



DAILY NEWS BULLETIN

LEADING HEALTH, POPULATION AND FAMILY WELFARE STORIES OF THE DAY
Wednesday 20240214

बच्चों में कैंसर

बच्चों में भी आम हो रहे हैं कुछ तरह के कैंसर, इन लक्षणों पर रखें नजर ताकि बनी रहे मासूमों की मुस्कान (Dainik Jagran: 20240214)

<https://www.jagran.com/lifestyle/health-international-childhood-cancer-day-know-symptoms-23652235.html>

बच्चों में कई तरह के कैंसर देखे जा रहे हैं। इसलिए जरूरी है कि हम इसके बारे में ज्यादा से ज्यादा जानकारी रखें। इनके लक्षणों के प्रति सजग रहना और साथ ही उचित समय पर इलाज की जागरूकता होने से इससे बचाव की संभावना बढ़ जाती है। तो आइए जानते हैं कि इसके लिए किन बातों का ध्यान रखना जरूरी है।

बच्चों में भी आम हो रहे हैं कुछ तरह के कैंसर, इन लक्षणों पर रखें नजर ताकि बनी रहे मासूमों की मुस्कान

हर साल दुनियाभर में 3 लाख से ज्यादा बच्चों में कैंसर का पता चलता है।

बच्चों में कैंसर होने की वजह अभी साफ नहीं है। इसे चिकित्सकीय भाषा में एथियोपैथिक कहा जाता है।

वहीं वयस्कों में जो कैंसर के मामले देखे जाते हैं, उनके ठोस कारण होते हैं।

नई दिल्ली। बच्चों में कैंसर की बात करें तो सौ में से तीन या पांच प्रतिशत को अलग-अलग प्रकार के कैंसर होते हैं। इसमें सबसे सामान्य प्रकार है रक्त कैंसर व दूसरा ब्रेन ट्यूमर। जागरूकता ही बच्चों में कैंसर से सबसे बड़ा बचाव है। अगर किसी भी तरह के लक्षण दिखें तो तुरंत बच्चों के कैंसर विशेषज्ञ से मिलना चाहिए। वे लक्षण की गंभीरता को सटीक तरीके से बता सकते हैं।

अभी साफ नहीं हैं कारण

बच्चों में कैंसर होने की वजह अभी साफ नहीं है। इसे चिकित्सकीय भाषा में एथियोपैथिक कहा जाता है। वहीं वयस्कों में जो कैंसर के मामले देखे जाते हैं, उनके ठोस कारण होते हैं। जैसे, फेफड़े का कैंसर है तो माना जाता है कि इसका कारण अत्यधिक तंबाकू या अल्कोहल का सेवन हो सकता है। जीवनशैली से भी बच्चों के कैंसर का सीधा संबंध नहीं है। बच्चों में कैंसर का एक कारण आनुवंशिक हो सकता है, पर यह भी बहुत दुर्लभ है।

समय पर हो इलाज

भारत में हर साल लगभग 50,000 से अधिक बच्चों के कैंसर के मामले सामने आते हैं। अगर इनका समय पर इलाज हो जाए तो वे पूरी तरह स्वस्थ हो सकते हैं। अक्सर अस्पतालों में या कैंसर विशेषज्ञ के पास लक्षण को लेकर पहुंचने में देर हो जाती है। इससे इलाज में जटिलताएं पैदा होती हैं। कोशिश करें कि बच्चों में कैंसर से जुड़े लक्षणों को लेकर सचेत हों ताकि कैंसर का प्रभावी इलाज सुनिश्चित हो सके।

इन लक्षणों को न करें अनदेखा

अचानक वजन में कमी आने लगे

सुबह के समय सिर दर्द या मिचली आना

बार-बार दौरे पड़ना

हड्डियों, जोड़ों, पीठ या पैरों में निरंतर सूजन या दर्द रहना।

बार-बार बुखार आना

रक्तस्राव (अक्सर अचानक)

त्वचा पर गहरे लाल धब्बे होना आदि।

हार्ट अटैक

साबुत अनाज हार्ट अटैक का खतरा टाले: स्ट्रोक की आशंका घटाए; रोजाना 90 ग्राम साबुत अनाज खाना जरूरी (Dainik Bhaskar: 20240214)

<https://www.bhaskar.com/lifestyle/news/whole-grains-refined-grains-benefits-risks-explained-132582156.html>

भारत में प्राचीन समय से साबुत अनाज को अहमियत दी जाती रही है। आज हम ऐसे दौर में हैं जहां ग्लूटेन (एक प्रकार का प्रोटीन) वाले खाने का ज्यादा चलन है। जिससे कब्ज, गैस जैसी समस्याएं लोगों में आम हैं। जबकि साबुत अनाज न केवल शरीर को दुरुस्त रखता है, बल्कि बीमारियों से भी बचाता है। यही वजह है कि डॉक्टर डाइट में रिफाइंड ग्रेन्स की जगह साबुत अनाज को खाने की सलाह देते हैं। साबुत अनाज में भरपूर मात्रा में न्यूट्रिएंट्स पाए जाते हैं।

इसलिए आज जरूरत की खबर में हम बात करेंगे साबुत अनाज यानी होल ग्रेन की। साथ ही जानेंगे कि-

-होल ग्रेन और रिफाइंड ग्रेन में क्या अंतर है?

