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'Caregiver' syndrome can affect neurological system in women

DT Next · 22 Mar 2022 · 2 · — Dr U Meenakshisundaram, director & senior consultant, Neurology, SIMS Hospital

Due to current societal compulsions and other patriarchal restrictions, women frequently tend to be caregivers. The majority of their active healthy lifetime and efforts are focused on providing care and assistance to the family and family members. Excessive stress and lack of family support can lead to 'Caregivers Syndrome', which can result in poor health and can cause a variety of neurological issues.

For a woman (whether homemaker or professional) who suffers regularly from migraines, venus strokes during pregnancy, catamenial headaches — migraines & epilepsy during menstruation, etc., lifestyle, food, family, and good moral support are critical.

Headaches, back discomfort, migraines, fibromyalgias, incorrect or interrupted sleep patterns — are all typical work obstacles. According to a Lancet study, India has shown a high disease burden for specific diseases including stroke, epilepsy, headache, Parkinson's disease, and dementia, mostly reported among the urban population in the last 30 years. It also shows that women are at equal risk for Parkinson's, as opposed to the general belief it affects only men.

Paralysis and stroke are also common in cases of high blood pressure, diabetes, or serious crises such as car accidents. Globally, around 50 million people have epilepsy, among whom 10–12 million live in India, especially among the rural population. Women with Epilepsy (WWE) have specific concerns and rules for various periods of life, such as young age, active reproductive phase, pregnancy and lactation, and so on. We need to be cautious when administering medications because some tablets can impact a woman's general reproductive health.

Due to hormonal changes following menopause, women are more at risk of heart attacks, strokes, osteoporosis and dementia. A healthy diet rich in fruits and green leafy vegetables and an active lifestyle that includes physical activities and workouts is crucial. Broccoli, whole grains, pumpkin seeds, dark chocolate nuts and beans, olive oil, eggs, almonds, nuts, and avacados, and small amounts of fish such as salmon, mutton, and chicken, will be ideal for supplementing and providing adequate amounts of vitamins and nutrients (vitamin B, K, folic acid, omega 3 fatty acids, magnesium, choline).

These improve memory, learning, and cognition in order to prevent and control.