

Sudden cardiac arrest a major killer in India: Expert

- At the Seminar by RSCWS

CHANDIGARH: Dr Rajat Sharma, cardiac electrophysiologist, Fortis Hospital Mohali, on Saturday said sudden cardiac arrest is becoming a major killer in India. He said while delivering a free awareness lecture to over 65 members of the Railway Pensioners' Association (RSCWS) at the Government Art Museum, Sector 10. The lecture was organised to create awareness about various heart disorders, particularly atrial fibrillation and sudden cardiac arrest. Dr Sharma said it is the sudden, unexpected loss of heart function, breathing and consciousness. This usually results from an electrical disturbance in heart that disrupts its pumping action. CHANDIGARH: Dr Rajat Sharma, cardiac electrophysiologist, Fortis Hospital Mohali, on said sudden cardiac arrest is becoming a major killer in India.

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This usually results from an electrical disturbance in heart that disrupts its pumping action, stopping blood flow to the rest of the body. He explained that sudden cardiac arrest is different from heart attack, which occurs when blood flow to a portion of the heart is blocked.

However, a heart attack can sometimes trigger an electrical disturbance that leads to sudden cardiac arrest. Sudden cardiac arrest is a medical emergency. If not treated immediately, it causes sudden death. With fast, appropriate medical care, survival is possible.

Administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or even compression to the chest can improve chances of survival until emergency personnel arrive.

"Heart rhythm disorders are the number 1 killer disease second only to cancer-related deaths. Millions of people get afflicted by this disease every year. Atrial fibrillation and sudden cardiac deaths are the two most common arrhythmia disorders," Dr Sharma said.

He explained that atrial fibrillation (AF) is the most common type of arrhythmia. During arrhythmia, the heart can beat too fast or slow with an irregular rhythm.

Dr Rajat said those suffering from atrial fibrillation may not notice its symptoms.

If atrial fibrillation is not noticed, it can increase the risk of stroke. In some cases, atrial fibrillation can cause chest pain or heart failure, especially if the heart rhythm is very fast.

Atrial fibrillation may happen rarely or every now and then or it may become an ongoing or long-term heart problem that lasts for years. If medicines or age slow the heart rate, the symptoms are minimised. Atrial fibrillation may be brief with symptoms that come and go and end on their own.

Sometimes atrial fibrillation is permanent and medicines or other treatments cannot restore the normal heart rhythm, he added.

Dr Rajat said people who have atrial fibrillation can live a normal, active life. For some people, treatment can restore normal heart rhythms.

For people who have permanent atrial fibrillation, treatment can help control symptoms and prevent complications. Treatment may include medicines, medical procedures, and lifestyle changes.

HT Chandigarh, Dated: 19-10-2014