-होल ग्रेन शरीर के लिए कितना फायदेमंद है?

-होल ग्रेन से क्या कोई नुकसान भी हो सकता है?

एक्सपर्ट- डॉ. अनु अग्रवाल- न्यूट्रीशन एंड डाइटेटिक्स

सवाल- साबुत अनाज और रिफाइंड ग्रेन में क्या खाना ज्यादा बेहतर है?

जवाब- अन्न का एक दाना तीन हिस्सों से बना होता है। बाहरी परत को ब्रान या चोकर कहा जाता है। वहीं बाकी दो भागों को एंडोस्पर्म और जर्म कहा जाता है। यह अनाज का भीतरी भाग होता है। रिफाइंड ग्रेन में प्रोसेसिंग के दौरान ब्रॉन और जर्म खत्म हो जाते हैं।

सफेद आटे और सफेद चावल में केवल एंडोस्पर्म होता है। एंडोस्पर्म अनाज का सबसे कम पौष्टिक भाग है। इसमें स्टार्चयुक्त कार्ब्स, कुछ प्रोटीन और थोड़े से विटामिन होते हैं। चोकर में जरूरी एंटीऑक्सीडेंट पाए जाते हैं। साथ ही जर्म में विटामिन बी, कुछ प्रोटीन, खनिज और हेल्दी फैट होता है। रिफाइंड ग्रेन्स की तुलना में साबुत अनाज ज्यादा हेल्दी होता है। क्योंकि रिफाइंड ग्रेन की इतनी प्रोसेसिंग की जाती है कि उसमें मौजूद फाइबर और पोषक तत्व खत्म हो जाते हैं। रिफाइंड ग्रेन से नूडल्स, पास्ता, केक, मैदा जैसी चीजें बनाई जाती हैं। जिन्हें खाना बीमारियों को दावत देने जैसा है। जबकि साबुत अनाज में फाइबर, विटामिन्स, फाइटोन्यूट्रिएन्ट्स जैसे पोषक तत्व पाए जाते हैं। जो स्वास्थ्य संबंधी समस्याओं को कम करने में सहायक होते हैं।

नीचे दिए ग्राफिक से समझिए कि साबुत अनाज और रिफाइंड अनाज में क्या अंतर है।



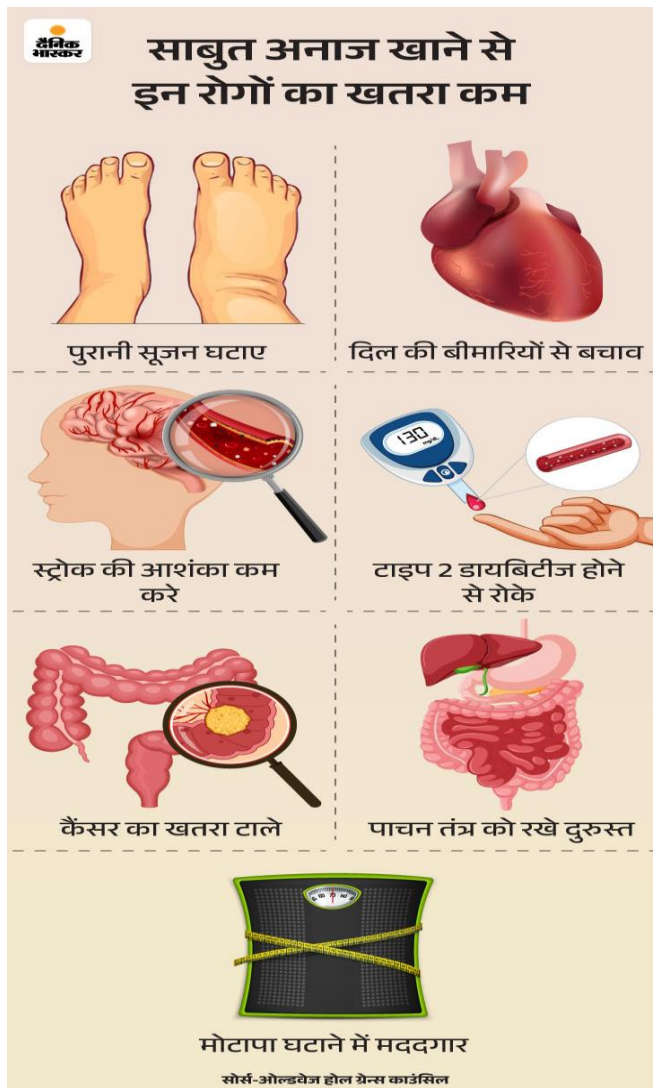
सवाल- डेली डाइट में कितना साबुत अनाज शामिल करना चाहिए?

