

Heart diseases take more lives than other ailments

Continued from Page 1

though the numbers vary. The proportion of deaths caused by heart disease is the highest in south India (25 per cent) and lowest — 12 per cent — in the central region. “What we have found is quite provocative. If you look at rural areas of poorer states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, the leading cause of death among middle-aged males is cardiovascular disease. Heart attacks are killing people not just in urban areas,” said Dr Prabhat Jha, director of the Centre for Global Health Research at the University of Toronto and lead researcher of the study. The study is being carried out in collaboration with the Registrar General of India (RGI) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

The data forms part of the first set of results from the study, dubbed the ‘Million Deaths Study’ because it aims to investigate one million deaths by 2014. The preliminary results relate to an analysis of 1,30,000 deaths that occurred between 2001 and 2003. Data relating to another 270,000 deaths is being analysed currently.

1,30,000 deaths were analysed in 2001-03

The study is based on the existing system of tracking the health status of 6 million people across 1.1 million households in all the states and union territories through the units of Sample Registration System (SRS) which the RGI uses to track birth and mortality data in the country. Members of SRS units have been trained in ‘verbal autopsy’ technique — a method of prospective investigation of deaths — while the actual cause of death is determined by physicians.

Verbal autopsy is an investigation of a “train of events, circumstances, symptoms and signs of illness leading to death through an interview of relatives or associates of the deceased.” This technique was first tested in Tamil Nadu where 35,000 deaths were investigated in 2006 to find out the exact cause of death. Overall, 42 per cent of deaths in



Heart disease is no more an emerging problem. It has emerged as a major cause of death in rural areas. We have not recognised this yet

— Dr Prabhat Jha, University of Toronto

People dying because of heart disease in their productive years is resulting in a great economic loss to the country

— Dr D. Prabhakaran, Centre for Chronic Disease Control



It clearly shows that the situation is changing dramatically in the country. It indeed calls for urgent action

— Dr K. Srinath Reddy, Public Health Foundation of India

India are accounted for by non-communicable diseases, while communicable diseases and those associated with child birth and nutritional disorders account for 38 per cent of deaths.

Other causes of deaths in the 25-69 years age group — urban and rural areas taken together — are respiratory diseases such as asthma (10.2 per cent), tuberculosis (10.1 per cent), malignant

tumours (9 per cent), digestive diseases (5.1 per cent) and diarrhoeal disease (5 per cent). Malaria, which had been a leading cause of death, now accounts for only 2.8 per cent deaths.

The study is claimed to be the largest exercise of its kind in the world and is expected to throw up new insights into disease patterns as well as underlying risk factors. It is not a mere academic

exercise. Findings from the study could help the government design interventions and new policies in the health sector.

Currently, India lacks authentic data on the causes of deaths. About 9.5 million deaths, which is about one in six deaths worldwide, occur in the country every year. Over three-quarters of these deaths take place in the home and more than half of these

do not have a certified cause.

The law on ‘Medically Certified Causes of Death’ has not been effective in providing any useful inputs as just about 0.4 million deaths are registered under this and that too in some cities.

Earlier, only smaller studies conducted in villages in coastal Andhra Pradesh had indicated that cardiovascular diseases had replaced communicable diseases as the top killer in rural areas. But, no large-scale studies have been done so far.

Unlike deaths from communicable diseases or injuries having known causes, most non-communicable diseases can have multiple causes. For example, heart attack could be caused by smoking, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and other factors.

It is the largest such study in the world

Jha observed: “Heart disease is not an emerging problem anymore. It has already emerged as a major cause of death in rural areas. We haven’t recognised this and don’t have adequate programmes to deal with it. For tuberculosis you have TB clinics. For malaria, you have the malaria control programme. For cardiovascular diseases in rural areas, we have nothing so far.”

Regarding acute heart attacks — not chronic heart disease — that are a major cause of death in urban India, he said it was mainly killing young people in their productive years. A large percentage of these heart attacks are attributed to smoking.

dineshc.sharma@mailtoday.in

TOP TEN CAUSES OF DEATH IN INDIA

(Ages 25 to 69 as percentage)

RANK	CAUSE OF DEATH	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1	Cardiovascular diseases	26.3	22.5	24.8
2	Respiratory diseases	10.1	10.4	10.2
3	Tuberculosis	11.4	8.3	10.1
4	Malignant and other tumours	7.8	11.8	9.4
5	Ill-defined conditions	4.8	6.0	5.3
6	Digestive diseases	6.1	3.5	5.1
7	Diarrhoeal diseases	4.0	6.6	5.0
8	Unintentional injuries	5.0	4.1	4.6
9	Intentional self-harm	3.3	2.6	3.0
10	Malaria	2.4	3.4	2.8

(All ages as percentage)

RANK	CAUSE OF DEATH	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1	Cardiovascular diseases	20.3	16.9	18.8
2	Respiratory diseases	9.3	8.0	8.7
3	Diarrhoeal diseases	6.7	9.9	8.1
4	Perinatal conditions	6.4	6.2	6.3
5	Respiratory infections	5.4	7.1	6.2
6	Tuberculosis	7.1	4.7	6.0
7	Malignant and other tumours	5.4	6.0	5.7
8	Senility	4.0	6.5	5.1
9	Unintentional injuries	5.2	4.5	4.9
10	Ill-defined conditions	4.6	5.0	4.8

HotDeals for Readers of **MAIL TODAY**

ORDER NOW
7 AM to 10 PM

Call 0922 333 4000 / 0922 333 3000

SMS naaptol to 58888 | Visit naaptol.com/hot | Keep Your Pin Code Ready

Home Delivery / Pay By Cash On Delivery / Secure Credit Card

BOSS Slider 360
Dual SIM GSM Mobile Phone

~~Rs. 6400~~
Rs. 3199

LOWEST PRICE CHALLENGE

If you find this product at a lower price else where, we will reimburse you ten times the difference

- 2.2"(56mm) LCD Display
- One Touch FM Radio
- Surround Sound Music Speaker
- 100% Valid IMEI No.

FREE 7 Gifts Worth Rs.1500/-

- USB Car Charger
- Phone String
- USB Cable
- Special Pouch
- Scratch Guard
- TF Card Reader
- Earphone

6 Months Manufacturer Warranty* Shipping Charges Rs. 200/- Extra*

wespro DV132
3.1MP Digital Video Camcorder

~~Rs. 5000~~
Rs. 2299

1 Year Manufacturer Warranty*

100+ Service Centers in India

- 1.5" (38mm) TFT LCD display, 4x Digital zoom
- Functions: Still Camera, PC Cam, TV Out: See directly on TV & PC
- 2-10 Seconds self timer, 1.3MP CMOS sensor
- USB 2.0 Compatible, Video recording at 30FPS
- Built-in memory 32MB, Expandable up to 4GB, SD/SDHC card slot
- In-built LED Flash Light for night shooting

Package Includes:
DV 132, USB Cable, Software CD, TV Out Cable, Manual, Warranty Card

Shipping Charges Rs. 200/- Extra*

naaptol kiya kya?

*T&C apply. The images shown here may differ from the original product. Order Status / Customer Care No: 09223516148 / 09223526148 (7 am to 10 pm)