



DAILY NEWS BULLETIN

LEADING HEALTH, POPULATION AND FAMILY WELFARE STORIES OF THE DAY
Thursday 20240829

Thyroid swelling (Hindustan Times: 20240829)

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/lifestyle/health/thyroid-swelling-what-does-it-indicate-how-to-get-it-treated-101724849358993.html>

Thyroid swelling: What does it indicate? How to get it treated?

Thyroid is a gland located at the base of the neck responsible for producing thyroxine (T-4) and triiodothyronine (T-3). These hormones help in normal growth and metabolism of the body. Thyroid issues are common in women and can be treated with hormonal supplements. However, swelling of the thyroid gland can indicate other conditions, and should be treated with urgency. In an interview with HT lifestyle, Dr. Satish Nair, academic head and consultant - Skull Base Surgeon and ENT - Head and Neck Surgeon, Manipal Hospital Old Airport Road, Bengaluru, explained thyroid swelling and how it should be treated.

Thyroid swelling: What does it indicate?

“Thyroid swelling is seen as swelling in the front portion of the neck which gradually increases in size. Although thyroid swelling is common among females, men are also affected by it. It can be accompanied by hormonal disturbances too. A swelling in the thyroid can be a simple cyst or nodule or a tumor or cancer in rare cases. 90% of thyroid swelling in women is non-cancerous whereas thyroid swelling in men has a 95% chance of being cancerous,” said Dr. Satish Nair.

Thyroid swelling: Evaluation process

Dr. Satish Nair explained the three-test procedure that is recommended in evaluating thyroid swelling - “When you notice a swelling in the neck that is persistent for more than 3 weeks, it is advisable to consult an ENT / Head and Neck Surgeon. There are three tests that are required for diagnosing thyroid swelling. First is the thyroid hormone test followed by an ultrasound scan of the neck which shows the size, site, and nature of the swelling. The third test you will be advised is a needle aspiration test from the swelling (FNAC – fine needle aspiration cytology) which is done to know the type of cells (cancerous or tumor) in the swelling.”

Thyroid Swelling: Treatment procedures

“Wait and watch is recommended in a female patient with a small swelling of less than 1 cm. Generally, it is advised that a thyroid swelling more than 4 cm in size, swelling in a male, age more than 55 years, and if the tests point towards cancer or swelling is accompanied by pressure symptoms (difficulty in swallowing, breathing, and voice change), it requires surgery as the mainstay of treatment. The decision to remove either partial or complete thyroid gland depends on the test results,” added Dr. Satish Nair.

Panic Attacks (Hindustan Times :20240829)

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/photos/lifestyle/panic-attacks-heres-what-it-feels-like-when-you-live-with-it-101724848688616.html>

Panic attacks: Here's what it feels like when you live with it lifestyle

Panic attacks are brief episodes of anxiety that can cause the physical sensation of fear. Some of the common symptoms of panic attacks are shortness of breath, racing heartbeat, dizziness, trembling and muscle tension. When someone lives with panic attacks, it can be extremely difficult for them to navigate through daily live activities. Therapist Taylor Barone explained what living with panic attack looks like.

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It is always a waiting game for a person living with panic attacks. They are constantly waiting for the next panic attack to hit.

They may fear that they can have a panic attack anywhere – hence, they choose to stay home as it is the safest option.

They may fear that they can have a panic attack anywhere – hence, they choose to stay home as it is the safest option. (Unsplash)

Recommended Photos

Isolating oneself and trying to stay away from socialising is very normal for people with panic attacks as they fear that they may get anxious

Worst-case scenarios and downward spirals are also common in people with panic attacks. They fear that they will be laughed at and judged.

Every symptom of a panic attack that they feel can make them fear having a full-blown panic attack and feeling anxious for hours.

Oropouche Virus (Hindustan Times: 20240829)

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/lifestyle/health/what-to-know-about-the-oropouche-virus-also-known-as-sloth-fever-101724831805626.html>

What to know about the Oropouche virus, also known as sloth fever

First found in a three-toed sloth, Oropouche virus is spread by midges and mosquitoes. More than 20 people returning to the U.S. from Cuba have been infected with a virus transmitted by bugs in recent months, federal health officials said Tuesday. They all had Oropouche virus disease, also known as sloth fever.

None have died, and there is no evidence that it's spreading in the United States. But officials are warning U.S. doctors to be on the lookout for the infection in travelers coming from Cuba and South America.

What is Oropouche virus?

Oropouche is a virus that is native to forested tropical areas. It was first identified in 1955 in a 24-year-old forest worker on the island of Trinidad, and was named for a nearby village and wetlands.

It has sometimes been called sloth fever because scientists first investigating the virus found it in a three-toed sloth, and believed sloths were important in its spread between insects and animals.

How does Oropouche virus spread?

The virus is spread to humans by small biting flies called midges, and by some types of mosquitoes. Humans have become infected while visiting forested areas and are believed to be responsible for helping the virus make its way to towns and cities, but person-to-person transmission hasn't been documented.

How many cases have there been?

Beginning late last year, the virus was identified as the cause of large outbreaks in Amazon regions where it was known to exist, as well as in new areas in South America and the Caribbean. About 8,000 locally acquired cases have been reported in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, and Peru.

