

DR TAREQ SALAHUDDIN, back from Hobiganj

In Bangladesh, several evidence based interventions have been identified as highly effective in reducing maternal and newborn morbidity and mortality. However, few programmes have demonstrated how to embed this proven models within the existing system in low resource countries.

In a district-wide settings, Ma-Moni (a project implemented by Save the Children in partnership with Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, ICDDR, B and national NGOs including Shimantil and FIVDB) is demonstrating effective implementation of an integrated maternalnewborn-family planning-nutrition package ensuring quality along with cost-effectiveness in a sustainable way.

The project is being implemented in remote areas of Sylhet and Hobiganj district which are topographically distinct with haors (low-lying land) that makes service delivery difficult.

Ma-Moni package is integrated with pregnancy identification, comprehensive antenatal care, promotion of clean delivery by skilled birth attendants, postnatal care for the newborn and mothers, exclusive breastfeeding, family planning, young and infant child feeding.

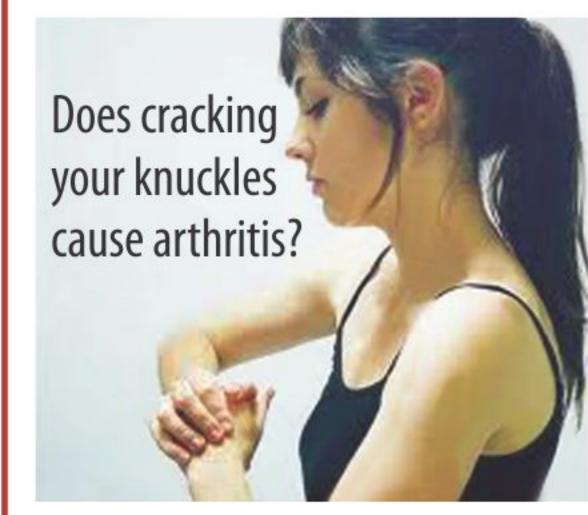
The project has several context specific unique components like water ambulance that supplements the quality care.

The project is not only providing with its deliverables, but also builds and strengthens the capacity of the government system and the local community to sustain the practice even after the project phases out. A strong referral network has been created in the joint interface of the community and local healthcare system that ensures maternal and child care. It plays a role in critical gap management. Instead of creating a parallel service delivery structure, Ma-Moni works in line with the existing system engaging the local government representatives.

The project model has already earned reputation in home and abroad due to its long term sustainable approach. To ensure maternal and child health in a resource poor country like Bangladesh, rolling out the components of project like Ma-Moni is crucial.

Email: tareq.salahuddin@thedailystar.net For more photo stories based on the field trip, visit our facebook album http://on.fb.me/UlaZD0

MEDICAL MYTH



Many people believe cracking knuckles can cause arthritis. But does it really do so? Several studies have been conducted so far and no one could reveal any significant relation between knuckling and development of arthritis.

Some people crack their knuckles by pulling the tip of each finger one at a time until they hear a crack. Others make a tight fist or bend their fingers backwards away from the hand, cracking the lot at once. Whichever method is used, the noise is created in the same manner. The space between the joints increases, causing the gases dissolved in the synovial fluid bathing the joint to form microscopic bubbles. These bubbles merge into large bubbles which then get popped by additional fluid which rushes in to fill the enlarged space.

Once the joints have been cracked they can't be cracked again for about fifteen minutes. OK, but could cracking your knuckles cause other forms of damage? There are isolated reports of accidental self-inflicted injury from knuckle-cracking, with injured thumbs and sprained finger ligaments, but these are rare.

So if you like cracking your knuckles then by all means carry on, but just bear in the mind it might be annoying for the observer.

Source: BBC



Can pacemakers be used twice?

People in developing countries with heart problems may not be able to afford new pacemakers, but a new study suggests devices removed during autopsies may have enough remaining battery life to be donated and used again.

Millions of people die worldwide each year because they do not have access to pacemakers, which send electrical impulses into the heart to help maintain a normal heartbeat. For many of those people, using the device for twice could be a solution.

Source: Reuters

Work stress raises heart risk

Having a highly demanding job, but little control over it, could be a deadly combination, UK researchers say. They analysed 13 existing European studies covering nearly 200,000 people and found job strain was linked to a 23% increased risk of heart attacks and deaths from coronary heart disease. The risk to the heart was much smaller than for smoking or not exercising, the Lancet medical journal report said.

HIRSUTISM

When females develop facial hair

Hirsutism is a condition where women have excess facial and body hair like a man. It is therefore primarily of cosmetic and psychological concern. Many cases of Hirsutism are not severe and have no underlying cause. However, it may be a medical sign of a more serious medical condition in certain cases, especially if it develops well after puberty.

In Hirsutism, females develop male pattern of body hair, sometimes excessive, particularly in locations where they normally do not develop hair during puberty (chest, abdomen, back and face).

About half of women with

male sex hormones called androgens. Androgen stimulates hair growth, increase size and intensify the growth and pigmentation of hair. Other symptoms caused by high levels of male hormones include irregular menstrual periods, acne, loss of feminine body shape, deepening voice, male pattern baldness, enlarged clitoris, and enlarged shoulder muscles.

High levels of hormone and Hirsutism can be caused by Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS) — a disease in the ovary that may also cause infertility,

Hirsutism may have high levels of

tumors on the adrenal glands or

ovaries, Cushing syndrome (occurs when people take excessive steroid and by certain medications) etc. In other cases, women with Hirsutism may have normal levels of male hormones. If no underlying condition is found, the cause of Hirsutism is unknown. Women of European, Middle

Eastern, and South Asian ancestry are more likely to develop the condition. Some conditions that cause Hirsutism may be inherited.

If anyone suspects that she might have excess hair in unusual part of her body, she should consult a doctor confirmation. Hirsutism is most cases treatable.

The treatment for Hirsutism depends how severe the problem is and whether there is an underlying cause. For example, if a tumour on the ovaries or adrenal glands is the cause, it may be removed surgically. If no underlying cause is found, a combination of self-care strategies and hair-removal techniques may be used. Psychological support may also help because Hirsutism is often a frustrating and embarrassing condition.

The write up is compiled by Dr Shahjada Selim, Department of Endocrinology and Metabolism in BIRDEM Hospital, Dhaka. Email: selimshahjada@gmail.com

HEALTH TIPS



Work on good posture

If you have lower back pain, sitting at an office desk all day can aggravate your symptoms. The University of Michigan Health System offers these suggestions for managing back pain at work:

•Make sure your feet are flat on the floor, either by adjusting the seat or using a footrest.

•If your chair does not offer sufficient lower back support, place a rolled towel or small cushion behind you.

·Make sure your reading materials are at eye level. Set up your desk so all supplies are easily reached; do not lean, bend or twist at the waist.

•Take regular breaks to stand up, stretch and move around.





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