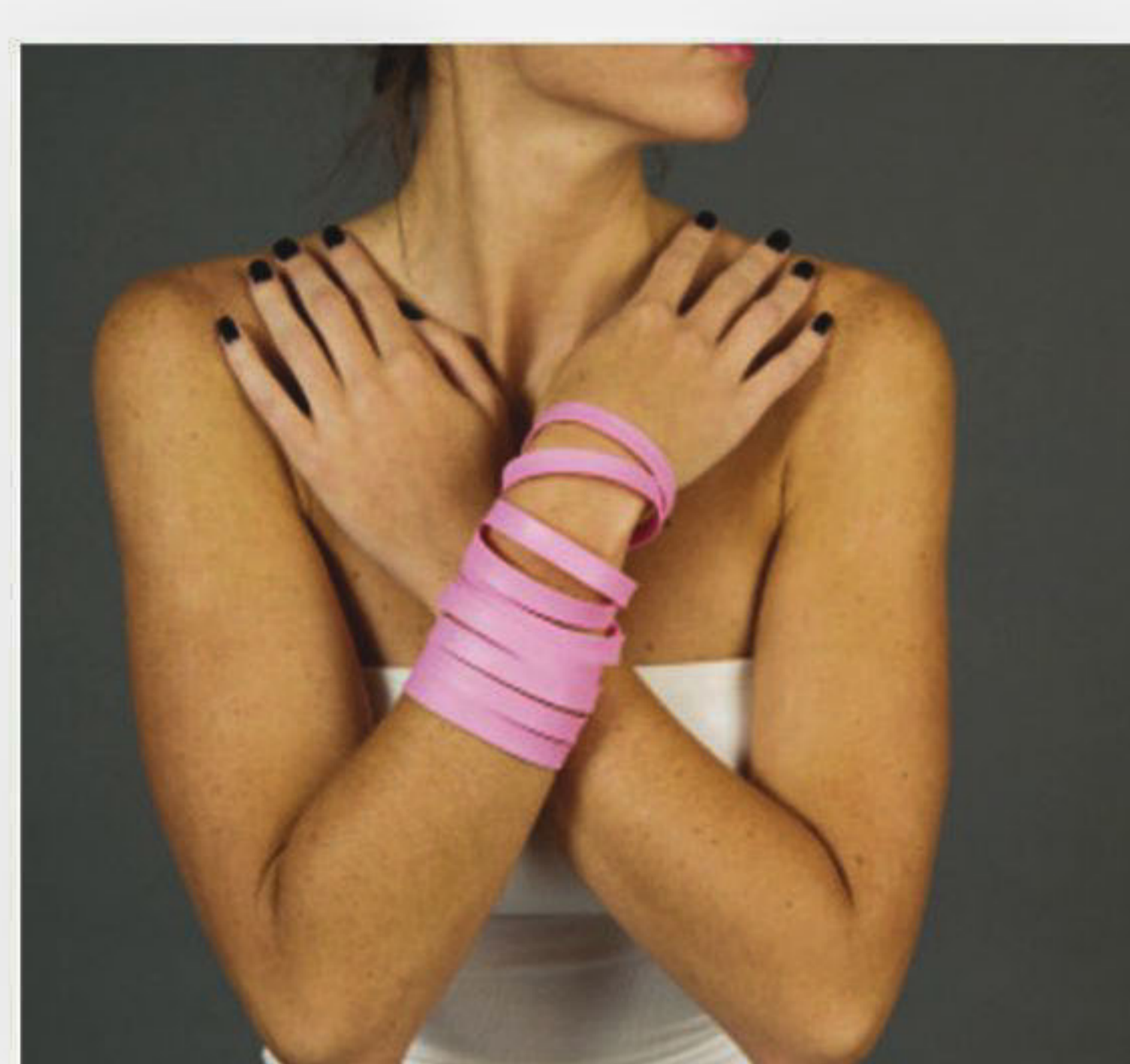


Dealing with breast pain

Breast pain is not worrying generally. Almost all women experience breast pain at some stage of their womanhood. Most commonly it is associated with periods. The pain is often mild but in some women, it may be severe enough to affect the quality of life. With simple measures and identifying the proper cause, women can manage such common pain quite effectively. Breast pain, most commonly is cyclical — that means it comes 1-2 weeks before period. It can first occur at any age after periods start, but most commonly first develops between the ages of 30 and 50 years. The 3-5 days prior to a period are usually the worst. The pain usually eases soon after a period starts. Typically, the pain affects both breasts. After proper diagnosis by a doctor, women should be reassured that cyclical breast pain is not a symptom of serious breast disease like cancer. The problem may settle by itself within 3-6 months or may come and go over the years. Treatment is not usually necessary in mild cases. If the pain is severe, or for the times when it may flare up worse than usual, treatment options include support the breasts with a well fitted bra, painkillers, topical pain medication and some other drugs depending on the condition. Breast pain can also be non-cyclical — that means it does not follow any regular pattern. It may radiate to back, arms and under rib-cage. Women sometimes describe it as a burning pain, which is not constant. This type of breast pain is not related to periods and is most common in women aged over 40.

