

Artificial limb is no longer a dream for the poor

BRAC Limb and Brace Centre provides low-cost, appropriate appliance for the disabled with an emphasis on the poor coxygen enters the blood via these capillaries. When oxygen levels are



From left to right: BRAC Limb and Brace Fitting Centre (BLBC) at Mirpur Road in the capital; Individuals provided artificial limb from BLBC; A child with brace to correct the deformity of his leg; Lakshmi Rani of Sylhet now continues her studies in the school with artificial leg; A person continues an economically productive life after fitting an artificial leg.

braces.

TAREQ SALAHUDDIN

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), 10 per cent of all individuals in Bangladesh are classified disabled. The cause of such a large and growing number of disabled people in our country range from road traffic accidents (RTA), illnesses and surgical complications. In a 1989 survey report on RTAs, Mr Bob Planer of WHO reported that 15,000 patients have limb amputated each year in Bangladesh. However, the rehabilitation facilities for the disabled in both public and private sector are insufficient to address the existing demand and magnitude of the problem. The situation is more miserable for the poor who cannot afford even their primary health needs.

life. Being inspired from the inci-Considering the magnitude of the dence, BRAC established BRAC Limb problem and the limited services and Brace fitting Centre (BLBC) in available in the country, BRAC added a rehabilitation component to its health programme in 2000 and estab-Centre (BLBC) was begun in order to lished BRAC Limb and Brace fitting provide support to physically dis-Centre (BLBC) in the capital (situated abled persons, especially the poor and those and who could be rehabilitated by Mirpur Road opposite to the Shaymoli Shishu Mela). using quality limbs and braces with

To expand the BLBC services appropriate technology. The goals and objectives of BLBC beyond Dhaka and to lessen the

burden for disabled people living in are -other parts of the country, BRAC is λ To provide low-cost, appropriate running two satellite centres in appliances and training for the dis-Chittagong and Mymensing. Trained abled with an emphasis on the poor. technicians are providing orthoses λ To provide quality limbs and braces (brace) and minor repair at these that are user-friendly

centres. Complicated cases are $\boldsymbol{\lambda}$ To provide information, education, identified at these satellite centres and counselling services to the disabled and their family. The background history of the

The services at the centre include fied arterial limb and braces, techniproviding prosthetic devices (artificial cal support, machinery, and materials limbs) and training for amputated of the prosthetic devices and braces it limbs (above- and below-knee), as well supplies. as provide orthotic services like brace (any type of splint or appliance worn limbs available in BLBC. The infor support, such as a metal support charge of the centre Dr Md Shahinul used on children's legs to make the bones straight or on teeth which are forming badly) for patients with disabilities like cerebral palsy, postpolio complications, spondylitis, drop foot, and congenital limb deformity. Special physiotherapy services are also

Hoque (Ripon) informs that an artificial leg (below knee) costs according to Indian formula Tk 3100 only and according to Switzerland formula Tk 6100 only. The patients have to pay Tk 100 only as service charge. BRAC provides up to 50 per offered by the centre for patients cent subsidy to make an artificial suffering from cerebral palsy, congenilimb and brace. They also provide tal club foot, cerebro-vascular accifinancial support to the patients who cannot afford the facility by dents (CVA), arthritis, frozen shoulder, Guilen-Barré syndrome, and other their own. The centre also provides

There are two types of artificial

In order to develop and implementation of the project, the centre is working in collaboration with SDMH, an esteemed and specilised pro-poor health services institute in Jaipur,

India. BLBC is financed by Jaipur provides the service almost free of Limb Campaign (JLC) London, UK. cost for the next time Besides, International Committee of Mr Babu* was suffering from post the Red Cross (ICRC) provides modipolio complication and could not walk as a normal individual. He got

trained from abroad either from course.

A total of 899 individuals received artificial limbs (above-and below-

knee) from BLBC while 1940 individuals received brace during July 2000 to September 2005. During the same period 666 clients received physiotherapy services.

Most of the individuals become economically unproductive, even after getting an artificial limb. The issue of economic empowerment is also addressed by BRAC to the patients receiving BLBC services, so that they do not become the burden for the society.

The BLBC has achieved good results in introducing physical rehabilitation into communities and has filled a gap in an area that has not been adequately addressed by the government. Sector specialist of this particular health programme of BRAC Dr Mohammad Raisul Haque expressed that BLBC services are likely to expand its facilities gradually in the capital and throughout the country.

