



Heart Attacks Affecting Younger, More Obese People



New findings presented at the American College of Cardiology's 65th Annual Scientific Session in Chicago, IL, show that serious heart attacks are affecting younger and more obese individuals. Rates of blood pressure, diabetes and COPD are also higher in this patient group.

ST-elevation myocardial infarction or STEMI is the most severe and deadly type of heart attack. The American Heart Association says that STEMI can be treated with clot-busting medicines if used within 30 minutes of the attack or percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) within 90 minutes. However, only 39 percent of hospitals have the capability to deliver this and there are many rural areas who still do not have access to it.

The study conducted by Dr Samir Kapadia, Professor of Medicine and Section Head for Interventional Cardiology at Cleveland Clinic, examined the risk factors for heart disease in patients treated for STEMI at the clinic. Over 3,900 STEMI patients were apportioned into four quartiles of 5 years each. Average age of the patients fell from 64 to 60 years.

Obesity rates increased from 31 to 40 percent; diabetes from 24 to 31 percent; high blood pressure from 55 to 77 percent; and COPD from 5 to 12 percent. Proportion of smokers increased from 28 to 46 percent and percentage of patients with three or more risk factors increased from 65 to 85 percent.

Dr Kapadia explains that the primary care practice should be prevention. This is not only the responsibility of cardiologists but also primary care physicians and patients. "On the whole, the medical community has done an outstanding job of improving treatments for heart disease, but this study shows that we have to do better on the prevention side. When people come for routine checkups, it is critical to stress the importance of reducing risk factors through weight reduction, eating a healthy diet and being physically active."

Source: American College of Cardiology Scientific Session

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