जवाब- नेशनल लाइब्रेरी ऑफ मेडिसिन के मुताबिक डेली डाइट में करीब 70-90 ग्राम साबुत अनाज शामिल करना चाहिए। हालांकि, साबुत अनाज की वैश्विक खपत करीब 38 ग्राम प्रति दिन है। वहीं, 187 देशों में से केवल 23 देशों में साबुत अनाज की डेली खपत 50 ग्राम से अधिक है।

सवाल- साबुत अनाज शरीर के लिए किस तरह फायदेमंद है?

जवाब- साबुत अनाज में रोगों से लड़ने वाले फाइटोकेमिकल्स और एंटीऑक्सीडेंट पाए जाते हैं। इसमें प्रोटीन, विटामिन बी, विटामिन ई, मैग्नीशियम, आयरन और फाइबर भी मौजूद होते हैं। साबुत अनाज पर काम करने वाली अमेरिका की संस्था 'ओल्डवेज होल ग्रेन्स काउंसिल' के मुताबिक डेली डाइट में साबुत अनाज खाने से कई तरह के फायदे हैं।

नीचे दिए ग्राफिक से समझिए कि साबुत अनाज अच्छी सेहत के लिए किस तरह मददगार है।



सवाल- साबुत अनाज को अपनी डाइट में कैसे शामिल करें?

जवाब- साबुत अनाज को अपनी डाइट में शामिल करने के लिए सबसे आसान तरीका है-

गेहूं को अंकुरित करें, उसे सुखाकर भून लें। फिर उसे मिक्सर में पीसकर इस्तेमाल कर सकते हैं।

सैक्स बनाने के लिए गेहूं के आटे का इस्तेमाल करें।
 साबुत गेहूं के टुकड़े या दलिया भी खा सकते हैं।
 सफेद चावल की जगह ब्राउन राइस डाइट में शामिल करें।
 पैकड आटे में चोकर मिलाकर इस्तेमाल कर सकते हैं।
 सवाल- क्या साबुत अनाज खाने से वजन कम हो सकता है?

जवाब- वजन घटाने के लिए कम खाना नहीं, बल्कि व्यक्ति को फाइबर से भरपूर खाना डाइट में शामिल करना चाहिए। ज्यादातर लोगों की डाइट में कार्बोहाइड्रेट रिच खाना होता है। साबुत अनाजों में कैलोरी कम और फाइबर की मात्रा भरपूर होती है। यह वजन को कम करने में मददगार है। इससे एक तो पेट भरा रहता है। दूसरा इसे पचाने में ज्यादा कैलोरी खर्च होती है। जौ, ब्राउन राइस कम कैलोरी वाले फाइबर युक्त अनाज हैं, जो वजन घटाने के अच्छे स्रोत हैं।

सवाल- क्या साबुत अनाज खाने से सूजन आती है?

जवाब- यह एक मिथक है कि साबुत अनाज खाने से सूजन आती है। साबुत अनाज में फाइबर की मात्रा अधिक होती है, जो आंतों की एक्टिविटी और उसके माइक्रोब्स को बढ़ाता है। इसके साथ ही पाचन में सुधार करता है। यदि आपको ग्लूटेन युक्त अनाज खाने के बाद बार-बार पाचन संबंधी समस्याएं होती हैं, तो जांच के लिए डॉक्टर से परामर्श ले सकते हैं। नीचे दिए ग्राफिक से यह समझते हैं कि साबुत अनाज में कौन से तत्व कितनी मात्रा में होते हैं-



सवाल- क्या साबुत अनाज खाने से किसी तरह का नुकसान भी हो सकता है?

जवाब- कुछ साबुत अनाजों में जैसे गेहूं में ग्लूटेन पाया जाता है, जो शरीर को नुकसान पहुंचा सकता है। साथ ही अनाज में कार्बोहाइड्रेट की मात्रा काफी होती है। जिसकी वजह से ज्यादा मात्रा में गेहूं जैसे साबुत अनाज का इस्तेमाल डायबिटीज के रोगियों के लिए सही नहीं है।

Autoimmune diseases

Why autoimmune diseases affect more women than men, scientists answer. Is there any way to stay protected from them? (The Indian Express: 20240214)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/life-style/autoimmune-diseases-affect-more-women-how-to-stay-protected-9157738/>

Early diagnosis and intervention can significantly improve outcomes for many autoimmune diseases. Don't hesitate to seek medical advice if you have any concerns.

Researchers discovered that specific molecules linked to the extra X chromosome women carry might hold the key, sometimes confusing the immune system and leading to these devastating conditions.

Imagine your body's defences turning against itself – that's the plight of millions suffering from autoimmune diseases like lupus and MS, which disproportionately affect women. Telling news from a Cell Journal study shines a light on a possible culprit: the X chromosome! Researchers discovered that specific molecules linked to the extra X chromosome women carry might hold the key, sometimes confusing the immune system and leading to these devastating conditions.