Some travelers have been diagnosed with it in the U.S. and Europe. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Tuesday said 21 U.S. cases have been reported so far — 20 in Florida and one in New York — all of whom had been in Cuba. European health officials previously said they had found 19 cases, nearly all among travelers.

What are the symptoms and treatments?

Symptoms can seem similar to other tropical diseases like dengue, Zika or malaria. Fever, headaches and muscle aches are common, and some infected people also suffer diarrhea, nausea, vomiting or rash.

Some patients suffer recurring symptoms, and 1 in 20 can suffer more severe symptoms like bleeding, meningitis and encephalitis. It is rarely fatal, though there are recent reports of deaths in two healthy young people in Brazil.

There are no vaccines to prevent infections and no medicines available to treat the symptoms.

Are there other concerns?

In Brazil, officials are investigating reports that infections might be passed on from a pregnant woman to a fetus — a potentially frightening echo of what was seen during Zika outbreaks nearly a decade ago.

The CDC has recommended that pregnant women avoid non-essential travel to Cuba and suggested all travelers take steps to prevent bug bites, such as using insect repellents and wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants.

Will Men go Extinct (Hindustan Times: 20240829)

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/lifestyle/health/will-men-go-extinct-study-finds-y-chromosomes-are-shrinking-in-the-world-101724841117274.html>

Will men go extinct? Study finds Y chromosomes are shrinking in the world

A study from the University of Kent has been making the rounds on social media lately and sparked concern among netizens. The findings revealed that the Y chromosome is dwindling, which is primarily responsible for male sex determination. This has raised questions about the potential extinction of males altogether in the future.

Role of chromosomes

Humans have 23 pairs of chromosomes in each cell. A chromosome is a thread-like structure found in cells and is composed of the genetic material of an organism. The 23rd chromosome pair is unique and determines the sex of the baby. Females have a pair of X chromosomes, while males have one X and one Y chromosome. The Y chromosome is the foundation of male biology and carries SRY (sex-determining region Y gene) and is responsible for the formation of testes in the embryo.

Deteriorating Y chromosomes

Y chromosome is the base for male existence. It is passed from male parent to male offspring. But it is not necessary for basic life functions. X on the other hand has essential life genes, making it indispensable. X chromosome has 900 protein-coding genes, while Y has only 100 protein-coding genes. Over time, the Y chromosome has a limited gene repertoire, shrivelling and degenerating slowly.

However, this has not always been the case. 166 million years ago, the Y chromosome was as gene-rich as the X chromosome. There's an inherent shortcoming, as the Y chromosome is the odd one out of the lot. All the chromosomes exist in pairs, and each cell has two

copies of each. But, the Y chromosome is a single copy, unable to undergo genetic recombination. With two copies of the chromosome, it is possible to get rid of damaging genetic mutation by shuffling the genes after every generation. Y chromosome lacks the benefits of genetic recombination and starts to shrink generation after generation it keeps carrying the damaging genetic mutation, causing the chromosome to degenerate.

Evolutionary resilience

However, the Y chromosome shows resistance and adaptability. A Danish study, published in PLoS Genetics, revealed that the Y chromosome attempts to preserve itself and develops a particular DNA sequence, palindromes, that essentially repairs the damaged genes. Here, undamaged genes are utilised as a blueprint to fix the damaged ones. The study also illustrated the likelihood of the Y chromosome's structural rearrangement for gene amplification, to maintain sperm health.

However, despite all attempts, the Y chromosome is continuing on its path of decline. The Y chromosome has disappeared in Japanese spiny rats and mole voles. In such a case, the SRY gene in the Y chromosome, responsible for the male characteristics, would latch onto another chromosome. Y chromosome would no longer determine sex, without the SRY gene. Although, it is doomed as well, and the new sex-determining chromosome SRY gene has moved onto, would experience the same degeneration as the Y chromosome.

Future of reproduction

The dwindling Y chromosome raises concern for human reproduction as the Y chromosome is essential for sperm production, and the continuation of the species. With the aid of assisted technologies, many of the genes can be bypassed. This implies that soon in the future, with the help of genetic engineering same-sex female couples or infertile men might be able to have children. But, even if it's feasible, it's unlikely to replace the natural reproduction completely. As per the study, the Y chromosome's disappearance is set to happen 4.6 million years into the future. But it does indicate that the future holds a new system of sex determination, reproduction, or if anything, an entirely new species.

Health Benefits (THE TIMES OF INDIA: 20240829)

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/health-fitness/health-news/powerful-health-benefits-of-indoor-walking-you-didnt-know/articleshow/112845361.cms>

Powerful health benefits of indoor walking you didn't know

Indoor walking is a growing trend among individuals with busy schedules, offering comparable health benefits to outdoor walking. Practiced at home, workplace, or shopping complexes, it aids in weight loss, stress relief, improved digestion, and reduced risk of type 2 diabetes. Experts recommend adding it to your daily routine for optimal health results.

Powerful health benefits of indoor walking you didn't know

Not getting time to exercise is no longer an excuse when you have an option for indoor walking. Fast catching on popularity, this urban fitness trend suits people with busy schedules who often face time constraints. Indoor walking stands for walking within the

confines of your home, shopping complex, office, or even climbing stairs. Fitness experts approve of this trend as it offers similar benefits to outdoor walking.

