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40% Deduction in Heart Patients Visit Due To Covid-19 Fear: Metro Hospital

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There is a marked increase in deaths from cardiac arrest at home



Hospitals around the world including India have recorded an approximately 50% decrease in patients with acute heart attacks. Cardiologists have a varied opinion on this scenario, while some attribute pollution-free and stress-free lifestyles during the lockdown as the reason for less number of reported heart attacks, others have opinionated that it may have been caused due to their inability to reach hospitals for treatment because of movement restrictions.

A similar trend is seen from the last two quarters data analysis from the records of a leading Heartcare Institute in North India—Metro Hospital & Heart Institute, Noida where from the no. of Heart Patients coming for treatment in the quarter of January-March 2020 has come down by 40 % in the quarter of April-June 2020 when the Coronavirus scare has been at the peak! Similarly, from the last year quarter of April-June 2019, a similar trend of drop in percentage of almost 40-45% Patients of Heart treatment is seen when compared to this year in this quarter when generally a lot of more Elective Cardiac Procedures are planned by the patients!

“While patients being admitted to hospital emergency units with an acute heart attack have decreased, there is a marked increase in deaths from cardiac arrest at home.This can be probably due to the postponement and delay in seeking medical attention. Therefore, it is important to emphasize that heart patients must not ignore any symptoms and/or delay medical attention as it will further deteriorate their health”, advises Dr Purshotam Lal (PadmaVibhushan), Founder & Chairman, Metro Group of Hospitals.

He further added, “What needs to be brought to the people’s attention is that the Covid-19 also affects the heart in many ways and having observed this several national medical organizations including ICMR have formulated and issued the treatment protocols to manage cardiac cases during the Covid-19 pandemic’’.

It is now evident that patients with pre-existing heart diseases, previous heart attacks, or low-pumping efficiency of the heart (heart failure) are at a greater risk of developing serious Covid-19 infection. Those above 60 years with hypertension or diabetes have a five times greater risk of dying from it. On the other hand, even a mild coronavirus infection can lead to the worsening of previously stable heart disease, which may require urgent medical care. Therefore, heart patients must protect themselves and should not be afraid to seek medical attention.

“People with underlying medical conditions such as heart disease and diabeteswere hospitalized six times as often as otherwise healthy individuals infected with the novel coronavirus during the first four months of the pandemic, and they died 12 times as often, according to a federal health report.

New observations show that the virus can affect the heart in previously healthy individuals also. The virus can cause severe inflammatory responses in the body that affect the arteries and also causes an increased tendency for clotting. This can lead to heart attacks and strokes, and people of younger age groups may not be immune to that”, asserts Dr Sameer Gupta, Director- Interventional Cardiology, Metro Hospital & Heart Institute.

The virus can also directly infect the heart muscle, causing myocarditis, which can be confused with a heart attack. This condition can lead to decreased pumping efficiency of the heart, acute heart failure, shock, heart rate, and arrhythmia and in rare instances, sudden death. This heart muscle injury is seen in 20%-30% of Covid-19 patients hospitalized with breathing problems and contributes to 50% of the deaths. Such serious patients require advanced in-hospital supportive care. Therefore, we are emphasizing again and again that in any case, these patients should reach out to the hospitals for urgent care.

No heart patient should delay or postpone any treatment due to undue fears over Covid-19 if the need arises. Heart patients should realize that timely treatment can save their lives.