

Quality care in heart diseases

Coronary Care Unit of Mitford Hospital at a government set-up in the old part of Dhaka city offers full range of cardiac care to the poor

STAR HEALTH REPORT

While thinking about the public hospital set-ups in Bangladesh, a common scenario comes to the mind where poor healthcare facilities are being provided with very limited resources. Most often, the ailing people have to learn that some better treatment options are not available due to the shortage or unavailability of equipment as well as skilled manpower. The condition pushes the affordable class in the private set-up leaving the poor with no answer.

But the scenario at the coronary care unit of Mitford Hospital (incorporated with Sir Salimullah Medical College) at the old part of Dhaka city tells quite different. The newly established unit has almost all the required facilities available to provide quality cardiac care at an affordable cost where the poor can be benefitted the most.

The management of critical cardiac cases are very good here with the sophisticated equipment at bedside of the patients. Besides, all necessary investigation facilities are also available.

The full-functional cath lab provides the opportunity of doing diagnostic and therapeutic interventional procedures. Diagnostic procedures include coronary angiogram, peripheral angiogram, renal angiogram, cerebral angiogram, cardiac catheterisation for congenital heart diseases, implantation of temporary pacemakers while therapeutic procedures include implantation of permanent pacemaker, coronary



Dr Mir Jamal Uddin (right) is doing a coronary angiogram in transradial route at the cath lab of coronary care unit (CCU) at Mitford Hospital, Dhaka, while his assistant is also seen in the photo.

angioplasty, mitral and pulmonary valvuloplasty.

An Associate Professor at the department Dr Mir Jamal informed Star Health that coronary angiograms are being done here even in transradial route. It means the approach of angiogram through the vessels of hands. He has done angiogram of many cases in this route. The conventional route of angiogram is transfemoral i.e. through the vessels of groin.

Dr Mir Jamal discussed that there are few benefits of angiogram in transradial approach over the conventional

femoral approach. These benefits include more ambulation of the patients, less chance of bleeding and hematoma (formation of blood clot), less dependence of the patients on his/her attendances and with some other significant clinical benefits. Moreover, the patients can be discharged within six hours of the procedure.

Since facilities are available at very reasonable cost, even poor people are availing these services from Mitford hospital. More public hospitals should come forward with these sort of services with their full dedication.

TREATMENT OF THALASSAEMIA

In quest of comprehensive treatment facilities

STAR HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

Thalassaemia is an inherited blood disease. In thalassaemia, the genetic defect results in the formation of abnormal haemoglobin molecules, and this in turn causes the anaemia which is the characteristic presenting symptom of the thalassaemias.

Other consequences of the disease are deposition of iron from the haemoglobin affecting the reticuloendothelial system of the body.

So the mainstay of thalassaemia treatment is blood transfusion at a regular interval and removing of iron from body by iron chelating agents.

If this can be maintained strictly, thalassaemia patients can also lead almost a normal and productive life. But most of the cases it does not happen. There remains various causes behind it.

First of all, patients seriously lack from proper knowledge about how to manage the disease and other important issues. Secondly comes the crisis of quality blood frequently. Sometimes patients get infected from poor quality blood. Thirdly, many patients cannot maintain

the iron chelating agents. Sometimes availability of drug is a problem, while most often not maintaining a proper guideline is the serious issue.

Above all, handling all these issues from the childhood, patients and their families are very exhausted. Many patients are quite in a fix what to do, where to go and with many more questions.

During treatment, proper evaluation and monitoring of the patients are very crucial which are not maintained very often.

To handle all these crises of the thalassaemia patients, Bangladesh Thalassaemia Foundation (BTF) has come forward with their comprehensive thalassaemia treatment centre named "Asha Thalassaemia Centre" in the capital.

Dr Abdur Rahim, Secretary General of Bangladesh Thalassaemia Foundation informed Star Health that they have opened the centre with a view to mitigate the problems of the patients from one stop centre. At this centre, they maintain a database of their registered patients by which they monitor their status and communicate with them in time.

"Patients in our country are not properly aware of this disease properly. We are also trying to make them aware of it so that they can cope with the disease easily", told Dr Rahim in a brief interview at this centre.

BTF offers the source of quality blood to their patients, provides iron chelating agents from the centre, monitor the health status of the patients by the doctors at the centre, manage discounted tests from renowned laboratory. Above all they communicate with their patients frequently and when needed.

For the awareness about the disease, BTF provide proper guideline for medical care and counseling not only to the patients, but also to the physicians.

Each thalassaemia patient has his or her own specific needs. Staffs of BTF hope that their comprehensive services will make a meaningful difference in both the quality and quantity of life of thalassaemia patients in the country.