People should know the availability of the low-cost services in our country.

* Name changed to protect identity

Breathing problem can be tackled by physiotherapy

Relaxed deep breathing: Sit down, relax your shoulders, and

breathe in through your nose and

out through your mouth. Your

abdomen should move in and out

while you are breathing. This

shows you are using your dia-

practitioner before you start. Some examples of physical

Walking: Perhaps start off with a

Stretching: To keep your

Weight training: Using small

Tai Chi: Tai Chi relies on breath-

ing techniques and slow graceful

movements which relax and

rejuvenate the body, help to boost

energy, calm the mind, and

Hydrotherapy: Exercise done in

Don't push yourself. If you start

feeling short of breath -- stop, sit

down and practice your breathing

often run pulmonary (lungs and

airways) rehabilitation courses.

The courses may be twice a week

for six weeks and they use a holistic

 λ Breathing can be much harder for

 λ Breathing exercises and light

 λ Always consult a doctor or health

practitioner before starting any

The writer is a physiotherapist in Gond

Things to remember

someone with lung disease.

physical activity can help.

type of exercise programme.

Hospitals with respiratory units

improve posture and balance.

few minutes each week and build

activity include ---

muscles supple

hand-held dumbbells.

up slowly.

water.

exercises

approach.

Prolonged breathing out:

phragm.

DR MD SAIFUL ISLAM

A little physical activity and some breathing exercises can help a person with lung disease. Be guided by your doctor or health practitioner and always plan your exercise routine under their supervision.

How the lungs work?

Breathe in for two counts and breathe out for three or four Lungs absorb oxygen from the air. counts. This helps to expel any We breathe with the muscles in the trapped air. rib-cage and a sheet of muscle Physical exercise: You may be called the diaphragm, which sits avoiding activities that make you beneath the lungs and above the feel short of breath. This can abdomen. The lungs contain tubes reduce your lung function even and small air sacs. Each air sac is more. Make sure you talk over the covered with a mesh of blood possibilities of an exercise provessels called capillaries and gram with your doctor or health

too low, the brain sends a signal to the lungs, telling them to work harder.

Lung diseases

There are many diseases that stop lungs from working as good as they could. Some of these diseases are asthma, emphysema, bronchiectasis, chronic bronchitis etc.

Breathing is difficult

A person with lung disease has to work harder to get enough oxygen. They often use extra muscles to breathe, such as the muscles of the neck and shoulders. If the lungs are stiff and inflexible, the diaphragm has to work harder too. This is very tiring. Feeling short of breath is one of the most common symptoms of lung disease.

Benefit of breathing

exercises Breathing exercise -- λ Improve the strength of the

diaphragm

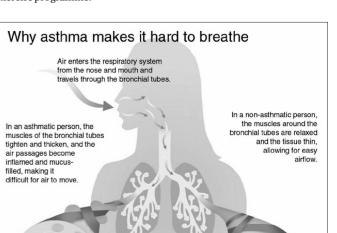
 λ Helps to get more air into the lungs

 λ Help bring up deep-seated mucous

 λ Keep the lungs and chest wall mobile

Some examples of breathing exercises

You should consult your physio therapist before starting any new exercise programme.



Baldness: What to do? CHILDREN'S ILLNESS

for referral to BLBC.

centre is very interesting. In 1997, a

doctor of BRAC had a motor cycle

accident while going to his duty

station. His legs had to be amputated

following the incident. He got artifi-

cial leg from Jaipur, India later on by

the help of founder of BRAC Mr Fazle

Hasan Abed. The doctor started a new

BRAC Limb and Brace fitting

clients who need artificial limb and lodging to the individuals from remote areas who have no place to stay in Dhaka. Moreover, the individuals receiving BLBC service need

to get further services as the shape of the socket changes, the device may need repair and so on. BLBC

brace and physiotherapy training from the centre and now can walk like a normal individual. He told that many people do not know that these sort of services are available in the country at such low-cost. He expressed that the quality of the products are very standard and the staffs are very skillful as well.

