

Heart diseases linked to impotency: Study

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CHANDIGARH: People suffering from impotency run a higher risk to developing cardiovascular diseases later in their lives.

And smoking alone can lead to impotency as well as heart diseases, the doctors revealed. In a study conducted by PGI's departments of urology and cardiology, impotents (patients suffering from erectile dysfunction) were found to be suffering from endothelial dysfunction, damage to inner lining of arterial walls, which is also an underlying cause for cardiovascular diseases.

This significant fact came out after the study was conducted on people having problem of erectile dysfunction, but are otherwise healthy.

"Patients on drugs known to cause impotency, having structural cause for ED like trauma or peyronies disease, suffering from diabetes or symptoms suggestive of cardiovascular diseases were purposefully excluded to evaluate the endothelial dysfunction and heart disease risk factors in patients with ED," said professor SK Singh, PGI urologist, who conducted the study.

Prof Singh added that smokers run a higher risk of developing endothelial dysfunction and may develop ED with passage of time.

Prof Singh has received accolades for the study during international consultation on sexual medicine in Paris (France) in February, 2009. For the study, a total of 45 patients (all above 40) suffering from ED were selected along with 15 age-matched controls. Their blood pressure, blood sugar, lipid profiles were compared, besides calculating flow mediated dilation (widening of blood vessels). It was found that patients with ED had higher cholesterol and disarranged other aspects of lipid profile than normal people.

Flow mediated dilation, which is done to assess endothelial function, was found to be significantly low in impotent people.

Dr Singh concluded that endothelial dysfunction is significantly associated with risk factors of cardiovascular disease.

Early measures like quitting smoking and adopting active life style are important to counter these risk factors. Exercise and healthy diet can correct endothelial dysfunction, which in turn, can reduce adverse cardiovascular problems in the future, the doctor advised.

Rising awareness

Health experts say unlike past there is considerable raise in awareness among people and they do not shy away from reporting their problems.

This is one of the factors resulting in high number of cases being reported at hospitals.