

'Hypertension cases rise by 97% in state in 7 years'

STUDY SHOWS In urban areas, only 40% people are aware of their condition

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MUMBAI: The number of hypertension patients in Maharashtra has gone up by 97% in the past seven years, according to a surveillance report by the Directorate of Health Services (DHS).

In 2017-18, 74,77,101 patients were screened and 2,06,935 diagnosed as positive for hypertension. Most were not aware of the condition and were brought under treatment after the diagnosis.

Hypertension is defined as sustained high blood pressure over five weeks or more. Those suffering from this ailment are at high risk of cardiovascular diseases and stroke. The union health ministry defines high blood pressure as a reading of more 140/90 mmHg.

"Studies suggest that in rural areas in India, only one quarter of people with hypertension are aware of their condition, and only around 10% have their blood pressure controlled. In urban areas, around 40% of people with hypertension are aware of their condition, and only around 20% have their blood pressure controlled. It shows a lack of awareness of cardiovascular diseases in the youth and hence it goes undetected," said Dr Sushant Patil, consulting cardiologist at Nanavati Super Speciality Hospital.

The DHS found over two lakh patients of hypertension in 17 districts of Maharashtra, in 2017-2018. This statistic is from the National Program for Prevention

WORRYING NUMBERS

Hypertension is an increasingly important medical and public health issue and as one ages, it becomes almost inevitable.



May 17 is designated World Hypertension Day in order to create awareness about the condition which increases the risk of developing heart attacks, strokes, kidney problems and other fatal health complications.

- The prevalence of hypertension increases with advancing age to the point of being 50% in people between 60-69 years of age and approximately 75% in those of 70 years of age and older
- In fact, the lifetime risk of developing hypertension is approximately 90% for men and women, who were non-hypertensive at 55 or 65 years, respectively.

STEPS TO AVOID HYPERTENSION

- Eat right
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Be physically active
- Say no to tobacco
- Avoid alcohol

and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, CVD and Stroke (NPCDCS) under which government hospitals run screening, diagnosis and treatment to reduce burden of non-communicable diseases. The program is now underway in 17 districts of the state and will be extended to 34 districts by 2018-19.

The data has also suggested an increase in the number of young people diagnosed with hyperten-

sion.

Dr Pratik Soni, cardiologist at Wockhardt Hospital (Mumbai Central) said, "In today's developing countries, one in five people are hypertensive due to lifestyle, target stress, pollution, work culture and food habits. As per Indian data we are expecting one in two by 2025," said Dr Soni.

The National Family Health Survey of 2017, conducted by the

union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare across 100 districts in India, found one in eight has hypertension. Though there has been a spike in the number of patients in Maharashtra and India, the numbers are lower than those of other countries. According to the World Health Organisation, one in every three people in the US and one in four in the UK suffer from hypertension.