

Heart attack triggers that may surprise you

Did you know that cold weather can cause a heart attack? We explain how, along with other triggers you might not know about.

Lack of sleep: Lack of sleep regularly can raise your risk of a heart attack. Researchers found that people who usually slept fewer than 6 hours a night were twice as likely to have a heart attack as those who slept 6 to 8.

Migraine headaches: People who get these are more likely to have a heart attack later in life than those who don't. And ones that include auras that start before the headache hits seem to have a stronger link to heart problems.

Cold weather: Being outside in the winter months can cause your arteries to narrow, making it harder for blood to reach your heart. On top of that, your heart has to work harder to keep your body warm. Limit heavy physical activity outside.

Air pollution: Heart attacks are more common when air pollution levels are high. People who breathe dirty air on a regular basis are more likely to have clogged arteries and heart disease. Sitting in traffic may be especially dangerous, because it can combine car fumes with anger or frustration.

A heavy meal: Think twice before going back for seconds or thirds, it may hurt more than



your waistline. When you eat large amounts of food in one sitting, it leads to higher levels of the stress hormone nor-epinephrine in your body. That can raise your blood pressure and heart rate, and it may trigger heart attacks in some people.

Strong emotions: Anger, grief, and stress are known triggers of heart problems, but joyful events can sometimes lead to a heart

attack as well. It can be triggered by the kind of emotions that go along with a surprise birthday party, a wedding, or the birth of a grandchild.

Sudden or intense exertion: Getting in shape will protect your heart in the long run, but doing too much could be dangerous. About 6% of heart attacks are triggered by extreme physical effort.

A cold or the flu: When your immune system fights off a bug, it can cause inflammation that can damage your heart and arteries. In one study, people with respiratory infections were twice as likely to have a heart attack. Heart attack rates are also higher during flu outbreaks — another good reason to get your flu shot.

Asthma: Your chances of having a heart attack go up about

70% if you have this lung disease. Even if you use an inhaler to keep it under control, your risk is still higher than normal. Because of your asthma, you also may tend to ignore chest tightness, which can be an early sign of a heart attack.

Disasters: Studies have shown that heart attack rates go up after major disasters like earthquakes or terrorist attacks. And not just immediately following them, but even up to a few years later. You may not be able to avoid these kinds of situations, but you can do things to manage your stress afterward.

Spectator sports: Playing sports can possibly trigger a heart attack and watching them can, too. In 2006, heart attacks in Germany spiked during the national team's World Cup football games.

Alcohol: Over time, alcohol consumption can raise your blood pressure, increase certain kinds of bad cholesterol, and lead to weight gain, all of which can hurt your heart.

Coffee: Caffeine makes your blood pressure go up for a short time, and that can trigger an attack, especially if you don't drink it regularly. Overall, though, coffee seems to be good for your heart.

Source: WebMD

ANNOUNCEMENT

MSD for Mothers commits \$10 million

STAR HEALTH REPORT

MSD, known as Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., U.S.A., inside the United States and Canada, announced recently its \$10 million commitment to the Global Financing Facility (GFF) in support of *Every Woman Every Child* to improve maternal and child health in low- and lower-middle-income countries worldwide through its *MSD for Mothers* initiative.

Through the GFF — a multi-stakeholder partnership hosted by the World Bank Group — countries are aiming to make a much greater impact on the lives of their most vulnerable citizens, with the goal of preventing an estimated 3.8 million maternal deaths, 101 million child deaths and 21 million stillbirths by 2030.

The contribution to the GFF Trust Fund — the first from the private sector — will be used for innovative financing and public-private partnerships to scale up high-impact interventions to help women and children to survive and thrive through critical periods of life: birth, the early years and adolescence.

MSD's commitment advances the mission of *MSD for Mothers*, the company's 10-year, \$500 million global initiative to end the tragedy of women dying from complications of pregnancy and childbirth. In addition to financial support, MSD will provide business expertise to strengthen this multi-stakeholder partnership.

GFF partners include, in addition to the GFF implementing countries, the World Bank Group; the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Gavi; the Vaccine Alliance; the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; the United Nations; and the governments of Canada, Norway, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States.

A total of 62 low- and lower-middle-income countries are eligible to receive grants.

HEALTH bulletin

Malaria, its fatal impact and treatment

DR AHMAD MUNIR HUSSAIN

From time immemorial men have been surviving amongst a lot of deadly diseases among which Malaria is a primitive one. It is no exaggeration to say that Malaria has been responsible for much of the human suffering and misery accompanying the process of social and economic development.

Malaria is caused by the bite of the female Anopheles mosquito which carries the germ of Plasmodium, the causative agent of Malaria.

