

Experts from Fortis Hospital, Mohali spoke about Asthma management to Students on World Asthma Day

- *Asthma is the most common non communicable disease among children*

Panchkula, May 2, 2017: Experts from Fortis Hospital, Mohali shared insights on 'Childhood Asthma' at Blue Bird High School here on the occasion of World Asthma Day today. The talk was led by **Dr Swati Gupta, Consultant, Paediatrics, Fortis Hospital, Mohali**. Students interacted with the expert and learned about symptoms as well as major causes that triggers this disease. Medical attention is essential for anyone suffering from it.

Asthma is one of the major non-communicable diseases characterized by recurrent attacks of breathlessness and wheezing, which vary in severity and frequency from person to person.ⁱ As per World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates, there were 383,000 deaths due to Asthma in 2015. India remains at the top when it comes to number of deaths due to lung disease. As per WHO estimates, India has about 15 to 20 million asthmatics.ⁱⁱ Asthma is the most common non-communicable disease among children. The rise in pollution levels has only aggravated the situation, especially for children.

"Asthma in children can lead to fatigue, absenteeism and missed class time due to frequent school health office visits. However, with proper medication and care, the disease can be managed and a better quality of life can be ensured," Dr Swati Gupta said. She explained the concept of asthma to the audience members comprising students of class IX and X along with teachers. Listing out symptoms, she said children must be mindful of coughing, wheezing, chest tightness, shortness of breath and excessive fatigue. *"Common allergens include animal dander from feathered or furry pets, cockroach droppings, dust mites, moulds and pollen," Dr Gupta said.*

Among the asthma triggers, the most common ones include environmental tobacco smoke or second hand smoke, air pollution and chemical & strong smells. Apart from this, additional triggers are weather changes, upper respiratory infections, cold air, strong emotions and exercise. *"Exercise-induced asthma is a narrowing of the airways that occurs 15-20 minutes after activity,"* the doctor explained.

Experts explained briefly about various symptoms of the disease. *"Chest sucking in or bulging of neck muscles must not be ignored, apart from other signs like difficulty or discomfort while breathing, nasal flaring or if breathing does not improve or worsens after quick reliever medication,"* Dr Gupta said.

Although Asthma may not be completely cured, it can be appropriately managed for a person to have a better quality of life. However, medication is not the only way to control Asthma. There is a need to reduce the level of exposure to common risk factors particularly air pollution and smoke especially children.

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“If anyone encounters an Asthma attack, then the patient should be rested in a chair,” Dr Gupta advised the teachers present to be mindful of a health emergency.

About Fortis Hospital Mohali

Fortis Hospital Mohali is a 355 bed, JCI and NABH-certified, multispecialty care hospital. The hospital commenced operations in 2001, and is today considered one of the most recognized cardiac hospitals of India. Located in the heart of Punjab over 8.22 acres, the tertiary hospital has a comprehensive team of clinicians delivering world-class patient care, supported by advanced technology. In July 2014, Fortis Hospital Mohali added the 55-bed ‘Fortis Cancer Institute’ on its premises to offer the latest and most comprehensive Medical, Surgical and Radiation Therapy modalities.

About Fortis Healthcare Limited

Fortis Healthcare Limited is a leading integrated healthcare delivery service provider in India. The healthcare verticals of the company primarily comprise hospitals, diagnostics and day care specialty facilities. Currently, the company operates its healthcare delivery services in India, Dubai, Mauritius and Sri Lanka with 45 healthcare facilities (including projects under development), approximately 10,000 potential beds and over 346 diagnostic centres.

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