Dr Sourav Pradhan, consultant rheumatologist, Manipal Hospital, Salt Lake, Kolkata, explained that various hypotheses support why women suffer from more autoimmune diseases and one such hypothesis is regarding the female sex hormone in the female i.e. estrogen and progesterone. "Estrogen has a strong effect on the immune system. When there is an imbalance or inflammation of the estrogen hormone, the risk of autoimmune disease increases among women," Dr Pradhan said.

Another is the chromosomal difference. Male and female embryos carry 22 identical pairs of chromosomes. The 23rd pair is different: Females carry two Xs, while males carry an X and a Y, which leads to the development of male sex organs.

Most of the genes in the second X-chromosome in females are inactive and non-functional but few of the genes in this second X-chromosome are active. Dr Pradhan said that these active genes play an important role in maintaining the immunity in females. Thus, these genes are also the reason that plays a pathological role in increasing the chances of autoimmune disease.

There is no stated rule to prevent the autoimmune disease because of the biological set-up of a woman, however, there are some things that you can do.

A few lifestyle changes such as quitting smoking, both active and passive, will minimise the chances of autoimmune diseases, according to Dr Pradhan, who described them as the following.

1 While these strategies can be helpful, it's important to consult your healthcare professional for personalised guidance based on your unique health profile and risks. (Source: File)

Embrace a Whole Food Diet: Ditch processed foods laden with sugar and unhealthy fats. Focus on consuming a diverse range of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. These provide essential nutrients that support a healthy immune system.

Move Your Body Regularly: Exercise isn't just for fitness; it's a potent tool for immune health. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous activity weekly. Include activities you enjoy, like dancing, swimming, or cycling.

Prioritise Quality Sleep: Aim for 7-8 hours of restful sleep each night. Sleep deprivation weakens your immune system, making you more susceptible to various health issues.

Manage Stress Effectively: Chronic stress can wreak havoc on your immune system. Practice relaxation techniques like yoga, meditation, or deep breathing to manage stress effectively.

Maintain a Healthy Weight: Excess weight puts strain on your body and can contribute to inflammation, a key player in autoimmunity. Aim for a healthy weight through a balanced diet and regular exercise.

Limit Smoking and Alcohol: Smoking and excessive alcohol consumption weaken your immune system and increase your risk of various health problems, including autoimmune diseases.

While these strategies can be helpful, it's important to consult your healthcare professional for personalised guidance based on your unique health profile and risks. Early diagnosis and intervention can significantly improve outcomes for many autoimmune diseases. Don't hesitate to seek medical advice if you have any concerns.

Postpartum care

Discovering motherhood: What goes on inside a postpartum care centre for new moms? (The Indian Express: 20240214)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/health-wellness/where-moms-have-a-new-birth-too-9157336/>

Birthing centres in Delhi are offering a range of guidance, from medical advice to spa sessions, under one roof

New mom Meenal Nirula gets a foot massage. (Express Photo by Rinku Ghosh)

Meenal Nirula has just breast-fed her baby and wants to lean back and rest awhile but the little one won't have any of it as he twists himself up in his swaddle. The attendant nurse comes by and gives her a break, holding and rocking the three-day-old. She walks over to an adjacent private room with sink-in couches and a footrest as the nutritionist hands her a zesty juice. And then a masseuse gets working on her feet with an aroma oil she likes. "Look, the colour of my leg has changed, my blood circulation has improved and I feel lighter," she says, picking up a book she's been meaning to finish for weeks.

A suite at Fortis La Femme in the posh GK II area of New Delhi. (Express Photo by Rinku Ghosh) A suite at Fortis La Femme in the posh GK II area of New Delhi.

At Fortis La Femme in the posh GK II area of New Delhi, this new mother is availing of postpartum (post-delivery) care services. This is the "baby blues" phase, the most physically challenging and emotionally fragile stage of a woman's life when hormonal fluctuations induce anxiety, depression and guilt about whether she can match up to new responsibilities and expectations. This is the time when she needs sensitivity and a support network around her. The 31-year-old image consultant had not thought about having a child till her biological clock started ticking. She felt inadequate, nervous, anxious, worried about whether she could handle the additional responsibility of nurturing a new life. "These first few days of guided initiation into motherhood gives a modern woman the agency to transition into a new role without negating her old one. The team here has helped me catch up on my sleep, understand how I am to reorient herself and get some much-needed support. Google is confusing and your family just gives you old wives' tales. None of them could teach me at what angle I had to hold the baby for feeding, how to help him latch on to me while changing sides, the diet I need to follow and how to manage when I return to work. The baby is important to me but I realised that I had to feel happy and confident about our journey together. I think this elongated postpartum programme is a necessity not only in the big cities but everywhere," says Nirula.