Dr Ripon also informed that all the staffs of the center including doctor, technician, physiotherapist are well Jaipur, India or London, UK. Some other staffs are on long training

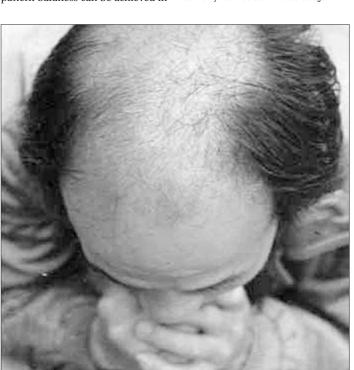
DR MINATI ADHIKARY

Men with shining pates are no uncommon. Sometimes someone becomes as bald as a coot. All that unfortunate guys wondering why their crowning glory is on the wane, the culprit is none else but the androgens (male sex hormone -- testosterone and androsterone, the hormone which increases the male characteristics of the body), playing truant.

On achieving puberty, the male hormone androgen starts flowing freely in the body and is responsible for the growth of hair all over the body in the post-pubescence stage. Ironically, the same hormone causes the destruction of hair follicles in those who are genetically predisposed to baldness in the frontovertex (top of the skull) region.

The hair follicles shrink with each new growth cycle. The hair shaft narrows, and the hair gets finer. Such an unfortunate becomes very much worried and tries to arrest fall by oiling hair or worse still hope the receding hairline is camouflaged under a cap.

But trichologists say nothing to be worried, help is at hand. According to trichologists the treatment of male pattern baldness can be achieved in



two forms. First by destroying the male hormone, which cause baldness by administering anti male hormone treatment. But they (trichologists) usually don't recommend this treatment since the antimale-hormone treatment causes a lot of side effects, especially sexual dysfunction. The second option is to change the genes, which is not scien-

Common causes of missed school STAR HEALTH DESK

family life until the child first starts day care or school. After that, though, it may seem like s/he is sick all the time. This is a normal part of tifically possible and for which the development of a child's research is still underway. immune system, which must be The best alternative without side exposed to many viruses before it effects is to administer natural DHT (Di-hydro testosterone) blockers.

develops its own resistance. Large groups of young children Trichologists propagate the use of are breeding grounds for all types of natural berry seed called Saw Palgerms that cause childhood illness. metto (a small palm tree with deeply cut leaves) with a plant called horse-Little hands rub drippy noses, and tail, which come in a combination then transfer germs to other chilcalled Serenoa Complex. The use of dren or to shared toys. Here is a Serenoa Complex has proved to have lineup of the top four infectious incredible results in blocking the illnesses that keep children home attack of DHT on hair genes. Now with from school or child care. this ray of hope it would be advisable

1.Colds

"Now, don't allow hair fall to fell your spirits. Help is at hand, go ahead and grab it," trichologists heartened you with hope and promise.

to identify the problem early on.

The writer is an Associate Professor of department of Community Medicine of Comilla Medical College.

Childhood illness may not affect a

The most common childhood illnesses are upper respiratory infections colds and other viral ailments that affect the throat, nose and sinuses. While adults average two to four colds a year, children typically have six to 10. Children also tend to have more severe and

longer lasting symptoms than do adults.

Studies have shown no benefit to treating children's colds with antihistamines, decongestants or cough suppressants. Don't use medicine without seeing a physician.

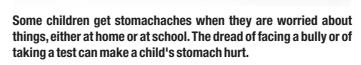
2. The 'stomach flu' (gastroenteritis)

The second most common childhood illness is gastroenteritis, more commonly known as the stomach flu. This childhood illness causes vomiting and diarrhea, and can lead to dehydration, particularly in very young children. Signs and symptoms of dehydration include: Excessive thirst λ Dry mouth

Little or no urine, or dark yellow

urine Decreased tears

Severe weakness or lethargy Oral rehydration solutions can



help replace lost fluids, minerals and salts. When you reintroduce food, start with easy-to-digest items broth, toast, bananas and rice. After huge publicity of oral rehydration saline, people are sometimes delay to administer ORS.

Many parents assume that any kind of stomach upset in a child is the result of a contagious illness when the real culprit is simple indigestion or constipation. Some children get stomachaches when they are worried about things, either at home or at school. The dread of facing a bully or of taking a test can make a child's stomach hurt.

It is important for a doctor to determine the cause of a child's digestive symptoms before prescribing treatment.

3. Pink eye (conjunctivitis)

Pink eye (conjunctivitis) is an inflammation of the clear mem-

brane that covers the white part of the eye and lines the inner surface of the eyelids. When caused by viruses or bacteria, conjunctivitis is highly contagious. It is typically treated with antibiotic eyedrops or ointment. Warm or cool compresses may ease the discomfort.