Malaria has got a very deleterious effect on health especially if it is recurrent. Malaria is always accompanied by haemolysis i.e. destruction of red blood cells causing severe or prolonged attack of anaemia that sometimes lead to death. Besides Plasmodium falciparum, malaria may have following complications: brain damage due to cerebral Malaria causing coma and death; kidney damage leading oliguria (less urine) and uraemia causing death due to acute renal failure; lung complications causing severe cough and respiratory distress due to pulmonary oedema; intestinal complication in the form of diarrhoea; liver damage causing jaundice, intravascular haemolysis causing Black water fever; hypoglycaemia especially with Quinine treatment; hypotensive shock;

splenic rupture; in pregnancy: maternal death, abortion, still birth, low birth weight baby.

Malaria fever should be diagnosed first with clinical features and then it must be confirmed with blood slide examination and ICT for Malaria test before starting anti-malarial drugs. If there is no immediate facility for MP test, anti-malarial drugs can be started on the basis of clinical feature, especially the type of fever. But once the drug is started the full course of it must be completed whether temperature remains or not. Otherwise resistance to drugs and relapses will occur.

For positive case of Plasmodium vivax and ovale, radical cure should be achieved by a course of Primaquin, otherwise there may be relapses. In Bangladesh anti-malarial regimes suggested by the World Health Organisation (WHO) should be strictly followed for uncomplicated Malaria, treatment failure Malaria and severe Malaria separately.

Absolute prevention or eradication of Malaria is very tough. However, this may be achieved to some extent by undertaking following measures:

(1) To prevent breeding of mosquito by application of insecticides and larvicides in their breeding places like stagnant water, bushes etc.

(2) Jungles and bushes around houses should be cleared for preventing mosquitoes to hide and reproduce

(3) The windows and doors of the household should be netted or screened to prevent entry of mosquitoes.

(4) Personal protective measures like reduction of exposure to mosquito bites especially during mosquito feeding times (from dusk to dawn) by using mosquito repellents and mosquito nets preferably impregnated with Pyrethroids, ICON etc. and covering the skin by wearing long clothing, thick socks may be effective.

(5) Individuals should avoid nocturnal outdoor activities as much as possible.

(6) Pregnant women should not travel to Malaria endemic zones especially where chloroquine-resistant Plasmodium falciparum malaria is present.

(7) Along with the above measures travellers should receive chemo-prophylaxis before, during and after exposure to the malarious areas of the world. But a single control strategy will not be helpful and individual circumstances require different or combined approach.

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DR MAHMOOD KAZI MOHAMMED

The digestive system can be a source of considerable illness in winter if people eat the wrong food and don't rug up. The digestive system enters an active stage in winter and that is why dietary reinforcements are usually more effective than in other seasons. But stomach problems also often occur due to cold air, eating unsafe and spicy foods.

Cold food should be avoided to reduce stimulation of gastric fluids, especially at breakfast. As most of the organs are still in a state of sleep, eating cold foods may result in contraction and poor blood circulation in the digestive system, leading to indigestion. Warm or relatively hot foods, however, can help stimulate blood circulation.

Since immunity decreases with cold temperatures, we should also be aware of infectious digestive ailments with typical symptoms like diarrhoea and vomiting. Uncooked foods are the first group recommended to be crossed off the menu.

As for patients with chronic stomach problems like inflammation or ulcers, it is essential to quit smoking, drinking and eating other stimulating foods. It is also advised to take precautionary medicine to stop relapses of stomach problems.

Please see a doctor if you have persistent stomach problems.

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A smear test lasts 5 minutes.

The impact of cervical cancer lasts a lifetime.

Attend your smear test. Reduce your risk.

Cervical Cancer Prevention Week, 2017 dates are 22-28 January

The facts

- 3 women lose their lives from the disease every day
- Cervical cancer is the most common cancer in women aged 35
- 75% of cervical cancers are prevented by cervical screening (smear tests)
- However 1 in 4 women do not attend this potentially life-saving test

What is cervical cancer?

Cancer starts when cells in the body begin to grow out of control. Cells in nearly any part of the body can become cancer and can spread to other areas of the body. Cervical cancer starts in the cells lining the cervix -- the lower part of the uterus (womb). This is sometimes called the uterine cervix. The fetus grows in the body of the uterus (the upper part). The cervix connects the body of the uterus to the vagina (birth canal).

Things to do to prevent pre-cancers

There are also some things you can do to prevent pre-cancers, such as:

- Avoiding exposure to HPV
- Getting an HPV vaccine
- Not smoking

