



All health information to keep you up to date

ABC of kidney transplantation

Kidney transplantation means replacement of a diseased or missing kidney or failed kidney with a healthy kidney from another person, called donor. It is an operation also known as renal transplant (renal is another word for kidney). People who receive a transplant must take medication and be monitored by a physician who specialises in kidney disease, known as Nephrologist.

During a transplant, the transplant team places the healthy kidney in patient's lower abdomen and connects the artery and vein of the new kidney to patient's artery and vein. Often, the new kidney will start making urine as soon as blood starts flowing through it. But sometimes it may take a few weeks to start functioning.

The main purpose of the kidneys is to purify the blood waste products such as uric acid and other toxic substances. At any point in time, one-fifth of the total blood in the body is filtered by the kidneys.

A person suffers from renal disease when, owing to an impairment in their function, the kidneys can not clean the blood competently. Common diseases like diabetes, hypertension and chronic glomerulonephritis can lead to permanent loss of renal functions. The kidneys in end-stage

renal disease function so poorly that they can no longer keep you alive.

End-stage renal disease cannot be treated with medicine or drugs. Only two treatments allow you to continue living when your kidneys stop functioning. They are dialyses and kidney transplantation. Dialysis is the term for several different methods of artificially filtering the blood.

Today, kidney transplantation has traveled a long way to achieve the present status with very good results due to high-tech surgical management and immunosuppressive drugs.

According to strict regulations, most countries require living donors to be family members, or that organs must be removed from cadavers. Some of our neighboring countries have become an attractive center for the transplantation of kidneys. Some hospitals in Dhaka, mostly private, have the transplant programme in Bangladesh.

In our country, healthy kidney comes from a living family member. Transplanted kidneys may come from donors who have died. The wait for a new kidney can be long. People who have transplants must take drugs to keep their body from rejecting the new kidney for the rest of their lives.

Fissures in updated National Health Policy

DR ENAMUL HASIB and DR NASREEN RUBABA KHAN

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has published the final draft of revised National Health Policy (NHP) on its website recently. After its first introduction in 2000, certain programmes like Sector Wide Approach (SWA), adoption of Essential Services Package (ESP) were reviewed for necessary changes and an updated draft was prepared in 2006 to incorporate the changes in programmes and approach; but it was not finalised. Along with mentioned sectors, different issues have come into the discussion but all were not included or prioritised accordingly during the recent process of updating NHP by current caretaker government.

Health risks due to population burden, climate change, global warming was needed to be

addressed appropriately. This is a good initiative to increase work force through public and private sector but the authority concerned overlooked it. Informal system of health service produces below-quality health care for marginalised population by training TBA (Traditional Birth Attendant training session).

This is an example of inequity to assign specialised service for wealthy population and TBA for marginalised. Special attention is being given on women, children and senior citizens. There is no direction about male and adolescents. Does equity and access mean two different systems for two separate group of population? According to the constitution one of the basic rights is health which is established on the base of gender equality, access equality and ethical conduct. These were forgotten long before. As long we set essential services package for

the marginalised and specialised service for the rich, we shall not be able to achieve equity and accessibility. The quality of health service cannot be improved overnight for sure, but it is also certain that proper management of the vast workforce would lead to a much more improved health services after a certain period of time.

A regulatory framework for ensuring accountability of service providers to the patient or their superior needs to be prepared. There should be a proper guideline about the referral system. The role of GPs and specialised consultants needs to be defined clearly. The point of health service delivery for urban population is either general or medical college hospitals which are known as hospitals of secondary and tertiary level. On the other hand, place for rural people is health complex. This is inequitable service.

A complete health policy was formulated in the year 2000 following long term five year plans since independence for governing health care system. In case of all five-year plans including the national health policy of 2000, involvement of government; doctors; politicians and people's participation was evident (Osman, F.A. Policy making in Bangladesh, 2004, pp. 148-156).

By recognising Alma Ata in 1978, nationally it was also decided to ensure participation of citizen through their representatives (Osman, F. A. 2004, annex 4.8, p. 372) that is not followed here. It is written in bold strong political commitment at the end of the draft of this health policy.

