

World Blood Donor Day 2015

Thank you for saving my life

STAR HEALTH DESK

Every year, on 14 June, countries around the world celebrate World Blood Donor Day. The event serves to thank voluntary unpaid blood donors for their life-saving gifts of blood and to raise awareness of the need for regular blood donations to ensure quality, safety and availability of blood and blood products for patients in need.

Transfusion of blood and blood products helps save millions of lives every year. It can help patients suffering from life-threatening conditions live longer and with higher quality of life, and supports complex medical and surgical procedures. It also has an essential, life-saving role in maternal and child care and during man-made and natural disasters.

However, in many countries, demand exceeds supply, and blood services face the challenge of making sufficient blood available, while also ensuring its quality and safety. An adequate supply can only be assured through regular donations by voluntary unpaid blood donors. The World Health Organisation's (WHO's) goal is for all countries to obtain all their blood supplies from voluntary unpaid donors by 2020.

Today, in just 62 countries, national blood supplies are based



on close to 100% voluntary unpaid blood donations, with 40 countries still dependent on family donors and even paid donors.

2015 World Blood Donor Day campaign
The theme of this year's

campaign is "Thank you for saving my life". It focuses on thanking blood donors who save lives every day through their blood donations and strongly encourages more people all over the world to donate blood voluntarily and

regularly with the slogan "Give freely, give often. Blood donation matters." The campaign aims to highlight stories from people whose lives have been saved through blood donation, as a way of motivating regular blood

donors to continue giving blood and people in good health who have never given blood to begin doing so.

Activities may include commemorative events, meetings, publication / dissemination of relevant stories on media outlets, scientific conferences, publication of articles on national, regional and international scientific journals, and other activities that would help in promoting the theme of this year's World Blood Donor Day (WBDD).

The objectives of this year's campaign are to:

- thank blood donors for their life-saving donations;
- promote regular voluntary unpaid blood donation;
- create wider public awareness of the need for regular donation because of the short shelf-life of blood components and to encourage existing and potential donors to donate blood at regular intervals
- focus attention on donor health and the quality of donor care as critical factors in building donor commitment and a willingness to donate regularly; and
- persuade ministries of health to show their appreciation of regular voluntary unpaid donors and provide adequate resources to provide quality donor care.

BREAKTHROUGH



Kieran Sorkin, a boy who was born without ears has been granted his wish of wearing sunglasses for the first time.

Boy born with no ears gets sunglasses wish

A boy who was born without ears has been granted his wish of wearing sunglasses for the first time, reports BBC.

Kieran Sorkin, 9, from Hertfordshire, was born with bilateral microtia, which means he just had small lobes where his ears should have been. He had an operation last summer to create a pair of ears made of cartilage taken from his ribs. It took place at the world-renowned Great Ormond Street Hospital in London.

He then had a second procedure in February to lift his new ears away from the sides of his head and forwards into the correct position. They were covered in skin taken from his scalp.

But it was not until Thursday that he was told by lead surgeon Neil Bulstrode that he could wear sunglasses, just in time for summer.

HEALTH bulletin

A less recognised emerging public health problem

Sleep disturbances among the adults living in disaster-prone areas in Bangladesh are on the rise.

TAHERA AKTER, FATEMA TUZ JHOHURA, FAKIR MD YUNUS and MAHFUZAR RAHMAN

The physical consequences of a disaster are more prominent than the emotional effects. Health effects in changing climatic conditions such as respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, injuries and deaths related to extreme weather events, food and waterborne diseases and other infectious diseases (dengue, malaria) are widely reported. However, sleep disturbances as an indirect effect of climate change are still understated not only in global media but also locally in developing countries.

Sleep plays an important role in maintaining good health and many of our somatic, cognitive and psychological processes are dependent on sleep duration, therefore insufficient either longer and shorter duration of sleep is a threat to our better survival. Too little and too much sleep have an enormous effect on our health.

A recent study conducted among rural populations in 8 low-income countries of Asia and Africa including Bangladesh reported that 150 million people (approximately 17% of the total) having sleep problems. Bangladesh topped as the

highest prevalence in sleep problems followed by Vietnam and South Africa.

Sleep disturbance among the people living in disaster prone areas could be an emerging issue but less addressed in the ground of climate change impacts on human health.

In a cross-sectional survey among 3,022 adult inhabitants from 960 households of 24 upazilas across Bangladesh, we explored if the adults including living in disaster prone areas are more exposed to sleep disturbances than the adults in non-disaster prone areas.

In results, we found that more women (57%) had short sleep than men (43%). This would mean that this large number of women is more vulnerable to suffer their memory, immunity and risks their overall quality of life. Research suggested that chronic short sleep deprivation is associated with an increased risk of obesity, diabetes, mental disorders, hypertension and other cardiovascular diseases.

It is evident that women are more vulnerable than men in any disaster. In our informal discussion, we found that most of the respondents including men and women perceived that women were more vulnerable than men in any natural disaster

with varying reasons that included: spent much time at home and did not leave home until they were hit by natural hazards; physical inability to move faster to safer places; more protective towards children, other dependent family members, and household belongings; managed cooking, collected fuel and drinking water even from distant places.

Besides, sanitation had been the most awful for the women due to lack of privacy. Respondents living in flood and cyclone affected areas reported their concern about losing livelihoods and properties due to natural hazards such as flood, storms and river bank erosion. Some of them were found worried about a certain future due to recurrent disaster.

The prevalence of sleep problems was found among the ultra-poor compared to the poor and non-poor groups. Having reported the evidences on sleep disturbances among the adults in various angles, such less recognised but emerging public health issue demands more attention in the ground of climate change and impacts on health.

Authors are the researchers from Research and Evaluation Division (RED), BRAC Centre.



10 amazing health benefits of garlic

1. Garlic kills a great number of various bacteria.
2. Garlic has anti-inflammatory properties and lowers blood pressure.
3. Garlic prevents clogging and aging of both peripheral and major arteries.
4. Garlic helps kill the cells of the malignant brain tumour - multiform glioblastoma.
5. Garlic also acts as an anticoagulant, which thins the blood and prevents the formation of dangerous blood clots, helping to reduce the risk of a heart attack or stroke.
6. Garlic is an effective remedy for colds and a natural antibiotic.
7. Garlic reduces the synthesis of triglycerides in the liver which help prevent the development of atherosclerosis, thus helping protect against heart disease.
8. Garlic's healing properties help reduce the level of bad cholesterol in the blood.
9. Garlic increases the body's ability to withstand the harmful influences of the environment, because it strengthens the immune system.
10. It is recommended to use garlic for disorders of the nervous system.



Chinese inventor of the e-cigarette Hon Lik poses for a photograph in central London, Britain.

Hon called e-cigs a 'consumer-driven' revolution

Authorities in Wales recently proposed a new public health law that would ban e-cigarettes in enclosed spaces like offices and restaurants following similar moves in Ireland and elsewhere.

Some regulators fear e-cigarettes could lead non-smokers to vape or even smoke, while proponents say bans discourage smokers from switching.

"E-cigarettes are a consumer-driven revolution," invented the e-cigarette a Chinese pharmacist Hon Lik said, noting the array of products now on the market that address the needs of various groups, from people wanting to cut back or quit smoking to a new band of recreational "cloud-chasers" who use nicotine-free vapor to blow the biggest and densest clouds.

Knowing for better living

150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week reduces the risk of diabetes by 27%

- Control your diabetes
- Control your blood pressure
- Control your body weight
- Avoid smoking
- Exercise regularly
- Consult your Doctor