However, for adequate Vitamin D intake, it's still advised to get some morning sun in your neighbourhood park or your balcony.

Any kind of physical movement can reverse the effects of a sedentary lifestyle and aid in weight loss. Walking is not only a convenient way to burn those extra calories, but provides a wealth of benefits from keeping your bones and muscles strong, brain agile, to reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes. Walking isn't just a workout but a mindful way of living your life in a healthier and more meaningful way.

Walking isn't your normal workout, it's also a happiness mantra. It helps release endorphins, improve blood flow and keep blood pressure in check. A count of 10,000 steps daily is considered magical. Indoor walking can help add to your step count. All you have to do is to be a little mindful about walking whenever there's an opportunity.

According to a study by Stanford University, walking opens the mind and helps the flow of ideas. Whether you are at home or in office settings, walking can help you get multitude of benefits.

How to ace indoor walking

indoor walking 2

Walking inside the home

Indoor walking inside your home can be ideal post lunch when the weather outside isn't favourable or you don't have time to head outdoors. It can simply be done from your drawing room to bedroom, or studyroom to kitchen. This will not only help add to your step count, but also aid in digestion and controlling sugar spikes.

Walking at workplace

Do not waste the opportunity to add to your step count in your office. You can climb stairs or just say 'hello' to a friend who sits a little far from you. You can also take a few calls while walking. One may also consider on-the-spot jogging when no one is looking.

Walking while shopping

Indulge in some retail therapy and work on your fitness levels at the same time. Instead of taking escalators in your neighbourhood mall, try to choose stairs. Climbing stairs while carrying those heavy shopping bags will surely help you lose some pounds.

Benefits of indoor walking

Weight loss

One of the most important benefits of indoor walking is that you burn some additional calories. Short bursts of activity can add up to help you reach your fitness goals. If you manage to do a total of even 30 minutes of indoor walking, you will be able to reap huge benefits for weight loss.

It keeps stress away

Sitting at your desk continuously without any movements can increase your stress levels. Walking a few steps, even inside your workplace, can help release endorphins and alleviate stress. This can also increase your productivity.

Aids digestion

Walking inside your home post meals can ensure your food is digested well. It also keeps acidity, and bloating in check. Ayurveda recommends practice of Shatapavali or 100 steps post every meal for optimum digestion and well-being.

Reduces risk of type 2 diabetes

Walking can reduce risk of diabetes by reducing insulin sensitivity. It also controls post-meal sugar spikes in people with diabetes. Walking helps lose weight which is another factor in reducing risk of the metabolic disorders.

Thyroid Gland (THE TIMES OF INDIA: 20240829)

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/health-fitness/health-news/herbal-remedies-that-can-regulate-your-thyroid-gland/articleshow/112867591.cms>

Herbal remedies that can regulate your thyroid gland

The thyroid gland, essential for regulating metabolism and energy, can be affected by issues like hypothyroidism and hyperthyroidism. Herbs such as Kachnar, Kuth Kadvi, ginger, Shankh Bhasma, and black pepper may help maintain thyroid health. Before starting any herbal regimen, consulting a doctor is advised for personalized recommendations.

Herbal remedies that can regulate your thyroid gland

The thyroid gland, a small butterfly-shaped organ at the base of your neck, is a powerhouse for your body's health. It produces hormones that control your metabolism, energy levels, and even your heart rate. When the thyroid isn't working properly, it can lead to issues like hypothyroidism (when it's underactive) or hyperthyroidism (when it's overactive), both of which can seriously affect how you feel.

Luckily, nature provides a variety of herbal remedies that can help keep your thyroid healthy and functioning well.

Kachnar

Kachnar, or mountain ebony, is another powerful herb for thyroid health. It helps in balancing thyroid hormone levels and is particularly beneficial for those with goiter or hypothyroidism. Kachnar can be consumed in the form of a decoction or powder mixed with honey.

Kuth Kadvi, also known as costus root, has been used in traditional medicine for its potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. It can help regulate thyroid hormone production and alleviate symptoms associated with thyroid disorders. Its bitter taste may not be pleasant, but its benefits for thyroid health are worth it.

Ginger

According to Mool Meena, Ayurveda expert, chief operating officer, Sheopal's, "Ginger is well known for its anti-inflammatory properties and its ability to boost metabolism. For those with hypothyroidism, ginger can help enhance their metabolism and improve energy levels. It can be taken in your teas, meals, or simply as a supplement."

Shankh Bhasma

Shankh Bhasma, an ayurvedic preparation made from conch shell, is rich in calcium and other minerals that support thyroid function. It is particularly useful for those with hypothyroidism. However, it is essential to use Shankh Bhasma under the guidance of an experienced Ayurvedic practitioner, as the preparation and dosage need to be precise.

Black Pepper

According to Shivani Sharma, Dietitian, Diet clinic "Black pepper, a common kitchen spice, has more to offer than just flavor. It contains piperine, which enhances the absorption of other nutrients and herbs. When combined with other thyroid-supporting herbs, black pepper can amplify their benefits. A pinch of black pepper in your daily diet can go a long way in supporting thyroid health."

