthy Heart Leads to a Healthy Life (World Heart Day Guest Comment)

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It has been a privilege and an honour to be writing this editorial on the occasion of “World Heart Day”. I would like to thank the editorial team for giving me an opportunity to do so.

The World Heart Day is celebrated on the 29th of September each year since the year 2000. This day is held as a campaign to impart knowledge about heart and heart disease worldwide. Heart is the most important organ of the body. It pumps blood to each and every organ of an individual. It plays a vital role in the general health of an individual.

Cardiovascular diseases (CVD) are the leading causes of death in both the developed and developing countries of the world including India. These include conditions such as hypertension, Coronary Artery Disease (CAD), Congestive heart failure (CHF), stroke etc. These diseases are associated with high morbidity and mortality and affect the quality of life of the affected person. Various risk factors include excessive smoking and alcohol intake, unhealthy diet, sedentary lifestyle, diseases such as Diabetes Mellitus, physical and mental stress etc. Perhaps, the greatest risk is the ignorance of signs related to the heart disease.

Each year, the world heart day is celebrated with an aim to reduce the deaths associated with heart disease. Heart Disease is a major health challenge of the 21st century. 80% of deaths in the world are due to cardiovascular diseases. In India, there has been a rapid transition in the rate of heart disease which is alarming.¹ Presently, India is experiencing nearly 2 million heart attacks every year in which most of the patients are of a younger age group.² The age group which suffers from most of the heart attacks are of productive age. This can lead to an economic setback for the country.³ There is an increased burden of cardiovascular risk factors on the lower socioeconomic status.

The rural society does not have access to proper treatment due to which more deaths occur.

Ways to prevent heart disease:

1. Maintenance of blood pressure and cholesterol
2. Reduction of mental stress, anxiety and depression
3. Diet modification and exercise
4. Regular health screenings
5. Smoking cessation and moderate alcohol consumption
6. Compliance to medications

These Cardiovascular risk factors have to be effectively reduced in order to ensure a healthy life to the patient.

The WHO has given pocket guidelines for the prevention of CVD. These should be effectively assessed at an early stage which forms the basis of primary prevention. Secondary prevention is done in individuals who have a certain CVD.

By 2020, CVD has been reported to become the leading cause of mortality worldwide. Early diagnosis and treatment planning can play an important role in its prevention. As, it is well said that prevention is better than cure, one should join hands on the upcoming World Health Day and perform mass participation in the same.

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