The pain may be in just one breast, and may be localised to one area in a breast. The pain may be caused by infections such as tuberculosis, syphilis, and histoplasmosis as well as a foreign-body granuloma, sarcoidosis, Wegener's granulomatosis, giant cell arteritis and polyarteritis nodosa. The incidence of tuberculosis, in general, is still quite high in South East Asia and often overlooked and misdiagnosed as carcinoma or pyogenic abscess. Pain also may radiate from the chest wall. Breast cancer is a very uncommon cause of breast pain. The first symptom of breast cancer is usually a painless lump. Pain is not usually an early symptom. However, even though breast pain is not likely to be caused by cancer, you should see a doctor if you have any concerns about breast pain or any other breast symptoms.



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The write up is compiled by Dr Tasmia Tahmid, a Breast Surgeon. E-mail: tasmiatahmid@aol.com

HAVE A NICE DAY

Cure for schizophrenia by next year

Schizophrenia is relatively a common form of severe mental illness. In simple, a person experiencing this may demonstrate symptoms such as disorganised thinking, perception of sound without outside stimulus and strange fantasies. Even though a serious disorder of the brain, it is highly treatable. Researchers found that genetics, early environment and psychological and social processes are important contributory factors to this illness. In Bangladesh, primary diagnosis is based on the abnormalities in behaviour reported by family members or friends followed by secondary signs observed by a psychiatrist or other doctors in a clinical assessment. Although there is no total cure at this moment for schizophrenia, but scientists are confident that a cure for schizophrenia could be found very soon. Previously, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, USA has announced that a cure for schizophrenia is possible by the end of 2013. They realised that the critical challenge would be to set the right priorities for research investments and to insist that the clinical research enterprise translates readily into real world practice. Certainly this is going to be a big breakthrough in the treatment of mental illnesses; and all are waiting to see a socio-medical revolution.



Dr Rubaiul Murshed

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HEALTH bulletin

Iron pills may help women beat fatigue



Prescribing iron supplements may help some women specially at reproductive age beat fatigue even if they are not officially anaemic, a study published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal suggests. A severe shortage of iron is the most common cause of anaemia resulting in lethargy, weakness and feeling faint. Taking too much iron, however, can be dangerous as well.

CT scans on children could triple brain cancer risk

Multiple CT scans in childhood can triple the risk of developing brain cancer or leukaemia, a study published in The Lancet suggests. Researchers underlined the fact the scans should only be used when necessary and the benefits of the scans outweighed the risks. They recommended that precautions should be taken to cut their radiation if a scan is necessary.