Herbal supplements for healthy thyroid

While these herbal remedies can be incredibly beneficial, an even more convenient way to incorporate these natural ingredients into your diet is through herbal supplements. These are commonly available in capsule or tablet form. Make sure you consult your doctor before adding them into your routine, especially if you are currently on thyroid medication as the doctor can determine the right combination and dosage of herbal supplements tailored to your specific needs.

Taking care of your thyroid is essential for overall well-being, and nature provides us with a wealth of herbs to support this vital gland. Kuth Kadvi, ginger, Kachnar, black pepper, and Shankh Bhasma are just a few examples of the powerful herbal remedies available. Remember to consult your doctor before starting any new herbal regimen to ensure the best results and maintain your thyroid health naturally.

Heart Attack (THE TIMES OF INDIA: 20240829)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AKdXBWgWtr4&list=RDPT1CwFIoc98&index=2>

Waking up late on weekends can prevent heart attack says research

Many people rely on Weekend Catch-Up Sleep (WCS) to balance the sleep loss during weekdays. Studies now show that while weeklong sleep deprivation can harm heart health, compensating with extra sleep on weekends may lower cardiovascular risks. Nonetheless, a consistent sleep schedule remains essential for overall health and well-being. [Read More](#)

Waking up late on weekends can prevent heart attack says research

Love to sleep during the weekend? Know how it helps in preventing heart attacks

Sleeping more on weekends: Can it really protect your heart?

Pick out any of us and you will see one thing in common; the struggle to get the recommended 7-9 hours of sleep each night. Whether it's due to work, school, or other obligations, sleep often takes a backseat, leaving us tired and sleep-deprived by the weekend.

To make up for lost sleep, many people indulge in what's known as Weekend Catch-Up Sleep (WCS). But can sleeping in on weekends actually have a positive impact on your heart health? Recent studies suggest that this might just be the case.

What is the connection between sleep and heart health?

Sleep plays an important role in maintaining overall health, including cardiovascular health. According to the Great Indian Sleep Scorecard, over 88% of the Indian population does not get a good night's sleep. This lack of sleep has been linked to an increased risk of high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes, obesity, and, notably, heart disease. When we don't get enough sleep, our bodies react by increasing the levels of stress hormones, which can lead to inflammation - a known contributor to heart disease.

sleep talk (1)

Research published in the US National Library of Medicine shows that inadequate sleep triggers an inflammatory response in the body. This inflammation, if left unchecked, can lead to severe cardiovascular issues like heart attacks and strokes. Sleep disorders such as obstructive sleep apnea, which disrupts breathing during sleep, can increase the strain on the heart, leading to higher risks of heart failure.

Can weekend sleep insulation help?

A study published in Sleep Health explored whether Weekend Catch-Up Sleep could mitigate the risks associated with sleep deprivation. The study specifically looked at individuals who slept six hours or less during the week but made up for it by sleeping an extra two hours on the weekend. The study found that these individuals had a lower risk of developing cardiovascular disease compared to those who didn't catch up on sleep.

Five hours of sleep each night linked to greater risk of chronic diseases: Study

The findings suggest that while weekday sleep deprivation is harmful, compensating with extra sleep on weekends may help reduce the risk of heart disease. It's important to note that this doesn't mean we should rely solely on weekend sleep to make up for a lack of sleep during the week.

Why sleep hygiene still matters

While catching up on sleep during the weekend can be beneficial, it's not a substitute for good sleep hygiene. The National Institute of Health emphasizes that healthy sleep includes not just adequate duration but also high-quality, restorative sleep and a consistent sleep schedule. Aiming for 7-9 hours of sleep per night should still be the goal, with a focus on creating a regular sleep pattern that supports overall well-being.

Consistent poor sleep, even with weekend catch-ups, can still lead to long-term health issues, including heart disease. Therefore, while the occasional weekend lie-in is helpful, prioritizing a regular sleep schedule throughout the week is crucial.

Other benefits of weekend catch-up sleep

Beyond heart health, catching up on sleep during the weekend can have other positive effects. Improved mood, better cognitive function, and reduced stress levels are just a few of the benefits associated with getting adequate sleep. Sleep is a time for the body to repair itself, so those extra hours can contribute to overall better mental and physical health.

COVID-19 (Medical News Today: 20240829)

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/mediterranean-diet-reduced-covid-19-virus-infection-risk>

Can following a Mediterranean diet reduce your COVID-19 infection risk?

A new study found that people who follow a Mediterranean diet may have a reduced risk of COVID-19 infection. Nadine Greeff/Stocksy

The Mediterranean diet is one of the most popular diets in the world.

Past studies have linked following a Mediterranean diet to a lower risk of several health issues and diseases, including viruses like the common cold.

Researchers from the Universitas Sumatera Utara report that those who eat a Mediterranean diet may also possibly be reducing their risk of COVID-19, which is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Over the last few years, the Mediterranean diet has become very popular due to its healthy mix of plant-based foods, healthy fats, and whole grains.

In fact, the Mediterranean diet has been named the best diet for seven years in a row through U.S. News & World Report's annual poll.

Past studies have linked following a Mediterranean diet to lower blood pressure^{Trusted Source}, cholesterol^{Trusted Source}, and blood sugar levels^{Trusted Source}, as well as a decreased risk for several diseases including type 2 diabetes^{Trusted Source}, obesity, cardiovascular disease^{Trusted Source}, and cancer.^{Trusted Source}

Previous research has also found a potential correlation between following the Mediterranean diet and a decreased risk for viruses such as the common cold^{Trusted Source}.

