

# HEART 'e' HEALTH

## Chennaiites give priority to Health

Team Cardiac Wellness Institute conducted two heart-health awareness programs in the first half of 2016:



a walk-for-a-cause event “Walk Chennai Walk” on 13 March at Elliot’s Beach in Besant Nagar and a series of workshops

on “How to Care Better for Your Heart” from 15-20 April at our facility in MRC Nagar. Both events were well attended and helped raise awareness about prevention and rehabilitation of heart diseases through healthy lifestyle among people of various ages and different walks of life.

The fact that so many of our fellow Chennaiites adorned walking shoes and set out to walk at 6.30 am on a Sunday morning

simply goes to prove their health-consciousness. Moreover, they donated generously for three organizations in the Adyar area that support women’s education and elderly care. Avvai Home for Girls, Vishranthi Old Age Home and Vocational Training Centre for Women actively participated in the walk and jointly received the donation amount after the event.

## How to care better for your Heart continued.....

The highlight of the workshop was the hands-on nature, which the participants thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated. Grouping participants based on prior heart disease helped our Team provide tailored sessions on car-

diac rehabilitation and preventive measures. While the majority of participants had had a heart-related diagnosis in the past, it was unsettling to see that their queries and concerns about how to get back to healthy living had

not been addressed. And the psychosocial issues faced by patients and family members were sadly neglected as well. We are glad to have imparted the knowledge pertaining to heart-



## Points of Interest

Improve your heart health with Iron and Vitamin C

How to Prevent anemia

Activity and exercise after Heart surgery

## Inside this issue:

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Walk Chennai Walk            | 1   |
| Workshops                    | 2   |
| Exercise after heart Surgery | 2-3 |
| Iron and Heart Health        | 4-5 |
| A new dimension of stress    | 6-7 |

healthy diet, appropriate exercises for the heart and stress management techniques like mindfulness and deep breathing.

We at Cardiac Wellness Institute will continue working with the people to reinforce the holistic approach to health and wellbeing as we are aware that our mission to reduce death and disability caused by heart diseases can only be accomplished by integrating various levels of prevention in our everyday work.

## EXERCISE AFTER HEART SURGERY

### NORMAL ACTIVITIES after discharge from the hospital:

**Dress:** Wear comfortable, loose fitting clothes that do not put undue pressure on your incisions.

**Rest:** You need a balance of rest and exercise for your recovery. Plan to rest between activities and to take short naps as necessary. Resting also includes sitting quietly for 20-30 minutes. Rest 30-60 minutes after meals before exercising.

**Walking:** This is one of the best forms of exercise because it increases circulation throughout the body and to the heart muscle. It is important to increase your activity gradually. Walk at your own pace. Stop and rest if you get tired. Each person progresses at a different rate after heart surgery. Physical therapists will provide you with an individual plan for exercise before your discharge. It is important to pace your activities throughout the day. Do not try to do too many things at one time. In cold weather, wear a scarf or mask around your mouth and nose.

**Stairs:** Take them at a slow pace. Stop and rest if you tire. When using the handrail, do not pull yourself up with your arms. Use your legs.

**Driving:** You can ride as a passenger in a car at any time. Avoid driving, outdoor bicycling, or motorcycle riding for six weeks after surgery. This time period is recommended to allow your breastbone (sternum) to heal. Your movements might also be limited and slow before the six weeks are up. When travelling, be sure to get out of the car every two hours and walk around for a few minutes.

**Lifting:** You should not put too much strain on your sternum while it is healing. Avoid lifting, pushing, or pulling anything heavier than 4 kilograms for six weeks after surgery. This includes carrying children, groceries, suitcases, cleaning, vacuuming, and moving furniture. Don't hold your breath during any activity, especially when lifting anything or when using the rest room.

**Work:** Most patients will begin to feel like returning to light work six to 12 weeks after surgery. Check with your surgeon before returning to work.

**Visitors:** Limit your visitors for the first couple of weeks. If you get tired, excuse yourself and lie down. Your visitors will understand.

### Exercise guidelines:

Stop any exercise if you experience shortness of breath, dizziness, leg cramping, unusual fatigue, and/or chest pain (angina). Notify your doctor if these symptoms persist.

If your post-exercise pulse rate is more than 30 beats faster than your resting pulse rate you have exercised too hard.

In order to correct these conditions, you will need to modify your next exercise session.

Pulse assessment:

Monitoring your pulse rate helps to keep your activities within a safe heart rate range.



### **First six weeks:**

- Light housekeeping (dusting, setting the table, washing dishes, folding clothes)
- Light gardening (potting plants, trimming flowers)
- Needlework, reading
- Cooking meals
- Climbing stairs
- Small mechanical jobs
- Shopping
- Attending sports events, church, movies, and restaurants
- Passenger in car
- Walking, treadmill, stationary bike
- Shampooing hair
- Playing cards/games

### **Six weeks to three months:**

- Continue activities of first six weeks (but you may be able to tolerate more)
- Return to work part-time if your job does not require lifting, and returning is approved by your surgeon
- Heavy housework (vacuuming, sweeping, laundry)
- Ironing
- Business or recreational travel
- Light aerobics (no weights)
- Walking with pets
- Driving a small car or truck

### **After three months**

- Continue activities of one to three months (but you may be able to tolerate more)
- Heavy housework (scrubbing floors)
- Heavy gardening
- Sports: football, tennis, bowling, swimming
- Jogging, bicycling, strengthening exercise, push-ups
- Motorcycle riding

## Iron and Heart Health

Iron is an essential nutrition that is required for human life. Iron is found in the body's red blood cells, which carry oxygen-rich blood to every cell in the body. Iron is also involved in energy production. Extra iron is stored in the liver, bone marrow, spleen, and muscles.

