

Feminine Health Issues for women above 35

“Better care in her Changing World”

In the last decade, what has been uppermost in my mind has been the preventive aspect of women's health. But, how many of the women benefit of such care, and how many of those who have benefitted take the care?

In India, 1,30,000 cases of cervical cancer occur annually, which is 1/4th of the total new cases globally! Just an annual pap smear and 3 doses of HPV vaccine are recommended to reduce the burden of this terrible cancer which kills so many between 40-50 years of age.

Another burning issue prevalent for women is breast cancer. Estimated 62,800 cases of breast cancer are detected annually per year. Yearly screening and mammography especially in women who have a family history of breast cancer is strongly recommended after the age of 35 years.

Cardiovascular disease will be the largest cause of death and disability by 2020, hence it is very important that women should prevent obesity and high lipids and high sugar in their blood, by physical exercise and healthy eating. This will reduce their risk of cardiovascular diseases and its complication such as sudden cardiac arrest or a stroke leading to paralysis.

Unsafe abortion is another leading cause for death in pregnancy especially in rural area. WHO reports that the risk of dying during unsafe abortion in India is 1 in 250 constituting 12% of maternal death in our country. Hence, proper contraception guidance and ensuring access to good medical facilities will decrease the burden of unwanted pregnancies leading to complication of unsafe abortion. On the other hand chances of conceiving beyond the peak reproductive years are of concern. Fertility rates decline with age and women above 35 years should be made aware of their declining ovarian reserve, which causes infertility. We therefore encourage women to have their pregnancy preferably before the age of 33 years, especially in women who are very involved in their career.

Osteoporosis is another health issue where 30 % of Indian women suffer from osteoporosis, which increases the risk of fracture of the spine, hip bones and arms. Prevention of Osteoporosis actually starts in childhood but it is after 35 years of age that women start losing their bones which gets accelerated at menopause. Physical exercises and 10 mins. walking in the sun, eating calcium rich diet and intake of calcium and Vitamin D helps to prevent Osteoporosis. Vitamin D which we get from sunshine is extremely important for calcium absorption; same should be taken in adequate quantities along with calcium.

Women should prevent problems which they will confront at their age, because these very problems will seriously affect their future quality of lives, hence we need to make our 35+ women aware of the various health concerns they face.

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