Ischemic stroke

All you want to know about ischemic stroke, lifestyle changes to prevent (Hindustan Times: 20240214)

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/lifestyle/health/all-you-want-to-know-about-ischemic-stroke-lifestyle-changes-to-prevent-101707824551700.html>

Lifestyle changes like balanced diet, regular exercise, and stress management can prevent recurrent strokes and also help enhance overall quality of life.

Actor Mithun Chakraborty was recently diagnosed with Ischemic Cerebrovascular Accident (Stroke) after he was admitted to a Kolkata hospital post complaining of chest pain and weakness in the right upper and lower limbs. While the actor has been discharged from the hospital and given a clean chit on health, it's important for stroke survivors to make appropriate lifestyle changes and focus on their recovery process. Around 15 million people around the world suffer from stroke. About Around 87% of all strokes are ischemic. They are caused by blockage of an artery. Haemorrhagic strokes are less common compared to ischemic and are caused by bleeding. About 13% of all strokes are haemorrhagic. (Also read | Mithun Chakraborty diagnosed with Ischemic Cerebrovascular Stroke, says hospital: 'He is fully conscious, well-oriented')

As Mithun got discharged from hospital, he advised everyone to control their diet to avoid stroke. "I eat like a demon. So I was punished. My advice for everyone is to control your diet. Those with diabetes should not assume that indulging in sweets won't impact them. Manage your diet," the actor said. Lifestyle changes like balanced diet, regular exercise, quitting to smoke, stress management, and having prescribed medications can prevent recurrent strokes but also help enhance overall quality of life.

What is an ischemic stroke?

An ischemic stroke hits people when there is a blockage or obstruction in blood vessels supplying blood to the brain, causing shortage of blood flow and oxygen to the brain.

"This obstruction is led by a blood clot or plaque swelled up within blood vessels. People aged 55 or older, having personal or family history of stroke, heart attack or transient ischemic attack and other risk factors like high blood pressure, excessive smoking or more exposure to second-hand smoking, overuse of alcohol, drug abuse, high cholesterol, diabetes, obstructive sleep apnoea, cardiovascular disease (heart failure, heart defects, heart infection or irregular heart rhythm, such as atrial fibrillation) are more vulnerable to Ischemic cerebrovascular stroke," says Dr Tarun Sharma, Director-Brain & Spine Surgery, Marengo Asia Hospitals, Faridabad.

"In the intricate network of our circulatory system, blood clots often play the role of silent culprits, leading to a cascade of health issues. Among these, one of the most alarming consequences is ischemic cerebrovascular strokes, where restricted blood flow to the brain becomes a critical concern," says Dr Sonia Lal Gupta, Senior Neurologist & Director-Metro Group of Hospitals.

Stroke has become more common among youngsters and lifestyle factors like sedentary lifestyle, unhealthy food choices and excessive stress in professional and family lives is putting people at the risk of stroke even in their 30s, says Dr Sharma.

"Certain individuals face a higher predisposition to ischemic strokes. Those who smoke, grapple with diabetes, struggle with high blood pressure, or have a family history of strokes find themselves in the higher-risk category. Understanding these risk factors is pivotal for implementing preventive measures and safeguarding one's health," says Dr Sonia.

Symptoms of ischemic stroke

"If a person experiences sudden weakness in arms, facial asymmetry, problem in speech, severe headache, confusion, vision issues like blurred vision or loss of vision in one or both eyes, loss of balance or coordination, he/she should be rushed to a nearest stroke hospital. These symptoms should not be overlooked. Delay in treatment may lead to permanent disabilities in patients," says Dr Sharma.

"Recognising the subtle warnings that precede a stroke is crucial for timely intervention. Frequently disregarded, these signs include abrupt confusion, severe headaches without an apparent cause, dizziness, loss of balance, coordination issues, sudden weakness or numbness of the face, arm, or leg – particularly on one side of the body. Additionally, confusion or difficulty understanding speech, slurred speech, and sudden vision impairment in one or both eyes are common symptoms that should not be taken lightly," says Dr Sonia.

Stroke treatment

"Prompt treatment in the golden hour (3 hours after the onset of stroke) can play a vital role in lowering brain damage and improving outcomes. This is a medical emergency hence clot-busting medications are administered to the patient within a short window. Tissue plasminogen activator (TPA) or mechanical thrombectomy (a type of minimally invasive, image-guided procedure) is done to remove a clot from a patient's artery. Moreover, patients are prescribed medicines to minimize the risk of future stroke and other leading risk factors such as diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and cardiac conditions," says Dr Sharma.

Lifestyle changes to prevent ischemic stroke

"To prevent ischemic stroke, you should make some lifestyle modifications such as quitting or limiting smoking, avoiding heavy alcohol use, maintaining healthy weight, controlling high blood pressure, high sugar levels by eating a well balanced diet, doing regular exercise like aerobic exercise which help brain and heart health. You should also incorporate green leafy vegetables and fresh fruits. You should also meditate or do yoga to reduce stress. Having sound sleep can also help boost brain and heart health," says Dr Sharma.