Developed countries like the United Kingdom, Finland, Spain and developing countries like India and Pakistan usually formulate health policy over a

period of time and then implement it for next 10 to 15 years. Policy must not be changed during this period otherwise all efforts and financial investments will be worn out. It is worth mentioning the separation of health and family planning department which was unified later and then separated again. Such lack of planning resulted in failure in achieving targets in both sectors.

In a nutshell, this can be said that this unscientific health policy surely is not going to benefit the general people of Bangladesh. There should be a uniform health care system for every citizen of the country though there could be options for private health care system for the affordable.

People's participation is a well-discussed subject. It would be a big slip-up to come up with any new policy without people's participation.

Countries in whole world have secured participation of all stakeholders including general population in policy-making to attain a sound health care system. That is why it is better to await this effort of updating national health policy and should concentrate to implement existing programmes. Involvement of technical panel including marginalised population and representative from all high risk areas would make the health policy helpful for outlining proper strategy and program for implementation.

Deliberative participation procedures provide means for insuring needs and interests that facilitate setting goals of health care policy and the means of achieving them.

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The realm of health myths

It's OK to skip breakfast

Breakfast is a very important meal. When we are sleeping, we are also fasting for an average of about eight hours, so it is essential to break this fast. Although people who skip breakfast catch up on their energy requirements later in the day, they are unlikely to get all the vitamins and minerals that a simple breakfast can provide. Try porridge with honey for a wholesome but filling meal. Or you can go for Oats, or if you are running out of time you can try ready-to-eat fortified breakfast cereals.



Eating carrots improves your eyesight

Though carrots contain a high concentration of vitamin A that is essential for healthy eyesight, an extra helping on your plate won't give you X-ray vision. In fact, the origin of the various sight-improving attributes of the humble carrot is generally credited to a campaign of misinformation carried out by the British Government during the World War II. British intelligence did not want the Germans to know that they were using radar to detect bombing raids so they spread the rumour that they were feeding their pilots carrots in order to improve their vision.



Good asthma control in pregnancy important

Women with inadequately treated asthma during pregnancy are at increased risk for premature delivery, according to a new study.

Medications to treat asthma are often restricted during pregnancy out of concern for potential harm to the developing child, even though there is evidence that severe asthma may have a harmful impact on mom and baby.

Dr Ludmila N. Bakhireva, from the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, and her associates studied the potential adverse effects of poorly controlled asthma in 719 pregnant women enrolled in their "Asthma Medication in Pregnancy Study" between 1998 and 2003.

They found that the incidence of preterm delivery was significantly higher among women

with poorly controlled asthma during the first 20 weeks of pregnancy (11.4 percent versus 6.3 percent). The investigators defined poor asthma control as the presence during the prior 2 weeks of asthma symptoms that interfered with sleep or activity.

The incidence of preterm delivery was more than doubled among women hospitalized for asthma during any part of the pregnancy (16.4 percent versus 7.6 percent).

These findings highlight "the need to optimise asthma control and prevent asthma exacerbations... by avoidance of triggering factors, self-management education, and optimal pharmacotherapy," the study team concludes.

Source: Annals of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology

Cervical cancer vaccine: Who needs it and how it works

STAR HEALTH DESK

A vaccine that offers protection from the Human papillomavirus (HPV) that is responsible for most cases of cervical cancer. Here is expert's insight into this revolutionary cervical cancer vaccine.

What is the significance of the cervical cancer vaccine?

The cervical cancer vaccine is the first vaccine ever designed to prevent a cancer. According to the World Health Organisation, there were 500,000 new cases of cervical cancer in 2005.

The tragedy of cervical cancer is that it often strikes when a woman is still young. She may be trying to raise her family or maybe she has not had children yet. Cervical cancer treatment may make future fertility impossible. And even with treatment, cervical cancer is a leading cause of cancer death in women.

When should the cervical cancer vaccine be given?

The cervical cancer vaccine is recommended for girls ages 11 to 12, although it may be used in girls as young as age 9. This allows a girl's immune system to be activated before she is likely to encounter HPV. Vaccinating at this age also allows for the highest antibody levels. The higher the antibody levels, the greater



the protection.

The vaccine is given as a series of three injections over a six-month period. The second dose is given two months after the first dose, followed four months later by the third dose.

Does the vaccine offer benefits if you are already sexually active?

Yes. In clinical trials, the vaccine was effective in a group of sexually active women age 26 or younger, some of whom had already been infected with one or more types of HPV. There is a caveat,

however.

