

Night-time blood pressure can predict 10-year mortality

A recent study published in *The Lancet* suggests that monitoring blood pressure (BP) over a 24-hour period may be a better predictor of health outcomes compared to measuring BP in a clinic setting. Previous studies on this topic have been limited in



size, but this study analysed data from a Spanish BP registry consisting of 59,000 patients who were recommended for ambulatory BP monitoring based on European guidelines.

The researchers followed these patients for an average of 10 years after conducting both standard clinic BP measurements and ambulatory BP monitoring at the beginning of the study. The key findings of the study were as follows:

- Systolic BP (SBP) showed a stronger association with all-cause and cardiovascular-related mortality compared to diastolic BP.
- 24-hour ambulatory SBP was more strongly linked to all-cause and cardiovascular-related mortality compared to clinic SBP.
- Night-time SBP, measured during ambulatory monitoring, exhibited a stronger association with all-cause and cardiovascular-related mortality compared to daytime SBP.
- Patients with masked hypertension (hypertension detected through 24-hour ambulatory monitoring but not in the clinic) had a higher risk of all-cause mortality compared to those with normal BP.

This study confirms that 24-hour ambulatory BP monitoring, particularly overnight measurements, can provide valuable prognostic information in a large group of patients. However, in the United States, the widespread use of ambulatory monitoring faces barriers such as limited availability, variable insurance coverage, and patient acceptability.

It remains unclear whether extensive use of 24-hour ambulatory monitoring for diagnosis and treatment would lead to improved clinical outcomes compared to a combination of office measurements and self-measurements at home. Further research is needed to address this question.

The role dopamine in hijacking our lives and how to get control back

Dopamine is a neurotransmitter (a chemical substance which is released at the end of a nerve fibre by the arrival of a nerve impulse and, by diffusing across the synapse or junction, to another nerve fibre, a muscle fibre, or some other structure.) that is involved in everything we do from regulating movements to controlling our attention. It is the force that makes us do things and plays a vital part in our brain's reward system by acting as a chemical messenger. People often misunderstand dopamine as the "pleasure chemical," but it is a wrong concept because dopamine controls your wants and desires, not liking and pleasure.

Today's world is full of distractions. Everywhere you go people are seeking your attention and making money out of it but in this process, you are losing your valuable time. According to scientists, scrolling down social media or watching youtube videos are highly stimulating activities as they help trigger the release of dopamine in your brain which leads you to watch one more youtube video or play video games for one more hour, etc.

Social media are designed with such algorithms that attract us all to it. For example, youtube suggestion videos are heavily customised according to your taste. Their greatest weapon from my point of view is notification, because every time your phone buzzes with a new message or a notification pops up on your screen (cue) you become eager to check it (craving that is the dopamine rush in your system).

Then you grab your phone and read the message or watch the video you were notified with

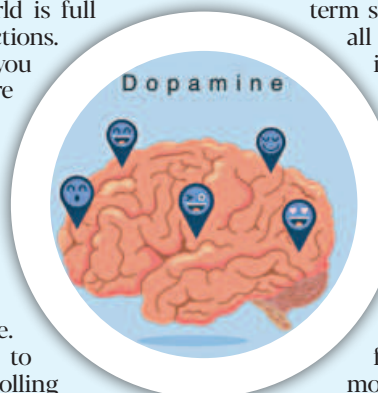
before (that is your response to your craving) and at the end you satisfy your craving to read the message. And this process continuously happens every time your phone dings with a new notification. It is like a never-ending loop and you eventually become associated with it. Every time you find yourself doing something pleasurable you are anticipating something (rewards) and that is your dopamine working, urging you to go and do the task and get your rewards.

So, now the question is how can we keep the right balance of dopamine in our systems? And that is when the term "dopamine detox" comes up, or we can also call it dopamine fasting. The term sounds fancy, but all you need to do is keep yourself away from all kinds of stimulating activities or things that give you pleasure.

For instance, you need to abstain from using your mobile phone for an entire day (24-hour detox) or even more. Fasting from dopamine you are removing the sources of want and desire in your life and abstaining yourself from all the things that control you daily.

After you complete your detox you will feel calm, relaxed, and focused on your actual work afterward. Eventually, you will have control over your life. You can also do some meditation, journaling, and reading during your detox. This will help you understand your environment in a far better way and help you become healthy and productive in what you do and stop procrastinating your work.

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World Blood Donor Day

Give blood, give plasma, share life, share often. 14 JUNE 2023

Give blood, give plasma, share life, share often

STAR HEALTH DESK

World Blood Donor Day is observed on 14th June. Officially designated as an annual event by the World Health Assembly in 2005, the day provides a special opportunity to celebrate and thank voluntary blood donors around the world for their gift of blood and has become a major focus for action towards achieving universal access to safe blood transfusion.

