

Understanding and managing labile hypertension

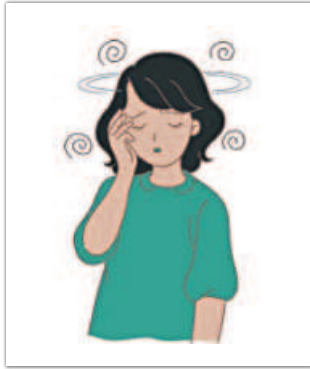
Imagine sitting at your desk, working through your day, when suddenly you feel your heart racing and your face flushing. You check your blood pressure, and it has skyrocketed out of nowhere. This sudden surge is not just alarming—it is a sign of labile hypertension.

THE NATURE OF LABILE HYPERTENSION:

Blood pressure is an essential measure of your heart's health. Unlike typical hypertension, labile hypertension is characterised by sudden and unpredictable spikes in blood pressure. Stressful situations like a heated argument, an intense workout, or a financial crisis can trigger these fluctuations. During these episodes, you might experience symptoms like facial flushing, tension headaches, sweating, and a general sense of unease.

TREATING LABILE HYPERTENSION:

Treatment often starts with lifestyle adjustments. If you are a smoker, quitting can significantly improve your heart health. Reducing alcohol intake and adopting a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains can help stabilise your blood pressure. Regular exercise and weight loss also play a crucial role in managing labile hypertension.



Sometimes, labile hypertension is linked to other medical conditions such as sleep apnea, cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, or adrenal gland problems. Treating these conditions can help control your blood pressure spikes.

Living with labile hypertension requires vigilance and proactive management. It is about understanding your triggers and finding the best strategies for keeping your blood pressure in check. Whether through lifestyle changes, medication, or treating underlying conditions, the goal is to prevent these sudden spikes from compromising your health.

LIVING WITH LABILE HYPERTENSION:

Imagine taking control of those unexpected surges, turning a frightening experience into a manageable condition. With the right approach, you can improve your quality of life and protect your heart from the unpredictable nature of labile hypertension. Regular check-ups is the key to navigating this journey successfully.



MARKING MAY 17

World Hypertension Day

SAIMA WAZED

Hypertension, in the words of the World Hypertension League (WHL), is 'a driving force in the global epidemic of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and the leading risk factor for death and disability globally.' World Hypertension Day, initiated by WHL in 2005, aims to increase awareness of this silent killer and galvanise global action to combat high blood pressure. This year, the theme is a call to 'measure your blood pressure accurately, control it, and live longer.'

It is estimated that more than 294 million people are living with hypertension in the Southeast Asia region. High intake of salt, tobacco and alcohol use, unhealthy diets, physical inactivity, stress, and air pollution are key risk factors for the rising prevalence of hypertension.

Early detection and control are crucial. Among adults with hypertension, half are unaware they have it, and nearly 1 in 6 do not have their blood pressure under control. Uncontrolled, it can lead to heart attacks, strokes, kidney failure, and early death. Limited access to affordable healthcare services for hypertension is one of the prime

reasons for the low Universal Service Coverage Index for most countries in our region and impacts access to quality health services.

The Southeast Asia region has identified the prevention and control of hypertension as one of its priorities. "SEAHEARTS: Accelerating Prevention and Control of Cardiovascular Diseases in the South-East Asia Region" is an initiative endorsed by the Seventy-sixth Regional Committee in 2023. The "Dhaka Call to Action: Accelerating the Control of Cardiovascular Diseases in a Quarter of the World's Population" provides guidance on how to achieve the SEAHEARTS milestone of placing 100 million people with hypertension and diabetes on protocol-based management by 2025.

Countries across this region are implementing evidence-based strategies to mitigate the associated risk factors. Encouragingly, trends indicate a decline in tobacco use and in exposure to household air pollution. Notably, four countries have initiated measures to eliminate trans-fatty acids from their national food supply chains. Two countries have implemented standards for labelling and marketing to give

consumers the information needed to make healthier dietary choices.

Several countries have established national targets to improve hypertension and diabetes management within primary healthcare settings. These efforts involve revising evidence-based clinical protocols to align with the WHO HEARTS technical package, introducing team-based care approaches, and enhancing the availability and accessibility of essential medicines and equipment. Notably, over 24 million individuals with hypertension are estimated to be on treatment within public health facilities across the region.

Nonetheless, efforts to prevent and control hypertension need to be further strengthened to meet global and national targets, including those outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and SEAHEARTS milestones.

On World Hypertension Day 2024, let us confront this silent killer and motivate all to 'measure your blood pressure accurately, control it, and live longer'.

The above statement by the Regional Director for South East Asia of World Health Organisation (WHO) was originally published on the website of WHO.

HAVE A NICE DAY Decoding NPD relationships

DR RUBAIUL MURSHED

Narcissism has become a popular topic to understand today, probably due in large part to Freud's work on the ego. Narcissistic personality disorder (NPD) is a mental health condition where individuals have an unreasonably high sense of their importance and crave admiration. They cannot often understand or care about others' feelings and have an exaggerated sense of their authority, beauty, or intelligence.

