

## Hypertension: The Silent Killer

**May Measurement Month 2018:** A month long global campaign led by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), the International Society of Hypertension, PHFI, the Centre for Chronic Disease Control, the Association of Physicians of India and over 50 partner institutions across the India to raise awareness about raised blood pressure and its prevention

**May 02 2018 New Delhi:** Raised blood pressure attributes to the leading risk factor for morbidity and mortality in India. Hypertension is attributable to 10.8% of all deaths in India. To raise awareness about Hypertension, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), along with the International Society of Hypertension, PHFI, Centre for Chronic Disease Control (CCDC), Association of Physicians of India and over 50 partner institutions across the country are collaborating and engaging in a month long global campaign conceptualized by the International Society for Hypertension (ISH) – May Measurement Month 2018 to raise awareness and educate communities on steps to prevent Hypertension. The campaign was launched and followed by a panel discussion by Prof. Balram Bhargava, Director General-Indian Council of Medical Research & Secretary- Department of Health Research, Prof. D. Prabhakaran, Vice President – PHFI and Executive Director- Centre for Chronic Disease Control, Dr. Manas Pratim Roy Deputy Assistant DG, DGHS, Dr. C. Venkata S. Ram, Director, World Hypertension League/WHO (South Asia) and Editor-in-Chief, Hypertension Journal, Dr. Y. P. Munjal, Director-Physicians Research Foundation, Association of Physicians of India, Dr. Narsingh Verma, Secretary General, Indian Society of Hypertension.

A screening of attendees was also done at the ICMR premises. Speaking at the launch of the campaign *Professor Balram Bhargava, Secretary – Department of Health Research and Director General ICMR said, “In India, Hypertension or raised blood pressure is one of the leading causes of premature deaths in India. Hypertension is directly responsible for 29% of all stroke and 24% of heart attacks in India. This is preventable with lifestyle modifications which include physical activity, yoga and dietary modifications. The aim of the campaign is to spread the message of prevention and encourage people across various age groups to check their blood pressure at regular intervals.”*

Dr. Manas Pratim Roy Deputy Assistant DG, DGHS added, “With the growing burden of disease and mortality due to raised blood pressure, it is imperative that a momentum is built among every member of the society in our country to check their blood pressure regularly across all age groups. I call upon health organizations, civil societies, institutions and physician associations across the country to be a part of this unique initiative and help spread awareness and prevention regarding raised blood pressure.”

Dr Dorairaj Prabhakaran, Vice President, PHFI and Executive Director- Centre for Chronic Disease Control, said.” Hypertension or High blood pressure (BP) is a major public health problem in India and its prevalence is rapidly increasing among both urban and rural populations. 2.6 lakh Indians die in India due to hypertension. Hypertension is now the most prevalent chronic disease in India. This stresses the need for its effective management and control and it highlights the huge impact it can have on the burden of Cardiovascular Diseases. Volunteer organizations/institutes have supported the May Measurement Month Initiative and in 2017 we have successfully screened over 2.5 lacs individuals. We hope more organizations and institutions join us in this movement and help us in screening and spreading awareness regarding raised blood pressure among even more individuals in the 2018 edition of the campaign.”

Hypertension has been long recognized as one of the major risk factors for cardiovascular disease and premature deaths worldwide, and is one of the most common lifestyle ‘Silent Killer’ diseases today, with every third person having suffered from it. International data suggest that fewer than half of those with hypertension are aware of their condition. Raised blood pressure — hypertension — causes approximately 9.4 million deaths each year worldwide, and many of those who die never knew they were affected. There are no symptoms and some only find out after suffering a heart attack or stroke, or are diagnosed with something else, such as heart or kidney disease. In India, it exerts substantial public health burden on cardiovascular health status and the health care system. Hypertension is estimated to account for 10.8% of all the deaths and 4.6% of DALYs in the country. The adult Hypertension prevalence has shown a drastic increase in the past three decades in urban as well as rural areas. It is estimated that 16% of Ischaemic Heart Disease, 21% of Peripheral Vascular Disease, 24% of Acute Myocardial Infarctions and 29% of strokes are attributed to hypertension.

#### **Tips to Keep Healthy Blood Pressure**

- Keep Weight Healthy
- Exercise Regularly (average of 30 minutes a day and Yoga)
- Eat plenty of fruit and/or vegetables every day
- Cut down on salt and reduce intake of fried food
- Cut down on fat and sugar
- Stop smoking tobacco!
- Reduce your caffeine intake
- Don't drink too much alcohol
- Relax: stress contributes to raising blood pressure. So, avoid stress where possible and allow time for relaxation

For more information, please contact:

Indian Council of Medical Research: Adil @ 9599332718

Public Health Foundation of India: Gina Sharma @9811887088

**About May Measurement Month 2018:** May Measurement Month (MMM) is a global awareness campaign led by the International Society of Hypertension (ISH), which represents the world's leading scientists, clinicians, health care providers and allied health care workers, all with a common interest in hypertension (high blood pressure) research. Launched in May 2017, MMM put the spotlight on increasing access to blood pressure screening as potentially the most effective way to reduce hypertension's adverse toll on health.

For institutions who would like to download the MMM2018 materials please visit: <http://ccmh.org.in/mmm.php>

**The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**, is the apex government body in India for the formulation, coordination and promotion of biomedical and health research. It is one of the oldest medical research bodies in the world. Besides the headquarters in New Delhi, ICMR has 32 research institutes, centres and units across India. ICMR funds both intramural and extramural research in India. The priorities of ICMR coincide with the national health priorities and have the goal of reducing the total burden of disease and to promote health and well-being of India's population. As part of this agenda, ICMR is interested in improving the estimates of disease burden and risk factors in India, especially at the sub-national levels, for better health planning, policy framing and fund allocation. For more information please visit <http://www.icmr.nic.in>

**The Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI)** is working towards a Healthier India. It collaborates with multiple constituencies including Indian and international academia, state and central governments, multi- and bi-lateral agencies, and civil society groups. The vision of PHFI is to strengthen India's public health institutional and systems capability and provide knowledge to achieve better health outcomes for all through strengthening training, research and policy development in public health. Visit [www.phfi.org](http://www.phfi.org)