Now researchers from the Universitas Sumatera Utara in Indonesia report that those who eat a Mediterranean diet may also possibly be reducing their risk of COVID-19, which is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

“The Mediterranean diet has long been known for its benefits, especially in chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes,” Andre Marolop Pangihutan Siahaan, MD, a staff member of the Department of Neurosurgery at the Universitas Sumatera Utara in Indonesia and senior author of this study told Medical News Today. “It is associated with immunomodulation^{Trusted Source} and anti-inflammatory factors, while inflammation is one of the critical factors in COVID-19.”

Continued need for ways to lower COVID-19 risk

For this study, Siahaan and his team analyzed data from six previously conducted observational studies that reported an association between following the Mediterranean diet and risk of COVID-19 infection, symptoms, or severity, for a total participant size of more than 55,000.

“Despite global vaccination, advanced medication, and preventive measures, multiple waves of COVID-19 infection continue to be reported worldwide,” Siahaan said when asked why it is important for researchers to continue to find new ways in which people can lower their COVID-19 infection risk. “The recent Olympic games saw over 40 athletes testing positive for the virus, underscoring the ongoing threat.”

“Moreover, the growing evidence of reinfection, and even multiple reinfections in one individual, is a cause for concern,” he continued. “While the latest study suggests that reinfection severity correlates more with the initial infection, it’s crucial to emphasize further research to fully understand the long-term impact, as we cannot yet consider it harmless.”

Following Mediterranean diet may reduce COVID-19 odds

In all the studies analyzed, adherence to the Mediterranean diet was assessed through a food frequency questionnaire.

Upon analysis, scientists said they consistently observed lower trends of odds ratio for those who adhered to a Mediterranean diet, suggesting that high adherence to the Mediterranean diet might provide protection against COVID-19 infection.

“Adherence to the Mediterranean diet will reduce the odds of COVID-19,” Siahaan said. “Still, this study, which was conducted qualitatively, was unable to determine the exact extent of the reduction.”

Researchers also reported their findings were unclear as to whether or not the Mediterranean diet had any positive impact on COVID-19 symptoms and severity.

“The findings on the Mediterranean Diet’s effect on symptoms and severity were inconsistent,” Siahaan said. “Still, it’s essential to keep in mind that insignificance may mean a smaller magnitude of impact, and these numbers need to be studied in a larger population.”

“The correlation between nutrition and immunity is very interconnected and complex,” he continued. “The Mediterranean diet’s benefit in helping protect against COVID-19 comes from the synergistic effect of every component. Olive oil is rich in polyphenols and unsaturated fatty acids, known for their immunomodulatory and anti-inflammatory effects. (The) Mediterranean diet is rich in vitamins and trace elements as well. Besides, high fiber intake promotes the eubiosis of intestinal microbiota, which will affect the immune system.”

Diet alone cannot change COVID-19 outcomes

After reviewing this research, Monique Richard, MS, RDN, LDN, a registered dietitian nutritionist and owner of Nutrition-In-Sight, told MNT that her initial reaction to this systematic review analyzing mostly observational studies was an affirmation of what she and her colleagues also observed in practice. She noted:

“[T]he quality of dietary patterns and lifestyle behavior appears to be inversely related to COVID-19 infection risk, recovery, duration and/or severity. In general — noting the emphasis on the words ‘in general,’ in order to underscore, ‘not all’ — individuals that were affected by COVID-19 or had [reduced] risks, severity of symptoms, or recurrence tended to have a more anti-inflammatory dietary pattern higher in fruits, vegetables and nutrient-rich plants commonly found in the Mediterranean diet pattern.”

“It is important to note that diet alone does not determine the impact COVID-19 may have on an individual,” she added. There are a multitude of factors that play a role including current health conditions, genetic predisposition, level of exposure, organ function, age, metabolic function, and environment just to name a few.”

MNT also spoke with David Cutler, MD, a board certified family medicine physician at Providence Saint John’s Health Center in Santa Monica, CA, who said it’s important to remember that correlation is not the same as causation:

“Even if there (was) an association between diet and COVID outcomes, that doesn’t imply that there’s any cause and effect relationship. And while that might be interesting, I really don’t think it’s all that important. I think most people would agree that a Mediterranean diet is a helpful diet and it’s a good idea to follow one, regardless of whether or not it changes COVID outcomes.”

“I think the fact is we already know how to lower COVID risk,” he continued. “COVID is a respiratory disease and while diet may have some influence on outcomes, the most important thing is preventing getting COVID in the first place. And we have, I think, quite good data showing that using respiratory precautions like well fitted N95 masks will help prevent acquiring the COVID infection.”

Healthy diet can boost immune protection against viruses

With virus season ^{Trusted Source} almost upon us, readers may wonder how they can help reduce their risk for infection not only from COVID-19 but also from other viruses like the flu.

First, Richard suggested meeting with a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) or other qualified, credentialed nutrition expert to learn more about your unique needs.

From there, foods rich in vitamins A, B (all the B’s, to name a few, B1, B2, B5, B6, B9, B12), C, D, E, but also minerals such as zinc, magnesium, (and) selenium are just a few specific nutrients that directly relate to immune health, Richard detailed.