The Asha Thalassaemia Center is located at 44/2, Chamelbag, Shantinagar, Dhaka 1217, Bangladesh. Phone: 88-02-8332481, 01190840191 email: info@thais.org web: www.thais.org



Want to live a long life? — Run

People who want to live a long and healthy life might want to take up running. A recently published study shows middle-aged members of a runner's club were half as likely to die over a 20-year period as people who did not run.

Running reduced the risk not only of heart disease, but of cancer and neurological diseases such as Alzheimer's, researchers at Stanford University in California found.

"At 19 years, 15 percent of runners had died compared with 34 percent of controls," Dr Eliza Chakravarty and colleagues wrote in the Archives of Internal Medicine.

Any type of vigorous exercise will likely do the trick, said Stanford's Dr James Fries, who worked on the study.

"Both common sense and background science support the idea that there is nothing magical about running per se," Fries said. "It is the regular physical vigorous activity that is important."

The team surveyed 284 members of a nationwide running club and 156 similar, healthy people as controls. They all came from the university's faculty and staff and had similar social and economic backgrounds, and all were 50 or older.

Starting in 1984, each volunteer filled out an annual survey on exercise frequency, weight and disability for eight activities - rising, dressing and grooming, hygiene, eating, walking, reach, hand grip and routine physical activities.

Most of the volunteers did some exercise, but runners exercised as much as 200 minutes a week, compared to 20 minutes for the non-runners.

At the beginning, the runners were leaner and less likely to smoke compared with the controls. And they exercised more over the whole study period in general.

"Over time, all groups decreased running activity, but the runners groups continued to accumulate more minutes per week of vigorous activity of all kinds," the researchers wrote.

"Members of the running groups had significantly lower mean disability levels at all time points," they added.

The team also set out to answer whether taking up running late in life would benefit, and whether people who stopped exercising began to pay a price as they aged.

Most of the runners have stopped running as they reached their 70s, Fries said. But it was difficult to find people who totally stopped exercising. "Almost all of them did something else. They continued their vigorous exercise," he said.

People who took up exercise when they were older also improved their health, he said.

The study also showed that people cannot use the risk of injury as an excuse not to run - the runners had fewer injuries of all kinds, including to their knees.

Source: Archives of Internal Medicine

Better vision for the future of the nation

DR TAREQ SALAHUDDIN

Children have different eye problems those are not readily disclosed. They live with it for years together and present very late in many cases where there is very little to do.

In Bangladesh there are more than 40,000 blind children (about 8 per 10,000 children) and approximately one million children suffer from refractive error and eye problems.

Children suffer from eye problem like low vision, night blindness, lazy eye, cataract and so on. Problems in their eyes also refrain them from going to schools.

To address this issue among the school going children, Mymensing BNSB Eye Hospital has taken an excellent initiative of organising eye camps in the schools at remote area of Mymensing. With prior notice they examine the selected students with symptoms in their eyes.

At the camps (in the schools) they provide spectacles to correct the refraction errors of the students after vision test at a very reasonable price or free for the poor. Childhood cataracts are operated at free of cost in the BNSB Eye Hospital.

The hospital has some other great works providing eye care in the greater Mymensing district. They bring innova-

tion in eye care in the peripheral set-up. People from other districts also visit the hospital for their eye related problems.

The school eye camp project of Mymensing BNSB Eye Hospital is supported by the ORBIS International Bangladesh country office. ORBIS is much known for its flying eye hospital that flies from country to country providing world class eye care and train local professionals.

ORBIS is a nonprofit, global development organisation whose mission is to eliminate avoidable blindness by strengthening the capacity of local eye health partners in their efforts to prevent and treat blindness. Through the principles of capacity building, local partners gain self-sufficiency in eye health care, and residents enjoy quality eye health services that are affordable, accessible and sustainable.

Child eye care needs are complex which require specific interventions and treatment. As per the strategic recommendation of the VISION 2020, it was suggested that Bangladesh needed a minimum of 15 comprehensive eye care centres. Identifying this critical gap ORBIS has established 7 child friendly paediatric eye care units in different geographic location of Bangladesh like Chittagong Eye Infirmary and Training Complex (CITC), Dinajpur BNSB Eye

Hospital, Moulvibazar BNSB Eye Hospital, Sylhet M A G Osmani Medical College Hospital, Mymensing BNSB Eye Hospital, Khulna BNSB Eye Hospital and National Institute of Ophthalmology (NIO).

From above mentioned centres, people can get quality paediatric eye care. Parents need not make delay if there they observe any abnormality in their child's eye or sight.

Young girls are neglected very often throughout the country, as the female are deprived of so many issues in our society. Parents are reluctant or hesitant about the treatment of their daughters' eyes mainly of two reasons - financial crises and social stigma. Financial issues are covered in the mentioned hospitals since there are many projects going on to help the poor.

