

## **Fortis Hospitals in Mumbai to spread awareness on timely detection and prevention of Cancer on World Cancer Day**

**Navi Mumbai, 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016:** Doctors at Fortis Hospitals in Vashi, Mumbai have emphasized that it is important to understand Cancer, the key symptoms and early warning signs, facts and trends and ways to prevent some types of cancers. The Hospital firmly believes that the public at large needs to know more about incidence of cancers so that they are equipped with the knowledge to battle it and adopt healthier lifestyle approaches to emerge victorious. Identifying cancer in early stage significantly improves chances of survival of patients.

**Dr Shishir Shetty, Oncologist, Fortis Hospital, Vashi, said,** *“Among various diseases that affect humanity, Cancer – one of the most unpredictable and complex of all non-communicable diseases – has emerged as a major threat. Today, Cancer is among one of the major causes of death globally, with approximately 14 million new cases and 8.2 million cancer-related deaths reported in 2012.”*

In India, cancer is one of the top causes of death after cardiovascular diseases, accounting for 7% of Indian mortality, with numbers rising steadily since last few years. In 2004, 0.26 million people died of cancer and 0.82 million people were living with the disease. Those numbers had more than doubled by 2012 with 0.7 million people dying of cancer and 1.8 million living with it in 2012. According to a special research paper on cancer in India published in Lancet Oncology journal, these numbers may almost double to 17 lakh new patients and 12 lakh deaths per annum by 2035. As many as one-tenth of incidences (100,000) of cancer and as many deaths (43,000) due to cancer in India were reported in the state of Maharashtra in 2012.

All types of cancers have been reported in Indian population including the cancers of skin, lungs, breast, rectum, stomach, prostate, liver, cervix, esophagus, bladder, blood, mouth etc. The causes of such high incidence rates of these cancers may be internal, like genetic mutations, as well as external or environmental factors (food habits, industrialization, social etc.). However, there is a clear correlation between less healthy lifestyles and incidence of cancer. More than 50% of cancers in India are now caused by lifestyle choices like consumption of alcohol and tobacco. The unfortunate fact of today’s lifestyle is that it has increased the likelihood of one contracting a critical disease like a cancer. Fiercely competitive working environments, extended working hours, unhealthy food habits, lack of exercise, never-ending stress and unhealthy habits such as smoking and alcohol are the becoming compulsions of today’s lives. These factors are resulting in young individuals – men as well as women – falling victims to the lifestyle diseases like cancer.

India is known as the oral cancer capital of the world due to the largest number of cases of oral cancers, which are caused due to tobacco consumption. *“It is well-known fact that tobacco is the leading cause of cancer. According to available statistics, one-fifth of all tobacco-related deaths take place in India, which equals to one life being lost every eight seconds due to tobacco. Even children and adolescent girls and boys, who consume tobacco, sooner or later contract cancer of the lungs and oral cavity and eventually die a painful,*

*premature death. In addition, it is not widely known that tobacco is also a major cause of cardio-vascular and respiratory diseases. We are observing increased number of cases of lung cancer, perhaps due to rising tobacco consumption. Any form of tobacco consumption should, therefore, be completely avoided as it leads to serious diseases,” adds Dr Shetty.*

As per the **World Health Organisation (WHO)**, tobacco use causes many types of cancer, including cancers of the lung, oesophagus, larynx (voice box), mouth, throat, kidney, bladder, pancreas, stomach and cervix. About 70% of the lung cancer burden can be attributed to smoking alone. Second-hand Smoke, also known as environmental tobacco smoke, has been proven to cause lung cancer in non-smoking adults. Smokeless tobacco (also called oral tobacco, chewing tobacco or snuff) causes oral, oesophageal and pancreatic cancer. According to the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS 2010), published by Ministry of health and Family Welfare, 275 million Indians consume tobacco in one form or another.

With cancer emerging as a major healthcare threat, Fortis Hospitals in Mumbai has started a campaign to spread awareness on timely detection and prevention of Cancer on World Cancer Day. **Dr Shetty says**, *“A number of cancer-related deaths can be prevented with spread of information. What is needed is the awareness about the incidence of cancer, which includes information like what is cancer, what are the signs/symptoms and what lifestyle changes can help in preventing a cancer. The likelihood of survival would be higher if the disease is detected in time. On this World Cancer Day, Fortis Hospital, Vashi, commits to increase the level of awareness about cancer in Navi Mumbai with an ultimate objective of reducing the number of fatalities.”* Given below is some basic information on cancer that may help people to identify the incidence of cancer early and take preventive measures to prevent it from becoming difficult to cure.

**What is a Cancer?** Cancer is a malignant growth or tumor in any part of the body, resulting from an uncontrolled division of cells. These genes are activated by mutations that are a result of environment or lifestyle influences such as tobacco, alcohol, radiation, harmful pollutants, etc. When this tumor spreads to other parts of the body, it is called a secondary tumor or a metastasis. Cancer may come back some time after its initial treatment. It could be because the original treatment did not get rid of all the cancer cells or that some cancer cells have spread to other parts of the body and gradually grown there to form a tumor. Sometimes cancer can become resistant to cancer drug treatment.

**Signs & Symptoms:** Key signs and symptoms include breathlessness, unexplained vaginal bleeding, persistent heartburn or indigestion, hoarseness of voice, persistent cough/sore throat, frequent diarrhea, persistent bloating, difficulty in swallowing, a sore that won't heal, a mouth or tongue ulcer that won't heal, heavy night sweats, unusual breast changes, blood in stools or urine with difficulty in passing urine, unexplained weight loss, new mole or changes to a mole, blood in sputum, unexplained pain, an unusual lump or swelling anywhere in the body.

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**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 54 healthcare facilities (including projects under development), approximately 10,000 potential beds and 306 diagnostic centres.*

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