“Many of these are found in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, proteins and fat,” she continued. “Keep in mind that dietary supplements for each of these nutrients do not

necessarily have the same impact as the whole food and in fact can often be counter-productive especially in high doses by depleting a different nutrient.”

“For example, too much zinc can deplete copper,” Richard explained. “Taking a zinc supplement may not be necessary especially if you are obtaining enough in your diet, it is not advised for a prolonged period of time. This is one of many I see in practice being overconsumed and consequences are not always benign.”

Richard also offered these simple questions to help readers assess if their diet is rich in immune-supportive nutrients:

How many fruit servings am I consuming in a day?

Are they coming from a variety of fresh or frozen sources such as citrus fruits (oranges, grapefruit, tangerines), berries, apples, and stone fruit (plums, peaches, apricots)?

How many servings of fresh or frozen vegetables am I consuming in a day?

Are rich leafy greens such as spinach, arugula, kale, or turnip greens included?

Are bright orange and red vegetables included, such as carrots, peppers, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, radishes, beets, etc.?

Where do I get my protein? Beans? Frozen or fresh or canned fatty fish such as salmon, sardines, herring, or tilapia for example?

Are fat sources in my diet quality olive, avocado, or nuts and seeds sources? Full-fat dairy?

Or is it mostly saturated fat from animal sources, which is then processed, breaded, and deep-fried?

Am I cooking and seasoning foods with antioxidant-rich spices and herbs such as ginger, garlic, onions, turmeric, basil, thyme, rosemary, parsley, cilantro, or scallions, just to name a few?

Rare diseases' (The Tribune: 20240829)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/rare-diseases-budget-jumped-to-rs-82-crore-within-3-years-health-ministry/>

Rare diseases' budget jumped to Rs 82 crore within 3 years: Health Ministry

From zero, India's budget for rare diseases has surged to Rs 82 crore within three years, said Dr L Swasticharan from the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW) on Tuesday.

Rare diseases are conditions with fewer than 100 patients per 100,000 people in the population. While over 350 million people worldwide are affected, about 1 in 20 Indians is affected.

The Additional DDG with the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), Swasticharan, said the government has also established a rare disease fund to support the patients' treatment.

“In 2022–23, we supported 203 patients to the tune of Rs 35 crore, a big leap from zero funds three years ago. In 2023–24, the amount rose to Rs 74 crore. In the current fiscal, a Rs 82.4 crore budget has been assigned, out of which Rs 34.2 crore has already been disbursed,” Swasticharan said.

Air pollution in Indian districts significantly increased death risk across age groups: Study' [View More right-arrow](#)

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He added, “However, we realise that even this may not be sufficient as we do not want to leave any patient behind.”

Swasticharan said this while speaking at SMArtCon2024, a two-day National Conference on Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) organised by India’s non-profit Cure SMA Foundation in Gurugram.

He noted the Health Ministry was “actively considering establishing a specialised technical expert group focussing on SMA.”

SMA is a rare and genetically inherited neuromuscular disease that robs people of physical strength by affecting motor nerve cells in the spinal cord.

Swasticharan said, “Called Tech MSA, the Group will advise centres of excellence on rare diseases spread across the country on what needs to be done regarding SMA and provide technical inputs. If we can successfully solve the challenge of SMA, the same model can be replicated for other rare diseases in the country.”

He also called for a “synergy between the government and the medical community to address the challenge of rare diseases in India.”

“We have a national policy for rare diseases and a mechanism to include more ‘orphan’ diseases in the list. The medical community must come forward and help the government identify priority diseases for attention and treatment, as funds are limited. We need to make drugs available and affordable for all patients,” he said.

He noted the government was also “focussing on indigenous research and production, supportive therapy, and CSR funding.”

“We are requesting pharma companies to provide funds to set up specialised clinics for rare diseases where patients can go for treatment,” the expert noted.

There are more than 7,000 rare diseases known or reported worldwide. About 80 percent are genetic in origin; 50 per cent are onset at birth, and the rest are late onset.

Rare diseases include inherited cancers, autoimmune disorders, congenital malformations, and infectious diseases, among others.

Coronavirus (The Indian Express: 20240829)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/spike-protein-changes-coronavirus-infect-brain-long-covid-study-9535058/>

Spike protein changes found to help coronavirus infect brain, could be basis of long Covid: Study

The exact causes of long Covid, which persists for months after the initial infection, and its brain-affecting symptoms are still not known

Changes in the spike protein enhanced the ability of the coronavirus to infect the brain, which could underlie the brain-related symptoms of the disease, including brain fog of long Covid, according to a new study.

The spike protein directs the virus, SARS-CoV-2, how to enter human cells before infecting them with COVID-19.

The exact causes of long Covid, which persists for months after the initial infection, and its brain-affecting symptoms are still not known and are being widely studied around the world.

The study could, therefore, help scientists understand these aspects better and may lead to specific treatments to protect and clear the virus from the brain, according to researchers at Northwestern University, UK, and the University of Illinois-Chicago, US.

For the study, published in the journal Nature Microbiology, the researchers infected mice with the coronavirus. As the virus multiplied itself within the host, the researchers compared the spike proteins of the viruses in the brain with those in the lungs.

Mice are often studied as they are biologically similar to humans.