Untreatable gonorrhoea spreading around world

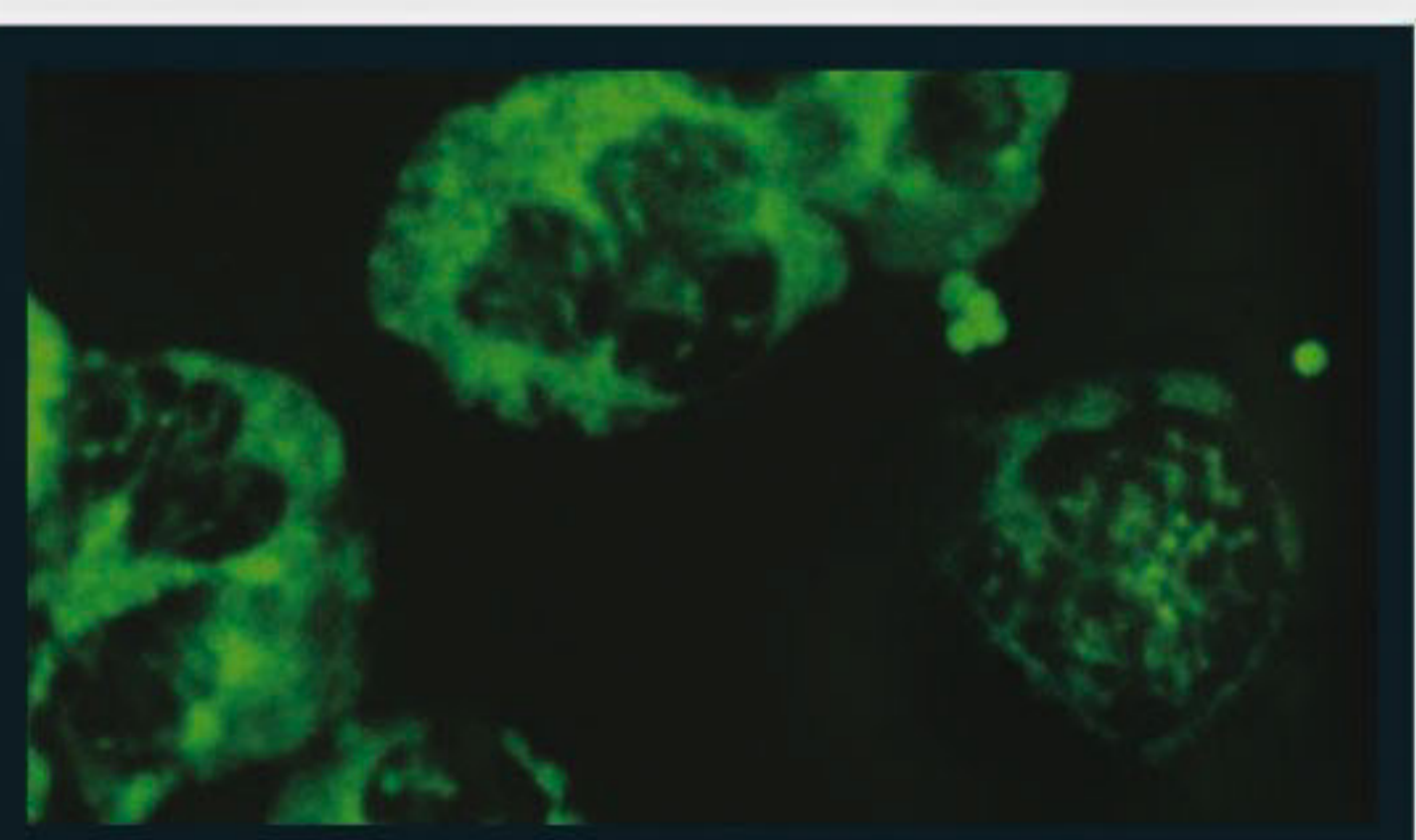
STAR HEALTH DESK
Drug-resistant strains of gonorrhoea have spread to countries across the world and millions of patients may run out of treatment options unless doctors catch and treat cases earlier — says the World Health Organisation (WHO). Scientists reported last year finding a "superbug" strain of gonorrhoea in Japan in 2008 that was resistant to all recommended antibiotics and warned then that it could transform a once easily treatable infections into a global health threat. WHO said those fears are now reality with many more countries, including Australia, France, Norway, Sweden and Britain, reporting cases of the sexually transmitted disease resistant to cephalosporin antibiotics — normally the last option for drugs against gonorrhoea. Gonorrhoea, a common sexually transmitted infection characterised

by burning with urination and penile discharge affected an estimated 106 million people every year. Expert from WHO said that the organism has developed resistance to virtually every class of antibiotics that exists. If gonococcal infections become untreatable, the health implications are significant. Gonorrhoea if left untreated, can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease, ectopic pregnancy, stillbirths, severe eye infections in babies, and infertility in both men and women. It is one of the most common sexually transmitted diseases in the world and is most prevalent in south and southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Bangladesh, in that context is at high risk of its grave complications. The WHO called for greater vigilance on the correct use of antibiotics and more research into alternative treatments for so-called gonococcal infections.

The emergence of drug-resistant or superbug strains of gonorrhoea is caused by unregulated access to and overuse of antibiotics, which helps fuel natural genetic mutations within the bacteria. Experts say an added problem with gonorrhoea is that its strains tend to retain their genetic resistance to previous antibiotics even after their use has been discontinued. Experts say the best way to reduce the risk of even greater resistance developing — beyond the urgent need to develop effective new drugs — is to treat gonorrhoea with combinations of two or more types of antibiotic at the same time. Gonorrhoea can be prevented through safer sexual intercourse. The WHO said early detection and prompt treatment, including of sexual partners, is essential to control sexually transmitted infections.

Source: Reuters

Gonorrhoea is one of the most common sexually transmitted diseases in the world and is most prevalent in south and southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Bangladesh, in that context is at high risk of its grave



Magnified view of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* bacteria, the causative agent of Gonorrhoea.

NEWS IN FRAME



With a view to providing proper guideline and treatment options, Liver Foundation of Bangladesh organised the first ever conference for the patients living with Hepatitis B and C and their family members in Bangladesh.



An agreement was signed between Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital and American charitable organisation 'Smile Train' to provide free treatment for the patients having cleft lip and palate.

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