Narcissists find it addictive and appealing when people fawn over them. They can be capable of inventing lies and manipulating others to isolate their victims and influence observers. Even when others disapprove of their unwise opinions or actions, they often cannot accept it sensibly or recognise their behaviour as wrong. Sadly, some narcissists harm others without realising their behaviour is narcissistic. They might not even know they are 'gaslighting'.

Narcissism harms both individuals and society. Money and material wealth are highly important to narcissists. One reason is that it represents power and control. So, more money means more power. More power means more control over people, meaning a more 'narcissistic stream'.

They prioritise wealth as the focal point of their relationships, favoring material possessions over personal fulfillment. They are attracted to expensive items, regardless of whether they come from wealthy or less affluent families. They often push their spouse or family to buy show-off items. Researchers have identified four main reasons for their consumption behaviour: seeking individuality and status, finding meaning in possessions, materialism, and using possessions for sexual signaling.

In a relationship, narcissists might seem caring at first, but they soon focus only on themselves, hurting those around them. However, experts say that while healthy relationships are possible for people with narcissistic traits, achieving them is challenging. Additionally, managing this specific mental health issue can be costly for many.

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WORLD FAMILY DOCTOR DAY 2024

The role of primary care physicians in climate change adaptation in Bangladesh



DR LT COLONEL (RETD) MD KABIR AHMED KHAN

The healthcare system all over the world can generally be divided into three levels of care: primary, secondary, and tertiary. Secondary and tertiary care are mainly provided by specialists and hospital services, while primary care is the first level of care in the whole healthcare system and also the first point of contact for those who seek any type of health service. In other words, primary health care is the backbone of any healthcare system.

Since 1978, when the World Health Organisation (WHO) began its "Health for All" programme, it has recognised that strong "primary health care" is the key to attaining the target. In the primary health care team, a family physician or family doctor acts as a leader among front-line health workers who provide services to persons of all age groups, organ systems, and genders and play a pivotal role in healthcare systems worldwide. Their holistic approach to patient care emphasises continuity, comprehensiveness, and coordination, which are essential for promoting individual and community health. They are often the first point of contact for patients, providing preventive care, diagnosing and managing illnesses, and coordinating with specialists when necessary.

A family doctor is a specialist physician who is educated and trained in the discipline of family medicine. Worldwide, family medicine is also recognised as a distinct academic discipline that is imparted through structured residency training concerned with the total health care of the individual and the family.

Understanding World Family Doctor Day: A day for primary care

World Family Doctor Day is a momentous occasion celebrated globally to acknowledge the significant role of family doctors in providing primary healthcare services. May 19 is declared World Family Doctor Day by the World Organisation of Family Doctors (WONCA). This year, World Family Doctor Day is being celebrated with the theme "Healthy Planet, Healthy People," which is a call to action for family doctors, healthcare professionals, and communities worldwide to recognise and respond to the health challenges posed by climate change.

Contrasting Bangladesh's healthcare system

Climate change, an escalating global crisis, has significant and multifaceted impacts on human health, particularly in vulnerable regions like Bangladesh, which, with its densely populated deltas and low-lying geography, is exceptionally susceptible to the adverse effects of climate change. Rising temperatures, an increased frequency of extreme weather events, and rising sea levels are some of the climate change phenomena affecting Bangladesh. These environmental changes have profound implications for public health, exacerbating existing health challenges and introducing new ones.

This year's theme of World Family Doctor Day highlights the intrinsic connection between the health of our planet and the well-being of our patients, emphasising the critical role primary healthcare can play in promoting sustainable health practices. Family doctors can make a difference by identifying how environmental changes influence health issues, adopting environmentally friendly practices in their clinics, and guiding patients on

how to protect their health while also caring for the planet.

Recent climate change in Bangladesh has significantly impacted public health, as rising temperatures have led to an increase in heat-related illnesses, particularly among vulnerable populations such as the elderly and outdoor workers. Furthermore, the spread of vector-borne diseases such as dengue fever and malaria has been facilitated by warmer temperatures, posing further health threats to communities across the country. Addressing these health impacts necessitates comprehensive health care planning through family doctors at the primary care level and promoting resilience in the face of ongoing climate change.

In our country, some families had their own doctors, but we never entered into an era of family doctors as we could not establish a proper referral system. Recently, a few private organisations started family doctor-based health care services at their own initiative, such as PRAAVA Health Family Doctors and Diagnostics and Unico Hospital. They are trying to familiarise and incorporate the concept among health seekers.

As we are going to celebrate World Family Doctor Day, it is imperative to recognise the invaluable contributions of family doctors in promoting individual and community health. Climate change poses significant health challenges for Bangladesh, where primary care physicians and family doctors are pivotal in addressing these issues. A coordinated, proactive approach involving all stakeholders is essential to safeguarding public health in the face of climate change.

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INTRODUCING

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Capsule endoscopy is used to diagnose problems in your digestive system. Capsule endoscopy can help:

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- Examine your esophagus for conditions like Barrett's esophagus
- Identify the cause of unexplained abdominal pain
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