The researchers found that in the lungs, the spike protein looked very similar to that of the virus used to infect the mice. However, in the brain, the spike proteins of most of the viruses were found to have a deletion or mutation in the region critical for entering human cells.

Festive offer

“Looking at the genomes of viruses found in the brain compared to the lungs, we found that viruses with a specific deletion in spike were much better at infecting the brains of these animals,” said Judd Hultquist, an assistant professor of medicine (infectious diseases) at Northwestern University and a corresponding author on the study.

Further, when the viruses having the mutated spike protein travelled to the lungs of the mice, they were found to be weakened.

The researchers, therefore, suggested that these viruses were better able to infect the cells of the brain and the central nervous system.

The authors also believe that the spike protein is a “critical regulator of whether or not the virus gets into the brain”.

The findings could thus have large implications for the treatment and management of neurological symptoms reported by COVID-19 patients, Hultquist said.

“If (long Covid) is caused by infection of cells in the central nervous system, our study suggests there may be specific treatments that could work better than others in clearing the virus from this compartment,” he said.

Swelling in Gallbladder (Navbharat Times: 20240829)

<https://navbharattimes.indiatimes.com/lifestyle/health/5-home-remedies-to-relieve-gallbladder-swollen/articleshow/112866275.cms>

Swelling in Gallbladder: पित्ताशय में सूजन को कम कर देंगी ये 5 जड़ी बूटी, कभी नहीं बनेगी पथरी

पित्ताशय में होने वाली सूजन कई बार गंभीर रूप ले सकती है। इसलिए इसका समय रहते इलाज बहुत जरूरी है। इसमें दवाओं के साथ कुछ प्राकृतिक हर्ब्स का सेवन भी काफी फायदेमंद हो सकता है।

पित्ताशय में सूजन, कई एक दर्दनाक स्थिति होती है और इसका उपचार न किया जाए तो यह पित्ताशय के कैंसर का कारण भी बन सकती है। पित्ताशय में सूजन में सूजन होने के कई कारण हो सकते हैं, जैसे कि पित्ताशय की पथरी, पित्त नलिका में रुकावट या संक्रमण आदि।

नेशनल इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ हेल्थ के अनुसार पित्ताशय में सूजन को कम करने के लिए दवाओं के साथ कुछ प्राकृतिक हर्ब्स का उपयोग किया जा सकता है। ये हर्ब्स सूजन को कम करने, पाचन को सुधारने और पित्ताशय को स्वस्थ बनाए रखने में मददगार हो सकते हैं। आइए इस आर्टिकल में जानते हैं कुछ ऐसे हर्ब्स के बारे में, जो पित्ताशय की सूजन को कम करने में मदद कर सकते हैं।

हल्दी

हल्दी में करक्यूमिन नामक पावरफुल एंटी-इंफ्लेमेटरी कंपाउंड होते हैं, जो सूजन को कम करने में मदद करते हैं। इसके सेवन से आपको पित्ताशय की सूजन और शरीर में होने वाली अन्य सूजन की समस्या में आराम मिलेगा। इसके लिए दूध में मिलाकर, हल्दी वाला दूध या हल्दी वाली चाय बनाकर पी सकते हैं।

अदरक

अदरक अपने एंटी-इंफ्लेमेटरी और एंटीऑक्सीडेंट गुणों के लिए जाना जाता है। यह पाचन को सुधारता है और पित्ताशय में सूजन को कम करता है। इसके लिए आप एक चम्मच अदरक के ताजे रस का सेवन करें या अदरक वाली चाय भी पी सकते हैं।

पुदीना

पुदीना में मेन्थॉल नामक गुण होता है, जो पाचन तंत्र को स्वस्थ रखने के साथ और पित्त के प्रवाह को ठीक रखता है। यह पित्ताशय की सूजन को कम करने में मदद कर सकता है। इसके लिए आप पुदीने की चाय पिएं या इसके पत्तों को चबाएं।

धनिया

पित्ताशय की सूजन को कम करने में धनिया के बीज भी काफी मददगार होते हैं। इसमें एंटी-इंफ्लेमेटरी गुण होते हैं, जो पित्ताशय की सूजन को कम करने के साथ पाचन को भी सुधारते हैं। आप धनिया के बीज का काढ़ा बनाकर पी सकते हैं।

मुलेठी

मुलेठी में ग्लाइसीरिजिन नामक तत्व होता है, जो अपने एंटी-इंफ्लेमेटरी गुणों के लिए जाना जाता है। यह पित्ताशय की सूजन को कम करने में सहायक है। इसके लिए आप मुलेठी की चाय बना कर पी सकते हैं।

Pulmonary Hypertension (Dainik Jagran: 20240829)

<https://www.jagran.com/lifestyle/health-pulmonary-hypertension-in-children-causes-types-symptoms-diagnosis-treatment-23787177.html>

बच्चों में पल्मोनरी हाइपरटेंशन की समस्या, इसके कारण लक्षण व जरूरी उपचार

पल्मोनरी हाइपरटेंशन वाले बच्चों को अपनी स्थिति की निगरानी करने और आवश्यकता के अनुसार उपचार को समायोजित करने के लिए बाल हृदय रोग विशेषज्ञ या पल्मोनरी उच्च रक्तचाप के विशेषज्ञ के साथ नियमित अनुवर्ती कार्रवाई की आवश्यकता होती है। आइए जानते हैं बच्चों में किन वजहों से होती है यह समस्या इसके कारण लक्षण व इससे जुड़ी जरूरी जांचें व उपचार।