Now it is time to come forward to remove the stigma from the society about treating the avoidable blindness from the children. Sometimes it is very difficult to find out the children with a cataract who cannot go out of his/her house.

These noble organisations are doing wonderful job to remove the avoidable blindness from the society. We should help, support and share their efforts.



Child eye screening camp at Fulpur Pilot High School, Mymensing organised by Mymensing BNSB Eye Hospital supported by ORBIS International, Bangladesh.



DR RUBAIUL MURSHED

All health information to keep you up to date



10 best healthy foods we should not ignore (2)

We already talked about regular intake of fresh fruits and vegetables that leads to lower risk of high blood pressure, stroke and other chronic diseases. Eating plenty of fruits and vegetables also keep our eyes well. A diet rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains appears to reduce the chances of developing cataract or macular degeneration. Let's start eating different foods and vegetables - thus making sure that we get all the components necessary for good health. Below there is a list of best healthy foods we are not giving much importance.

2. One of the best items in this list would be beets. Beetroot as a fleshy vegetable is popular as a salad item. The beet is like red spinach. It offers us a rich source of folate, betaine as well as natural red pigments that may be cancer fighters. These nutrients can also help in decreasing risk of heart related diseases. This vegetable is a superb remedy for anaemia, tiredness and general weakness. This fleshy root vegetable is also rich in potassium, calcium and vitamin A and C. This is good for both digestive and lymphatic system. Beet juice is one of the most precious juices for liver and gall bladder. Then again, certain foods containing sulfites like beetroot, carrot or cold drinks may be not good in respiratory disorders. Fresh and raw and grated to make a salad is very good as heating decreases the antioxidant power.

3. Pomegranate or 'Anar' or 'Bedana' whatever the name is! It is a wonderful fruit. The pomegranate juice regulates our body by offering more energy as well as helping to reduce blood pressure. Four ounces of pomegranate

juices provides 50 percent of our daily vitamin C requirement as well. People use to drink pineapple juice, apple juice or orange juice, but now it is the 'pomegranate juice'.

4. Guava or 'peyara' is a well known fruit in our country and certainly one of the best fruits to take. It is the richest natural source of vitamin C after Gooseberry (Amla). It is also rich in vitamin A and B. It is good for joint pain and bleeding gum. It contains lycopene, which is an antioxidant that fights prostate cancer. There are some lycopene in tomatoes and watermelon, but it is not as much as guava. Guava is less acidic so it usually goes down nicely. It is a good laxative as well. Regular intake of this fruit ensures the building up of body's resistance against cough and cold and also gives the skin a healthy glow. This would be a good choice for those who cannot tolerate pineapple or orange.

5. The last item of today's list is the pumpkin and its seeds. They are a great source of natural minerals that our bodies need. This is a low-calorie vegetable and very rich in potassium and sodium. This is high in fiber and contains magnesium and antioxidants. Pumpkin seed is rich in zinc and calcium. Seeds can help to reduce the risk of cancer in that they provide more oxygen to cells and there is less damage. The oil and seeds are used to treat the prostate gland trouble. It is also used to destroy worms (parasites) in the gut. Pumpkins are alkaline in reaction and are a source of vitamin B and C. Pumpkin juice is useful in cases of acidity and liver problems. It is said that fresh ripe pumpkin taken regularly helps to get rid of kidney stones.

To be continued

Cheese is gold in the morning, silver at noon and lead at night

German proverb

Gulshan society organises health awareness seminar



Parkway Health, Singapore, which owns and operates Gleneagles Hospital, Mount Elizabeth Hospital and East Shore Hospital in Singapore, has jointly organised a seminar with Gulshan Society, Dhaka on "Stroke Prevention and Back Pain" on 9th August 2008 at Hotel Lake Shore, Gulshan, Dhaka - says a press release.

Dr Tang Kok Kee, Senior Consultant Neurosurgeon of Mount Elizabeth Hospital, Singapore was the guest speaker to deliver a talk on the main causes of stroke and back pain, important risk factors and method of controlling these risk factors to prevent

sudden death due to stroke and agitating feeling of back pain. He also focused on the various unique ways of treating patients with stroke and back pain with the recent advancement in diagnostic and therapeutic options.

Mr Jahurul Islam Chowdhury, General Secretary, Gulshan Society, Mr Mick Kong, Manager, Corporate Marketing, Parkway Health, Singapore, Mr Zahid Khan, Director, Dhaka Liaison Office of Parkway Health, Singapore, were present during the seminar. About 150 elite members were present to be apprised of various important health awareness. -ps.