

Everyday medicine is evolving and so is the new age patient

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Dr Kanika Chandra, Associate Consultant, Department of Preventive Health and Wellness, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital shares her views on evolution of medicine in India



There was a time when people met their family physician only when they were down with fever or some similar ailment, but in this day and age it's a different picture. The scenario today is different people as young as 20 years are visiting hospitals for a preventive health check-up and they are serious about it. With stress, anxiety and endless hours of socializing people are having sleepless nights, episodes of depression, loneliness and too much insecurity.

Keeping the youngsters aside, we get patients who are coming all the way from the interiors of our country. They are farmers, small town businessmen, housewives who have never ever met a doctor but now feel the need for a thorough check up. We help them, hear them out, counsel them and lastly treat them.

Not all of them have serious ailments, some of them just need lifestyle modifications, de-addictions and the ladies need to know the importance of calcium and vitamin D supplementation also essential things like breast examination to say the least.

We try to expel such wrong pre-set notions which are deeply embedded in their minds, for example eating curd will give rise to phlegm, consuming banana will give constipation, having essential medicines like anti-hypertensive and anti-diabetics gives acidity. The list is endless

There is also the corporate sector and the working class which as a company policy send their employees for an annual health check-up. This is definitely a good policy which encourages the family members to also have similar check-ups .We come across educated people who have difficulty in accepting their medical diagnosis of Hypertension, Diabetes Mellitus, or asthma .Giving them time, counseling them, dispelling the fear of unknown is fruitful sometimes but not always.

Hidden among all these people we manage to find some serious ailments for instance breast cancers, chronic liver diseases, lung cancers, tuberculosis etc.

We encourage people to take up healthy practices like brisk walking, meditation and yoga and also advising them to increase physical activity and indulge in sports.

People from neighboring countries also come in huge numbers and it is an experience in itself sometimes when history taking becomes a big challenge owing to language barrier, but health issues and concerns remain similar around the world.

Getting a full body examination, expensive lab tests sometimes may not give you all the answers.

The general population has to be primed especially the young population about the need of proper balanced diet/exercise/yoga/meditations, proper sleep and rest. Not only this spending time with family, conversations with friends, vacations with family, some time off from mobile devices and social media can bring you in the right frame of mind and in turn lead you on the path of health .We need to educate people about the importance of knowing ones family history and how it may influence the future generations health and how best to tackle it.

Simple activities like checking blood pressure and blood sugars at home can find so many potential hypertensives and diabetic patients and avert dangers before any life threatening damage is done.

It is now the need of times to be cautious and take care of ones health.