बच्चों में पल्मोनरी हाइपरटेंशन की समस्या, इसके कारण लक्षण व जरूरी उपचार

पल्मोनरी हाइपरटेंशन के कारण लक्षण और उपचार (Pic credit- freepik)

लाइफस्टाइल डेस्क, नई दिल्ली। बच्चों में पल्मोनरी हाइपरटेंशन एक गंभीर स्थिति है जिसकी विशेषता पल्मोनरी धमनियों में उच्च रक्तचाप है, जो वे वाहिकाएं हैं जो हृदय से फेफड़ों तक रक्त ले जाती हैं। यह स्थिति गंभीर जटिलताओं का कारण बन सकती है, जिसमें सही दिल की विफलता भी शामिल है। इसे लेकर हमने फरीदाबाद में सर्वोदय हॉस्पिटल के कार्डियोथोरेसिक और वैस्कुलर सर्जरी के सीनियर कंसल्टेंट, डॉ. वेद प्रकाश से बात की, जिन्होंने इस बीमारी से जुड़ी कई जरूरी बातें बताईं। आइए जानते हैं इसके बारे में।

कारण और प्रकार

बच्चों में पल्मोनरी हाइपरटेंशन को कई प्रकारों में बांटा जा सकता है, जो आमतौर पर इसके कारणों पर निर्भर करता है।

1. ईडीओपैथिक पल्मोनरी आर्टेरिअल हाइपरटेंशन (IPAH)

यह एक दुर्लभ स्थिति है और वयस्कों की तुलना में बच्चों में ज्यादा देखन को मिलती है।

2. हेरिटेबल पल्मोनरी आर्टेरिअल हाइपरटेंशन (HPAH)

यह प्रकार आनुवंशिक है और परिवारों के माध्यम से बच्चों में ट्रांसफर होता है।

3. जन्मजात हृदय रोग से जुड़ा पल्मोनरी उच्च रक्तचाप

जन्मजात हृदय दोषों से फेफड़ों में रक्त प्रवाह या दबाव बढ़ सकता है, जो पल्मोनरी हाइपरटेंशन की वजह बन सकता है।

4. पल्मोनरी उच्च रक्तचाप फेफड़े की बीमारी या हाइपोक्सिया के कारण

पुरानी फेफड़ों की बीमारियां, जैसे ब्रोंकोपल्मोनरी डिस्प्लेसिया या स्लीप एपनिया जैसी स्थिति पल्मोनरी हाइपरटेंशन का कारण बन सकती हैं।

5. बाएं हृदय रोग के कारण पल्मोनरी हाइपरटेंशन

ये वयस्कों में आम है, लेकिन कुछ बच्चों में भी ये विकसित हो सकता है।

पल्मोनरी हाइपरटेंशन के लक्षण

बच्चों में पल्मोनरी हाइपरटेंशन के लक्षण सूक्ष्म हो सकते हैं और धीरे-धीरे विकसित हो सकते हैं। सामान्य लक्षणों में शामिल हैं:

- सांस की तकलीफ खासकर फिजिकल एक्टिविटी के दौरान

- थकान महसूस होना

- सीने में दर्द-बेहोशी

- दिल की धड़कन तेज होना

- होंठों या त्वचा पर नीला रंग

- टखनों, पैरों या पेट में सूजन

पल्मोनरी हाइपरटेंशन का निदान

बच्चों में पल्मोनरी हाइपरटेंशन का पता लगाने के लिए कुछ जरूरी जांच की जाती है, जैसे-

इकोकार्डियोग्राम

हृदय का एक अल्ट्रासाउंड, जो पल्मोनरी धमनियों में दबाव का अनुमान लगा सकता है।

कार्डियक कैथीटेराइजेशन

एक थोड़ा मुश्किल प्रोसेस है, जो सीधे पल्मोनरी वेसेल्स में रक्तचाप को मापती है और हार्ट के फंक्शन का आंकलन करती है।

चेस्ट एक्स-रे या सीटी स्कैन

फेफड़ों और हृदय में हो रहे बदलावों को देखने के लिए।

इलेक्ट्रोकार्डियोग्राम (ईसीजी)

हार्ट रिदम की समस्याओं की जांच करने के लिए।

ब्लड टेस्ट

अन्य कारणों का पता लगाने या अन्य अंगों के कार्य का आंकलन करने के लिए।

पल्मोनरी हाइपरटेंशन का उपचार

बच्चों में पल्मोनरी हाइपरटेंशन के उपचार में शामिल हैं:-

दवाएं

कुछ खास तरह की दवाओं के जरिए पल्मोनरी आर्टरी के दबाव को कम करना और हृदय के कार्य में सुधार करना है।

ऑक्सीजन थेरेपी

कम ऑक्सीजन वाले बच्चों के लिए।

सर्जिकल प्रक्रियाएं

कुछ मामलों में, सर्जरी की आवश्यकता हो सकती है, खासकर अगर पल्मोनरी हाइपरटेंशन जन्मजात हृदय दोषों से संबंधित है।