

## Stress as a predictor of cardio-vascular diseases in middle aged Indians

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■ **ABSTRACT** : Coronary heart disease (CHD) remains the major cause of death in middle aged Indians. Previous studies suggest that psychological stress may be one of the risk factors in the development of cardio-vascular disease (CVD) during this age. Both short term and long term stress has a direct impact on serum lipids and blood sugar levels. The other risk factors include heredity, faulty dietary habits, obesity and sedentary and stressful life style. In the present study various reasons for stress were assessed and the effects of stress on the serum lipid and blood sugar levels were seen. Forty middle aged subjects (40-60 years) were selected using convenience sampling technique. Complete cardio-vascular risk assessment was done using a score based questionnaire in which psychological stress was also taken into account. Almost 43 per cent of the subjects were at high risk of developing cardio-vascular disease. Ninety five per cent of the subjects were suffering from varying and diverse types of stress. Change in financial state was found to be the major cause of stress among the middle aged Indians. Strong correlation was seen between stress and blood sugar levels ( $p < 0.05$ ). Stress also affected the lipid profile and other biochemical parameters. Results of the present study showed that, if modified, the risk of CVD in middle aged subjects could be reduced. Prevention efforts need to begin a long way before 50 years of age. Modification of life style, stress management, a correct diet and regular exercise can help to a great extent in the prevention of this chronic, irreversible degenerative disease.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Coronary heart diseases, Cardio-vascular disease, Stress, Risk factors, Lipid profile

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