The cervical cancer vaccine blocks HPV types 6, 11, 16 and 18, but only if you have not been exposed to those particular types of HPV. The more sexual partners you have had, the greater your chance of having been exposed to multiple types of HPV — including HPV types 6, 11, 16 and 18.

Does the vaccine carry any health risks or side effects?

The cervical cancer vaccine has proved to be remarkably safe. The most common complaint is soreness at the injection site, the upper arm. Low-grade fever or

flu-like symptoms also are common. But the effects are usually mild. No one in the clinical trials discontinued the vaccination series because of side effects.

Will women still need to have Pap tests?

Absolutely. The cervical cancer vaccine is not intended to replace Pap tests. Routine screening for cervical cancer through regular pelvic exams and Pap tests remains an essential part of a woman's preventive health care.

What can you do to protect yourself from cervical cancer if you are not in the recommended vaccine age group?

HPV spreads through sexual contact. To protect yourself from HPV, use a condom during sex. It is also important to limit your number of sexual partners. Quitting smoking helps, too. Smoking doubles the risk of cervical cancer.

To detect cervical cancer in the earliest stages, have your Pap test or VIA test (Visual Inspection of cervix with Acetic Acid) done at a regular interval. Seek prompt medical attention if you notice any signs or symptoms of cervical cancer like vaginal bleeding after sex, between periods or after menopause; foul-smelling discharge; or bloody vaginal discharge; pelvic pain; or pain during sex.

Fit and fat: Study shows it is possible

It may be possible to be both fat and healthy, researchers reported recently. At least half of overweight adults, and close to a third of obese men and women, have normal blood pressure, cholesterol and other measures of heart health. And being lean does not necessarily protect people, either.

"A considerable proportion of overweight and obese adults are metabolically healthy, whereas a considerable proportion of normal-weight adults express a clustering of cardiometabolic abnormalities," Judith Wylie-Rosett of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York and Rachel Wildman and colleagues wrote in their report, published in the Journal Archives of Internal Medicine.

Wylie-Rosett's team looked at data on 5,440 men and women. They found just over 51 percent of those who were overweight, and 31.7 percent of those who were obese, had healthy levels of cholesterol, blood sugar, blood pressure and other measures linked to heart disease.

These measures have been shown in many other studies to predict heart attacks, strokes, diabetes and other heart disease, although this particular study did not look at whether people suffered any of these problems.

"Our study shows you can still be healthy even if you are obese," Wylie-Rosett said.

Her team did not look at people's diets, but she believes the location of body fat is as important as how much there is. Many studies have shown that having visceral fat (fat in and among the internal organs) may be more dangerous than having fat thighs or buttocks.

But when Wylie-Rosett's team measured waist circumference, a common way to estimate visceral fat, more than 36 percent of the obese people with what should have been dangerously large waists had healthy blood test results.

A second study by Dr. Norbert Stefan and colleagues at the University of Tubingen in Germany suggested that the liver may be the key.

They also found that obese men and women could have healthy hearts and arteries and suggested that having fat on the liver may be what makes the difference. "Altogether, 10 percent of the study population and 25 percent of the obese subjects had a high insulin sensitivity phenotype or metabolically benign obesity," they wrote in their Archives report.

"Our data suggest that ectopic fat accumulation in the liver may be more important than visceral fat in the determination of such a beneficial phenotype in obesity," they pointed out.

Source: Journal Archives of Internal Medicine

WORLD'S BEST CORPORATE REPUTATIONS SURVEY

Novo Nordisk ranks in top 10

Novo Nordisk Pharmaceuticals, a world leader in diabetes care has been ranked in the top ten for World's Best Corporate Reputations, says a press release.

Reputation Institute created a variety of standardised models to provide companies with a framework for benchmarking their corporate reputations internationally and to enable identification of the factors that drive reputations.

Companies Rated The Global Pulse 2008 measures the reputations of the world's largest companies in each country based on their total revenues. In Bangladesh, Novo Nordisk has got this achievement.

Although other companies like Toyota (Ranked No 1) or Kraft Foods (Ranked No 7) as well as Google (Ranked No 2) is widely used by Bangladeshi consumers, none of them have direct operations in Bangladesh.



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