

RAPID TREATMENT OF HEART ATTACKS IS CRUCIAL TO SURVIVAL

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates: The risk of cardiac complications and even death after a myocardial infarction (heart attack) is significantly elevated if not managed appropriately with rapid treatment, according to healthcare experts ahead of World Heart Day 2017. With cardiovascular disease (CVD) continuing to be the leading cause of death in the UAE, Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi, the region's leading heart care hospital, has warned that every minute following a heart attack is crucial.

"Time is muscle and for every minute not treating an acute myocardial infarction or heart attack, the heart muscle dies and increases the likelihood of heart failure, arrhythmia, mechanical complications, and even death," said Ahmad Edris, MD, a Cardiovascular and Interventional Cardiology Consultant at Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi's Heart and Vascular Institute.

"Heart attacks are the cause of one-in-four deaths in the UAE. It is vital that chest pain symptoms are not ignored or underestimated, especially as CVD strikes Emiratis up to 10 years earlier compared with patients in the West." In April this year, the Health Authority - Abu Dhabi officially designated Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi as a Chest Pain Center. This means that any patient visiting the hospital's Emergency Department with chest pain

symptoms will have access to specialist acute care by consultant-level cardiologists and advanced technology, such as robotic hybrid cardiac surgery.

"We recognize the importance of managing heart attack patients early as it has large implications for patients and society as a whole that deserve the very best treatment," said Dr Edris. According to recent emergency department data from across the UAE, one-in-five patients who seek hospital treatment for chest pain are found to have an underlying heart condition, such as acute coronary syndrome (an unstable blockage in the coronary artery supplying the heart muscle).

Ahead of World Heart Day on September 29, Dr Edris is urging patients to call the emergency services if chest pain is accompanied by the following symptoms: shortness of breath, dizziness, sweating, nausea or vomiting, and a fast or irregular pulse. World Heart Day was founded in 2000 by the World Heart Federation, which is based in Geneva, Switzerland, to spread awareness about CVD. Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi is marking World Heart Day this year with its own theme of "Love Your Heart". The hospital is commissioning a nationwide survey into the root causes of Emirati heart deaths, to better understand UAE nationals' knowledge and attitudes regarding CVD.



RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil: View of *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes infected with a bacteria that prevents them from spreading dengue, Zika and chikungunya, before their release at Ilha do Governador in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. — AFP photos

MILLIONS OF INFECTED BRAZILIAN MOSQUITOES TO TACKLE DENGUE



RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil: Brazilian biologists handle mosquitoes larvae at the Fiocruz Institute in Rio de Janeiro, before releasing *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes infected with a bacteria that prevents them from spreading dengue, Zika and chikungunya.

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazilian scientists on Tuesday began to unleash the first of millions of mosquitoes infected with a bacteria meant to prevent the insects from transmitting the dengue virus to humans. Thousands of *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes carrying the bacteria were released in front of journalists by scientists from the Fiocruz institute in Rio de Janeiro. The hope is that they will then breed and spread the bacteria, denting the insect population's ability to spread dengue and other viruses including Zika and chikungunya. Scientists have been preparing the project developed by Australians who first put the *Wolbachia* bacteria into mosquitoes since last year.

Dengue causes fevers, rashes, nausea

and in some cases can be fatal, while Zika has been blamed for serious birth defects. In 2016, fears over Zika led to the United Nations health body to declare an international health emergency, ending in November. Fiocruz plans to release 1.6 million infected mosquitoes a week, later stepping that up to three million. "We found that when an *Aedes aegypti* mosquito has this (bacteria), it blocks or reduces the capacity of the mosquito to transmit viruses like dengue, Zika and chikungunya," said the head of the dengue program at Fiocruz, Luciano Moreiro. "So the idea is that when they are released, they will transmit this, as if they were immunizing the other mosquitoes and therefore transmission will be reduced." — AFP

SAN DIEGO BATTLES DEADLY HEPATITIS A OUTBREAK

LOS ANGELES: A record outbreak of Hepatitis A has killed 14 people and put scores in hospital in San Diego, hitting mostly homeless and patients using intravenous drugs. The latest data from San Diego County in California show that more than 350 cases have been diagnosed since the beginning of the year. Most of those have taken been identified since July, and 264 people have needed care in hospital. "As hepatitis A goes, the number of deaths is greater than in other large outbreaks reported to CDC, though not all outbreaks are reported to CDC," a spokeswoman for

the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention told AFP.

Another outbreak in 2003 linked to green onions in Pennsylvania caused three deaths and sent 124 people to hospital. Authorities have not yet identified the cause of the latest outbreak. But they say it is being spread person-to-person and through contact with a fecally contaminated environment. This puts homeless people especially at risk since they do not have regular access to sanitary facilities and clean water to wash their hands, state health authorities noted. — AFP



LYNWOOD, California: File photo shows a nurse loading a syringe with a vaccine against Hepatitis A at a free immunization clinic for students before the start of the school year, in Lynwood. — AFP

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