"Taking charge of one's health involves a multi-faceted approach to minimize the risk of ischemic strokes. This includes managing risk factors through prescribed medication, adopting a regimen of regular exercise, and embracing a healthy lifestyle. Smoking cessation, in particular, stands out as a crucial step in reducing stroke risk. By addressing these elements, individuals can actively contribute to their overall well-being and mitigate the potential impact of blood clots," says Dr Sonia.

Post-stroke lifestyle modifications

According to Dr Vipul Gupta, Director of Neurointervention and Co-Chief of the Stroke Unit at Artemis Hospital, Gurugram, for those who have experienced a stroke, the journey towards recovery extends beyond medical intervention.

"Lifestyle modifications become imperative, encompassing a balanced diet, regular exercise, smoking cessation, stress management, and adherence to prescribed medications. These adjustments serve not only to prevent recurrent strokes but also to enhance the overall quality of life. In the aftermath of a stroke, enrolling in rehabilitation programmes becomes a pivotal aspect of the recovery process. These programmes aim to restore lost skills, offering individuals the opportunity to regain independence and functionality. Seeking guidance from a stroke expert is paramount, as individualised advice ensures tailored strategies for recovery," says Dr Vipul.

Post-stroke, embracing lifestyle modifications and seeking expert guidance contribute significantly to the path of recovery.

Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Day

Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Day 2024: Date, significance, types of congenital heart defects (Hindustan Times: 20240214)

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/lifestyle/health/congenital-heart-defect-awareness-day-2024-date-significance-types-of-congenital-heart-defects-101707831884494.html>

Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Day is observed on February 14 every year. All you want to know from significance to types of congenital heart defects.

Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Day is observed annually on February 14 to spread awareness around CHDs or congenital heart defects which are present at birth and can range from mild to severe. These heart defects can affect the structure of a baby's heart and the way it works. From impacting the heart's ability to pump blood effectively, developmental delays, to long-term health risks such as heart failure, arrhythmias, and stroke, congenital heart defects can cause a range of health issues. In India, approximately 2 lakh children are born with congenital heart disease every year. Around one-fifth of these suffer from critical heart disease.

Congenital defects can occur due to genetic factors, environment factors like exposure to toxins, mother's diet and health condition or certain medications taken during critical periods of foetal development which could impact formation of organs and systems in the unborn baby.

Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Day date

Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Day is observed on February 14 every year. The day is promoted extensively by various organizations, including the Paediatric Congenital Heart Association and the American Heart Association, to raise awareness about congenital heart defects and advocate for affected individuals and families.

Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Day significance

Congenital heart defects need to be addressed immediately. Early detection and treatment enable improving prognosis and reducing complications for individuals born with congenital heart defects (CHDs). Heightened awareness around congenital heart defects and advocacy efforts can help increase funding for research and driving advancements in treatment options.

More information about risk factors, prevention strategies, and etc can help improve quality of life of children with CHDs.

Types of congenital heart defects

Bicuspid aortic valve (BAV): Bicuspid aortic valve is a congenital heart condition characterised by the aortic valve having two cusps instead of the typical three, potentially leading to valve dysfunction and other cardiac complications.

Ventricular septal defects (VSD): Ventricular septal defects are congenital heart abnormalities characterized by an abnormal opening in the wall that separates the heart's lower chambers, leading to mixing of oxygen-rich and oxygen-poor blood.

Atrial septal defects (ASD): Atrial septal defects are congenital heart defects characterized by an abnormal opening in the wall between the heart's upper chambers, leading to the mixing of oxygen-rich and oxygen-poor blood.

While some heart defects can be treated easily, others may require surgical intervention or other treatment. Children with CCHD need surgery or treatment within their first year of life to survive and lead a healthy life.

Frailty

22 crore Indians aged between 45-59 affected by frailty: Study (New Kerala: 20240214)

<https://www.newkerala.com/news/2024/9368.htm>

A whopping 22-crore middle-aged people (or 16.2 per cent of the population) in the age group of 45-59 in India are affected by frailty, according to a global study.

Frailty refers to a state of weakness in the human body that makes people prone to diseases, injuries and falls. Although frailty is commonly associated with older people, it may not be limited to a particular age group.

The study, published in BMJ Open, showed the rising prevalence of frailty among middle Indians.

It showed that women are twice as likely as men to be frail. Having lower education, and using tobacco were also found to be associated with frailty among Indians.

The team of researchers from The George Institute for Global Health (Delhi and Australia), and from the UK, also showed that there are nearly 60 crore (43.2 per cent) frail adults aged over 60.

They found that frailty results in more hospitalisations, falls, and poor cognition in all adults, irrespective of age and sex. The outcomes are worse in women compared to men, although not statistically proven.

Surprisingly, frailty was found to be more common in people who spent more money on their daily needs.

"We think this might be because frail people often have more healthcare expenses, which makes them spend more on daily needs. However, when we looked at their household income instead of spending, we did not see any clear connection," Vivekanand Jha, Executive Director at The George Institute, told IANS.