4. Strep throat

If your child has a sore throat and fever, s/he has a 15 per cent chance that the condition is strep throat. This infection occurs more often in school-age children and children in child care than in any other age group, child or adult. Some children may carry the infection without showing any symptoms.

For most children, though, strep throat has clear signs and symptoms. Swallowing can be so painful that a child may have difficulty eating. Fevers above 101 F are common. The tonsils and the back of the

throat may look red, swollen and dotted with whitish or yellowish patches of pus.

Antibiotics are required to combat strep throat. Left untreated, the body's reaction to the strep bacteria eventually can damage the heart and joints (rheumatic fever), as well as the kidneys (nephritis).

Prevention

Sneezes and coughs spray germs into the air. Sometimes the germs infect other people by landing right on them. In other situations, the germs lie on surfaces such as desks, doorknobs and phone receivers. People who touch these surfaces pick up those germs on their fingers. If they then touch their eyes, nose or mouth, the germs gain entry.

The single most important thing a child can do to prevent illness is to wash his or her hands thoroughly and frequently. It is recommended that people wash their hands with soap and warm water for 15 seconds -- about as long as it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice.

Alcohol-based hand sanitisers can also keep hands clean. They can come in disposable hand wipes or in gel form and require no water.

How long should sick kids stay home?

As a parent, you can help prevent the spread of illness by not sending a sick child to school or child care. Each facility generally has its own rules, but most will not let children attend if they have a fever of more than 100.4 F, are vomiting or have diarrhea. In addition, some facilities require that children with strep throat or pink eye be on antibiotic therapy for 24 hours before returning

Generally, though, children can return to school when they have no fever; can eat and drink normally; are rested and alert enough to pay attention in class; and have completed any period of medically recommended isolation.



and clog the walls of the arteries

making them harder and inflexi-

HDL (High Density Lipopro-

tein) or "good cholesterol" shovels

out stuck LDL pieces, specially

stubborn pattern and steers them

back to the liver where they are

Triglycerides also causes a

particularly dangerous type of fat

particle, specially prominent in

aged person to $\operatorname{clog} \operatorname{up}$ the arteries.

They even more lethal when

combined with small dense bits of

To much fat makes two things

Two, more LDL pieces cling on

to happen. One, liver makes extra

to the arteries and there are not

enough HDLs to dislodge them.

VLDL to transport the fat.

LDL or low HDL.

recycled, broken or excreted.

Nutrition Corner: Fat Facts

ble.

MD RAJIB HOSSAIN

All fats are not alike. Some fats are

harmful for the body whereas some can do good. Fats that we take are of 2 types -- bad fats and good fats.

Bad fats are the saturated fat that stimulate our liver's production of bad cholesterol. Notorious are egg yolk, red meat, organs, lard, ghee, whole milk, hard cheese, vanaspati and margarine as well as coconut and palm oils. We should avoid them.

Good fats are unsaturated fats are of plant or marine origin. They are of 2 types -- better fats and best fats. Better fats are polyunsaturated fatty acid found in oily fish, nuts, dark green vegetables, incorn, stunflower and Saffllower oils. It lowers both bad and good cholesterol.

Best fats are mono-unsaturated fatty acid found in olive, mustard, groundnut, soyabean oils. The reduce the harmful cholesterol without lowering the good one.

Fat from the food we eat is digested and sent off to the liver where it is processed into cholesterol to commute to different parts of the body. After delivery, the cholesterol returns to the liver and the circle goes on and on the liver makes packets of lipoprotein from lipids (fats and cholesterol and protein). VLDL (very low Density Lipoprotein) -- transport the fat and becomes LDL after it unloads

fat.

What to do?

LDL (Low Density Lipoprotein) or "bad cholesterol" can build up

Keep your total fat intake not more than two tablespoons a day.

These can result a brain a Hack or heart attack. The lipid profile Different types of lipids are present in plasma of blood in different

amounts. It in known as lipid profile. A person should view his/her lipid profile after the age of 40 or in cardiac disease. Blood lipids with their normal values are

Total Lipid 450-800 mg/dl Triglyceride 50-160 mg/dl Cholesterol 150-220 mg/dl Combined cholesterol 155 mg/dl Free cholesterol 45 mg/dl Free fatty acid 6-16 mg/dl Phospholipid 200mg/dl