

## 80% of Mumbai women with a BMI over normal are at risk of heart disease: Saffolalife Study

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In a unique initiative aimed at identifying risk factors associated with poor heart health among Indian women, the Saffolalife Study 2015 has revealed that more than 60% of urban Indian females are at risk of being affected by cardiovascular diseases (CVDs). With 89% of women at risk of CVDs in Mumbai falling in the overweight/obese category, the results of the study has revealed some alarming statistics.

Running in its fourth year, Saffolalife Study is India's largest study on risk factors causing heart diseases. It addresses health and nutrition aspects related to preventive healthcare, and seeks to impart accurate, credible and expert-led information. The Saffolalife Study 2015 was conducted in 10 leading metro and non-metro cities of India. The study saw participation by 1,299 urban Indian females in the age group 30-45 years. The data collated from the study was analyzed by IMRB International.

Supporting the Saffolalife Study, Dr. Brain Pinto, Chief of Cardiology at Holy Family Hospital, Bandra said, "Cardiovascular diseases in women are slowly gaining epidemic proportions due to high low-density lipoprotein (LDL) levels and body mass index (BMI) over normal. Moreover, changing food habits and unhealthy food choices, such as increased intake of food like cheese, food rich in trans fats and late dinners are leading to increased abdominal obesity and increased waist-to-hip ratio, a major risk factor for heart diseases."

"An increasing number of women are transitioning from the cardio-protective pear shape body to apple shape with increasing waistlines and truncal obesity, eventually putting them at risk of heart diseases. In addition, smoking, low levels of physical activity, diabetes, high BP and other lifestyle factors are responsible for fat redistribution in women while accelerating their risk of CVDs", he added.

Compared to eastern India, a higher proportion of women in Mumbai were found to be at risk of getting CVDs. 78% of women in Mumbai at risk of being affected by CVDs have reported increased belly fat, indicating that apple-shaped women are at risk of getting heart diseases. 34% of women at risk of being affected by CVDs have large waistlines in Mumbai.

As for food habits, it was found that a majority of women in Mumbai (86%) who have greater risk of getting CVDs, consume preserved foods thrice a week. With food like cheese, food rich in trans fats, 64% of such high-risk category women consume them twice a week, while 63% consume fried foods thrice a week. Despite the much-maligned role of sweetened beverages in raising the risk of getting heart diseases, 55% of women in Mumbai within this high-risk category consume sweetened beverages twice a week. Additionally, of the total women at risk, 23% eat late dinners.

As Niti Desai, Celebrity Dietician and Health Coach says, "High saturated fats, sugar rising stress levels, smoking and lack of physical activity are among the major factors responsible for deterioration in heart health among women. Likewise, having late dinners is becoming a normal trend among urban women due to late working hours and lack of time. This is an invite for heart diseases."