

Exploring the Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factor Perception and Barriers Faced among Working Women

Sir,

The United Nation Women has announced its theme for World International Women's Day as "Think equal, build smart, innovate for change" reemphasizing its earlier 2017 theme "Women in the Changing World of Work: Planet 50-50 by 2030" all emphasizing towards the gender equality and empowerment of women by advancing equal job opportunities for women.^[1] In India, nearly 31.2% of the labor force participation is provided by the females and working women are vulnerable to neglect their health due to family and work stress.^[2]

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) has become the leading cause of mortality in India among women.^[2] The GO RED for WOMEN campaign was started by the American Heart Association in view that women are more likely to underdiagnosed and undertreated than men and hence aims to encourage women to take care of their heart.^[3] A study done by Aswin K *et. al* to assess the cardiovascular disease risk factor profiling among group C employees of JIPMER Puducherry found that nearly 18.7% of the women employee were at the risk of developing CVD.^[4] The survey Visualizing the Heart Diseases in Indian Women (VEDNA) conducted among cardiologists by Heal Foundation Bangalore revealed that 83% of doctors believe that Indian women are ignorant about heart disease and they have also noted increased heart disease among the working population.^[5]

Majority of the CVD are caused by modifiable behavioral risk factors such as unhealthy diet, lack of physical activity, stress, overweight, raised blood pressure and blood sugar, consumption of tobacco and alcohol. In today's sedentary lifestyle scenario, the majority of working women are stressed in creating a work-life balance and are more prone to behavioral risk factors. The window of opportunity for secondary prevention exists among the family members of suspected CAD patients. Creating awareness about the risk factors of CAD amongst patients and their family members and counseling for modification may help in reducing the burden.^[6] Hence, researches need to be planned to explore the perception of risk factors for CVDs among working

women. The use of simple markers like Resting Heart rate (RHR) for the assessment of severity and complexity of CAD will benefit the general public especially working women in the future.^[7]

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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Letter to Editor

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