For the study, the scientists analysed data from the Longitudinal Ageing Study in India (LASI). The data, which is publicly available, was collected from 2017 to 2019 and includes details from over 65,000 individuals aged 45 and above. The survey covered all states and union territories in India, except Sikkim.

"India has a large ageing population, and the healthcare system is not yet well-coordinated. Knowing about the prevalence of frailty in the country will help in providing the right care and support for those who need it most," Dr Jha emphasised. Previous studies on frailty have primarily focused on high-income countries.

Since frailty is more common in women, strategies to address it should consider gender differences.

As there is a strong connection between social inequalities and frailty, it is also important to focus on marginalised communities to tackle this health issue effectively, the researchers said. They also suggested managing risk factors and screening for frailty, especially at centres of primary care.

Prostate cancer

Plant-based diet linked to better sexual health in males treated with prostate cancer: Study (New Kerala: 20240214)

<https://www.newkerala.com/news/2024/9291.htm>

According to a new study, a diet low in meat and dairy but high in fruits, vegetables, grains, and nuts is associated with lower rates of erectile dysfunction, urinary incontinence, and other frequent side effects in prostate cancer patients.

Led by researchers at NYU Grossman School of Medicine and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, the analysis of more than 3,500 men with prostate cancer explored whether eating a more plant-based diet was associated with quality-of-life issues that often arise after treatment. Sorting patients into five groups (quintiles) based on the proportion of plant versus animal foods the men said they eat, the authors found that the quintile that consumed the most plants scored 8% to 11% better in measures of sexual function compared with the group that consumed the least.

Similarly, the results revealed up to 14% better scores for urinary health, with fewer instances of incontinence, obstruction, and irritation. The authors further found up to 13% better scores in hormonal health (which assesses symptoms like low energy, depression, and hot flashes) among the highest quintile of plant-based diet compared with the lowest.

"Our findings offer hope for those looking for ways to improve their quality of life after undergoing surgery, radiation, and other common therapies for prostate cancer, which can cause significant side effects," said study lead author and urologist Stacy Loeb, MD. "Adding more fruits and vegetables to their diet, while reducing meat and dairy, is a simple step that patients can take," added Loeb, a professor in the Departments of Urology and Population Health at NYU Langone Health.

Prostate cancer is among the most common and deadliest forms of cancer among American men, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Previous research by the same team had already found that eating a plant-based diet may reduce the risk of developing the disease in the first place. Other investigations have connected this diet to a lower risk of sexual dysfunction in general but not specifically for those with prostate cancer, who are at particularly high risk for such issues.

The new study, publishing online Feb. 13 in the journal *Cancer*, is also believed to be the first of its kind to show better urinary health in these patients based on nutrition, says Loeb.

For the research, the team analyzed data from the Health Professionals Follow-Up Study, an ongoing investigation begun in 1986 and sponsored by Harvard Chan School. The data set is composed of information on more than 50,000 male dentists, pharmacists, optometrists, osteopaths, podiatrists, and veterinarians. The project was designed to better understand how nutrition influences risks related to cancer, heart disease, and other serious illnesses.

As part of the project, men with prostate cancer answered a questionnaire every four years about the kinds of foods they ate and in what proportions. Another survey, which was administered every two years, assessed frequency of incontinence, difficulties maintaining an erection, and problems with bowels, energy, and mood, among many other health concerns. Most of the patients (more than 83%) had received prostate cancer treatment, Loeb notes, and all included in the current study had early forms of the disease that had not yet spread to other organs. She adds that when searching for potential connections between plant-based diet and health, the research team took into account weight, physical activity, and many other factors that could affect quality of life.

Among the findings, the researchers say, eating high amounts of any plant-based food was linked to better sexual health, urinary health, and vitality scores, regardless of demographic factors, lifestyle differences, or history of other medical issues such as diabetes. Eating more healthy plant-based food was also associated with better bowel function, which, Loeb says, may be explained by the dietary fiber found in plants.

"These results add to the long list of health and environmental benefits of eating more plants and fewer animal products," said Loeb. "They also clearly challenge the historical misconception that eating meat boosts sexual function in men, when in fact the opposite seems to be the case."

Loeb cautions that the men assessed in the study were mostly White healthcare professionals. As a result, she says the team next plans to expand their research to a more diverse group of patients and to those with more advanced stages of the disease.

Colorectal cancer

How a new stool test may help reduce colorectal cancer deaths (Medical News Today: 20240214)

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/how-a-new-stool-test-may-help-reduce-colorectal-cancer-deaths>

Researchers say a new stool test may reduce the number of people who need to have a colonoscopy to screen for colorectal cancer. Colorectal cancer is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer in men and women in the United States, excluding skin cancers.

Screening for colorectal cancer has reduced rates of cancer since the mid-1980s.

A new screening test developed in the Netherlands may improve accuracy of colorectal cancer screening. A new stool test could offer improved detection of precursors to colorectal cancer.

