

Children with HIV in Asia resistant to AIDS drugs!

REUTERS, Hong Kong

Teenagers in Asia receiving treatment for HIV are showing early signs of osteoporosis and children as young as five are becoming resistant to AIDS drugs, an anti-AIDS group said recently, urging more attention be given to young HIV patients.

The finding is a reminder that while more people in Asia now have access to basic AIDS drugs, improved medicines remain out of reach and patients — both adults and children — still suffer from inadequate care.

In Asia, some 160,000 children are infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which causes AIDS. Of these, 57,000 require treatment but only 30,000 were receiving it as of the end of 2008, according to Unicef.

Researchers at TREAT Asia found children as young as five were developing resistance to AIDS drugs and may soon require improved, more expensive medicines, which are not available for them yet.

Poor adherence to the timing or frequency of taking AIDS drugs can result



in resistance. But in Asia, resistance is also due to the lack of drug formulations for children.

Annette Sohn, Director of TREAT Asia said health experts and drug providers need to find ways to make third-line, more powerful drugs available for children in poor countries. Such medications are available or subsidised in

rich nations but very expensive and sometimes unavailable in developing countries.

"We all made some mistakes on how we managed patients with HIV in the beginning of the epidemic," Sohn said. "We used adult tablets. We had no pediatric formulations in our countries."

"Unless we develop access to third-

line drugs, we are going to find ourselves in a clinic room with a patient that there is nothing left and we have no other drug to give them."

A long-term study of 4,000 HIV patients under the age of 23 in Asia by TREAT Asia also showed that a high percentage of teenagers had low bone mineral density, a precursor of osteoporosis.

"We did a special X-ray on these teenagers who are about 16 years old and found that 15 percent of them had low bone mass," Sohn said.

"That is not normal. Kids are not supposed to have low bone mass when they're 16 years old and that's because of the effect of HIV on their bodies ... brain, bone, immune system."

Sohn, a paediatric specialist for children with HIV/AIDS, said this may also be due to toxic effects that some AIDS drugs, such as tenofovir, have on bones.

The study covers Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Cambodia, Indonesia and India. TREAT Asia is a network of clinics, hospitals and research institutions working together to improve treatment access.

PAIN MANAGEMENT



Myofascial pain syndrome

Myofascial Pain Syndrome is a chronic form of pain that affects muscle (Myo) and connective tissue surrounding muscle (Fascia). It involves some sensitive spots of the muscle called myofascial trigger points. These trigger points are painful when touched. Pain and spasms can spread throughout the surrounding muscle.

The syndrome is often under-recognised. In many cases, it can be difficult to diagnose, as a significant number of patients also suffer from other different coexisting complications such as muscles weakness, sleep problem, fibromyalgia and different biomechanical abnormalities.

Myofascial pain most often occurs in people 30 to 60 years old, especially who are less active and affects women more than men. Certain factors that may increase your risk of muscle trigger points include: muscle injury or overuse, inactivity, stress and anxiety.

Treatment of the syndrome typically includes physiotherapy, soft tissue mobilisation, ischaemic compression, muscle energy techniques, stretching, trigger point injections, dry needling or medications.

No conclusive evidence supports using one therapy over another. If you experience muscle pain that does not go away in typical self-care measures, such as rest or massage, exercises and stretching then you need to consult with a doctor or physiotherapist who can manage your condition confidently.

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HEALTH bulletin



Fish consumption reduces Alzheimer's risk

People who eat baked or broiled fish on a weekly basis may be improving their brain health and reducing their risk of developing mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and Alzheimer's disease, according to a study presented at the annual meeting of the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA).

Low vitamin D linked to heart disease, death

Vitamin D deficiency has been linked to heart disease and death, but the risk is more than halved when they are given supplements, according to a large new study published in The American Journal of Cardiology. Sunlight exposure and certain foods, like oily fish, eggs and enriched milk products are good sources of D.

Exercise for the benefit of brain

For centuries, people have known that exercise remodels muscles, rendering them more durable and fatigue-resistant. But very little thing was known whether it helps to keep brain fit or not. To learn more about how exercise affects the brain, scientists in Ireland recently asked a group of sedentary male college students to take part in a memory test followed by strenuous exercise.