Every single donation is a precious lifesaving gift and repeat donation is the key to building a safe and sustainable blood supply.

In many countries, blood services face the challenge of making sufficient blood available, while also ensuring its quality and safety. Lack of access to safe blood and blood products – especially in low- and middle-income countries, impacts on all patients, including those requiring regular transfusion.

One of the World Health Organisation (WHO) strategies is to assist low- and middle-income countries in improving the availability and quality of human plasma, including optimising the utilisation of the plasma recovered from whole blood donations, and increasing patients' access to the life-saving plasma protein therapies.

Focus of this year's campaign:

The slogan for 2023 World Blood Donor Day campaign is "Give blood, give plasma, share life, share often."

It focuses on patients requiring life-long transfusion support and underlines the role every single person can play, by giving the valuable gift of blood or plasma. It also highlights the importance of giving blood or plasma regularly to create a safe and sustainable supply of

• encourage people in good health to donate blood regularly, as often as is safe and possible, to transform the quality of life for transfusion dependent patients and help to build a secure blood supply in all countries in the world;

• highlight the critical roles of voluntary non-remunerated regular blood and plasma donations in achieving universal access to safe blood products for all populations; and

• mobilise support at national, regional and global levels among governments and development partners to invest in, strengthen and sustain national blood programmes.

Activities that would help promote the slogan of this year's World Blood Donor Day may include donor appreciation ceremonies, social networking campaigns, special media broadcasts, social media posts featuring individual blood donors with the slogan, meetings and workshops, musical and artistic events to thank blood donors, and colouring the iconic monuments red or yellow.

Countries are encouraged to disseminate to various media outlets stories of people, in particular transfusion-dependent patients, whose lives have been saved through blood or plasma donation as a way of motivating blood and plasma donation.



blood and blood products that can be always available, all over the world, so that all patients in need can receive timely treatment.

The objectives are to:

• celebrate and thank individuals who donate blood and encourage more people to become new donors;



Advanced technologies for refractive and cataract surgeries in Bangladesh

STAR HEALTH REPORT

A large number of patients in Bangladesh undergo refractive and cataract surgeries each year to improve their vision. While the overall success rate of these surgeries is satisfactory, the actual outcome significantly depends on the technologies used as part of the procedures. Many such advanced technologies are now arriving in the county, raising the overall eyecare standards in Bangladesh.

Recently, VISUMAX 800 and Quatera 700, two advanced medical devices, have been introduced in Bangladesh as part of the collaboration between ZIESS, a globally leading technology enterprise in optics and optoelectronics, and Bangladesh Eye Hospital. VISUMAX 800 is a femtosecond laser platform that provides precise and safe ophthalmic procedures. With its advanced technology, VISUMAX 800 enables surgeons to perform corneal refractive surgeries, such as LASIK (laser-assisted in situ keratomileusis) and Small Incision Lenticule Extraction (SMILE), with accuracy, speed, and reliability. It ensures patient comfort, faster recovery times, and great visual outcomes.

Quatera 700 is an advanced surgical microscope that provides optical excellence with great functionality. Designed to meet the diverse needs of modern surgical environments, Quatera 700 delivers great image quality, improved depth perception, and advanced visualisation capabilities. Its QUATTRO Pump ensures chamber stability independent of intraocular pressure and flow. Quatera 700 can make surgical workflow even more efficient while reaching quality outcomes for every eligible patient – even in complex cases.



Raw milk: a raw deal

Foodborne illnesses can occur when we consume foods that are contaminated with harmful bacteria such as Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC). Some common sources of STEC include dairy products and undercooked meat. Ingesting these contaminated foods can lead to serious health issues, especially in children and individuals with weakened immune systems, such as kidney disease and haemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS), which can be life-threatening.

In August of 2022, the Tennessee Health Department discovered two cases of STEC infection in infants. Unfortunately, one of the infants developed HUS and had to be hospitalised for 27 days. An investigation into the outbreak revealed that although the affected families were not officially part of a cow-share programme, they had obtained raw milk from individuals who were part of a cow-share group comprising around 125 families from Georgia, Tennessee, and North Carolina. These families regularly consumed raw milk. Further investigation uncovered three more cases of STEC infection in children. Fortunately, there were no fatalities among the five children.

The investigation also revealed that the dairy responsible for supplying raw milk from 10 cows had several points in their production process that could have contributed to the contamination.

This report serves as a reminder of the risks associated with drinking raw milk and raises concerns about obtaining this product from uninspected cow-sharing operations, particularly in rural areas.

If a STEC infection is suspected or confirmed, it is crucial to promptly report it to the appropriate health department. This helps determine the source of the infection and allows for measures to limit its spread.




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