Not having enough iron can lead to anemia. The most common symptoms of anemia are weakness and fatigue. One reason people who are iron deficient get tired easily is because their cells do not get enough oxygen. Pregnant women, young women during their reproductive years, and children tend to be at highest risk of iron deficiency. Anemia may be mild, moderate, or severe. It can be caused by blood loss, such as that from a bleeding ulcer, menstruation, severe trauma, surgery, or a malignant tumor. It can also be caused by an iron-poor diet, not absorbing enough dietary iron, pregnancy, and the rapid growth that takes place during infancy, early childhood, and adolescence.

In decades past, many people who were fussy eaters would develop iron-deficiency very easily. Mild iron deficiency anemia usually doesn't cause complications. However, left untreated, iron deficiency anemia can become severe and lead to health problems. Iron deficiency anemia may lead to a rapid or irregular heartbeat. Your heart must pump more blood to compensate for the lack of oxygen carried in your blood when anemic. This can lead to an enlarged heart or heart failure.



Iron deficiency anemia can be prevented by eating a diet high in iron-rich foods and vitamin C.

### **Foods high in iron include:**

- Lean meat, such as lamb, pork, chicken, and beef
- Beans
- Pumpkin seeds
- Leafy greens, such as spinach
- Raisins and other dried fruit
- Sea foods



### **Foods high in vitamin C include:**

- Citrus fruits, such as oranges, grapefruits, strawberries, kiwis, guavas, papayas, pineapples, melons, and mangoes
- Broccoli
- Red and green bell peppers
- Sprouts
- Cauliflower
- Tomatoes
- Leafy greens

On the other hand, too much iron in the body can lead to a condition known as hemochromatosis, which can cause diabetes, liver damage, and discoloration of the skin. Unlike other nutrients, excess iron cannot be excreted by the human body.

When experience symptoms of anemia or have risk factors for anemia, consult a doctor about getting regular screening tests to check your hemoglobin and red blood cell count. Early diagnosis and prevention of anemia will not only help you feel better faster, but it will also improve your heart health.

### **Beetroot-Carrot Punch (Iron Rich juice)**



#### **Ingredients:**

1 cup carrot cubes (unpeeled)  
1 cup beetroot cubes  
1/2 cup apple cubes (unpeeled and deseeded)  
10 mint leaves  
1 inch ginger piece  
4 dates  
2 cups of water  
1 teaspoon of lime juice  
1 tablespoons honey  
crushed ice for serving

#### **Method**

1. Add the carrot cubes, beetroot cubes, apple cubes, dates, mint leaves, ginger and water blend it nicely, filter it, add honey and lime juice, mix well.
2. Add some crushed ice in 2 individual glasses and pour equal quantities of the juice over it.
3. Serve immediately.

## STRESS, IS IT ALWAYS BAD FOR YOU?

The latest buzzword is Stress. Half the people we know men, women, and children keep saying that they are stressed. Am sure most of us have experienced some level of stress.

But according to a recent research article, there is a new way to look at Stress.

In a study that tracked 30,000 adults in the United States for 8 years, they were asked two questions:

How much Stress have you experienced in the last year?

And

Do you think Stress is harmful for your health?



People who experienced a lot of stress and also believed that Stress was harmful to them experienced more negative effects of Stress.

People who experienced a lot of Stress but who did not believe that stress was harmful to them had the lowest risk of stress.

The study concludes that the belief that stress is found to be bad for you is much more harmful than the effects of stress on the body.

When we change our mind about stress we can change our bodies response to it.

We find that when we are exposed to stressful situations, where we feel we are being judged or are not measuring up, our body reacts in ways that it normally does...heart pounds, we break into a sweat, voice quivers etc. We normally see these as signs that we are not coping well. Instead we can see them as signs that the body is preparing to face the challenge.

A study conducted by Harvard University found that in participants who viewed this response as being healthy, their physical responses changes. Normally heart rate goes up and blood vessels constrict. This is not very healthy but when participants who learnt to view this as healthy, their blood vessels dilated like how blood vessels dilate when one is experiencing positive emotions.

## A few ways to help you rethink about stress:

1. Think that this is your body getting ready to deal with the challenge. When we think that way, the body believes in getting into a positive mode.

2. The cuddle hormone “OXYTOCIN” is released when we cuddle someone. It primes us to do things to strengthen social contact.

OXYTOCIN is a stress response pumped out by the pituitary gland in the brain. It is nature’s way of telling you to go seek support and be with people who care about you. Oxytocin acts on the body and protects it.

It protects the heart cells and helps them regenerate, and strengthens it. Oxytocin’s benefit increases when we reach out to more people and support them.

3. Helping neighbors and people in your community helps reduce stress and consequently prevents premature death.

It is not only the ill effects that stress brings which cause problems to us but how one thinks and how one acts transforms the experience of stress.

Lets try looking at stress as a friend and use that opportunity to reconnect with our loved ones!



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