The study revealed that the exercised volunteers performed significantly better on the memory test. The researchers said that immediately after the strenuous activity, the people who were involved in exercise had significantly higher levels of a protein known as brain-derived neurotrophic factor, or BDNF, which is known to promote the health of nerve cells.

Several studies have found similar result. Experts opined that for everyone, the evidence is very strong that physical activity will increase BDNF levels and improve cognitive health.

Exercise not only helps improve memory but also keep brain fit. In muscle, exercise increases the number of mitochondria, the tiny organelles that float around a cell's nucleus and act as biological powerhouses, helping to create the energy that fuels almost all cellular activity. Brain cells are also fueled

by mitochondria like muscles.

South Carolina scientists exercised their mice for eight weeks and it showed that the running mice displayed much greater endurance than the loungers. Some parts of their brains showed more activity than others, but in each of the samples, the brain cells held newborn mitochondria. Epidemiological studies show that long-term runners have a lower risk of neurological disease. Best of all, the effort required to round your brain cells into shape is not daunting.

A 30-minute jog, according to expert, is probably a good human equivalent of the workout that the mice completed.

Source: The New York Times



Tips to help manage angina

Angina describes the pain and discomfort that occurs when the heart lacks a sufficient supply of oxygenated blood. The National Heart Lung and Blood Institute offers these suggestions to help manage angina symptoms:

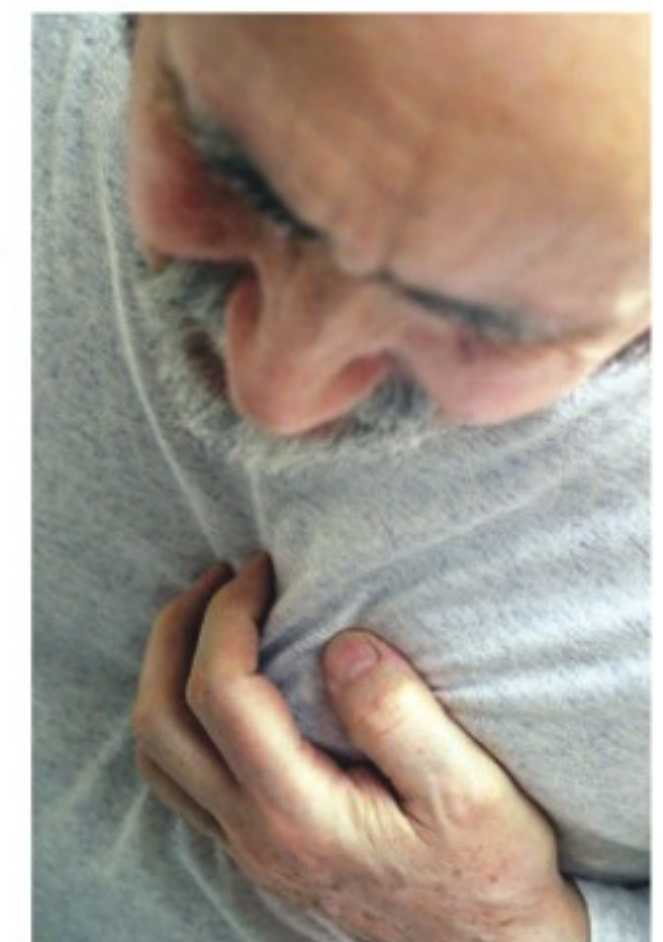
- Know how long and how vigorously you can exercise without causing angina, and always stop exercising before you reach the point of chest pain or discomfort. Sometimes, situation may go fatal while exercising.

- Do your best to avoid or limit emotional stress. Exercising and practicing relaxation techniques can help.

- Do not overeat, even if it is occasional. Overeating aggravates angina by engaging more blood to absorb food around gastrointestinal tract, and hence causing poor supply around heart.

- Do not push yourself too hard when it comes to work, hobbies, sex and other physical activities.

- Know when your symptoms become severe enough that you should seek immediate medical attention.



Knowing for better living

In Bangladesh . . .

53.61% children suffering from pneumonia belong to the age group of 1 to 5 years !

Prevent air pollution

Keep your home clean and free from dust

Avoid smoking in front of children

Do not cough or sneeze in front of children

Ensure adequate nutrition for children

Consult your Doctor



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