That's according to a new study Trusted Source published in The Lancet Oncology.

The researchers from the Netherlands say the test they developed is more effective than currently available stool tests at detecting larger polyps.

“The current test performs well but leaves room for improvement,” Gerrit Meijer, principal investigator at the Netherlands Cancer Institute and co-author of the research, said in a press statement.

“We want to be able to detect the tumors before they have become invasive, that is at the stage of larger premalignant polyps. Treating physicians then can remove these polyps during a colonoscopy, rather than by surgery,” Meijer added.

The benefits of stool tests for colorectal cancer

FIT tests are fecal immunochemical tests. They are a type of stool test that many countries use in screening programs for colorectal cancer.

They work by detecting the presence of hemoglobin in stool samples. Hemoglobin is a type of protein found in blood.

“The big benefit of these tests that are stool based are the convenience of being able to do them in your own home. So, overall, they are very convenient to do and that’s why we’re happy that it is a screening option,” Folasade May, PhD, an associate professor of medicine in the Vatche and Tamar Manoukian Division of Digestive Diseases at the University of California Los Angeles, told Medical News Today.

“These tests are actually quite good at finding cancers,” added May, who was not involved in the research. “They are also pretty good at finding these pre-cancerous polyps that we also care about a lot. But they’re not going to be as good as finding a pre-cancerous polyp as, say, a colonoscopy. The biggest [downside] is that they’re not as good at detecting these precancerous lesions.”

How the new mtFIT colorectal cancer test is different

The researchers say their stool test is more effective than the FIT test at detecting precursors to colorectal cancer, such as polyps. They have called it the multitarget fit test (mtFIT).

Their test detects hemoglobin, the protein found in blood as well as two other proteins, calprotectin, and serpin family F member 2.

The researchers compared the efficacy of their test with standard tests by enlisting 13,187 people to give stool samples. They gave the samples to both the mtFIT and regular FIT test.

The researchers reported that their test led to more positive test results than the regular FIT. The mtFIT detected abnormalities in 299 people while the regular FIT detected abnormalities in 159 people.

“The new test detects more larger polyps without a significant increase in ‘false-positive’ results and thus unnecessary colonoscopies. This is exceptionally good news,” Meijer said.

Excluding skin cancers, colorectal cancer is the third most commonly Trusted Source diagnosed cancer in men and women in the United States.

The American Cancer Society estimates there will be roughly 106,590 Trusted Source new cases of colon cancer and roughly 46,220 Trusted Source new cases of rectal cancer in the United States this year.

Colorectal cancer rates have dropped since the 1980s, in large part due to screening programs. In the United States, it is recommended those aged between 45 to 75 be screened regularly for colorectal cancer.

The power of colorectal cancer screening

“With colorectal cancer screening is powerful in two ways,” May said. “Number one, it can help us with early detection, which is finding a cancer early enough that it’s curable. But I think even more powerful than that, colorectal cancer is a very unique cancer in that we also can find precancerous lesions with screening. And when we find and remove a precancerous polyp, the patient never gets a diagnosis of cancer. So imagine that you have the power of a technology that is eliminating cancer diagnoses. And that’s the way to think of the power of colorectal cancer screening.”

In the United States there are currently three available stool tests for colorectal cancer screening. CT colonography, flexible sigmoidoscopy, and colonoscopy are also used.

While a colonoscopy is considered among the most accurate of screening options, it comes with challenges.

“The problem with colonoscopy is that it’s just not as accessible as it probably should be... It’s just that there’s just a lack of resources and a lack of basically qualified people to do colonoscopy,” Dr. Babak Firoozi, a gastroenterologist at MemorialCare Orange Coast Medical Center in California, told Medical News Today.

“If we could find a stool test, to essentially filter out or weed out all those people who may not need the colonoscopy, it would provide access for everyone who needs one,” added Firoozi, who was not involved in the research. “And it’ll maybe allow some people who do not need a colonoscopy to not ever get one. This new test really comes very close. It comes a long way to helping, but it’s not quite there yet.”

Screening reduces cancer risk

Estimates suggest there will be 53,010 deaths due to colorectal cancer in the United States in 2024.

It is the third leading cause of deaths related to cancer in men and the fourth in women. If the cause of cancer deaths for both men and women are combined, colorectal cancer is the second most common cause.

Screening for colorectal cancer is a proven way to reduce risk of colorectal cancer. During screening, abnormal growths can be detected and then removed before they turn into cancer. Screening can also help detect colorectal cancer in its early stages, when treatment is most effective.

Experts say whether a person chooses a stool test, colonoscopy or other screening method for testing, the most important thing is to get tested.

“Get something done. Whether it’s stool based testing or colonoscopy. Go with what you’re comfortable with,” Firoozi said.

“So if you if you’re OK with doing the colonoscopy and you have access to it, by all means, get it. If access is a problem, or if you’re not comfortable undergoing a procedure, at least do the stool test,” he said.