Regular Exercise Will Reduce Your Risk of Heart Failure

American Heart Association Journal recently published a report with the startlingly new fact that an hour of moderate exercise daily, or half an hour of vigorous exercise, will substantially reduce your risk of heart failure by 42 percent.

According to the researchers of this report, the United States is a nation where heart failure is a major cause of death. About 380,000 deaths each year occur due to heart failure, and about 5.7 million Americans are already diagnosed with congestive heart failures. More than half of these people diagnosed are at risk of facing death in next five years.

As of now, mostly in industrial countries, heart failure is the most common disease contributing to almost 2% of total healthcare costs. As per the report, death risk within five years after the diagnosis is about 30 to 50 percent.

Studying 39,805 people, within the age group of 20-90 who were not having heart failure a group of Swedish scientists started their research in 1997. Initially only total but leisure time activities of these people were monitored which followed linking these activities to the possibility of developing heart failure. It was noticed that active persons were less threatened with the risks of heart failure.

In addition, they also found that:

Group of people carrying out highest degree of leisure time activity, especially about an hour of moderate or half an hour of aggressive exercise shown about 46% reduced risk of heart failure.

Irrespective of gender, physical activity is most important to reduce heart failure risk.

People who developed heart failure were normally old male individuals. Additionally there not much educated, having high body mass index along with higher waist to hip ratio with history of certain illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol and heart attacks.

Kasper Andersen, MD, PhD, while reading report said, “It is not at all necessary to run marathon in order to seek benefits of physical activity. Nevertheless, even low levels of physical activity will bestow positive health effects”. Kasper is co-author of this study and is researcher at the Uppsala University in Sweden. Further, he stated, “Physical activity decreases risks of heart diseases, which eventually reduces the risks associated with heart failure as well certain other severe heart diseases”.

A questionnaire was provided to each of the study participants asking general information about lifestyle, physical activity, medications as well habits such as smoking and alcohol consumption. By studying the total physical activity, which also included job, related activity and leisure activities. To make it simple researchers divided the self-reported leisure physical activities in three different categories. Light activities such as walking, moderate such as jogging and aggressive such as competitive sports. By verifying and tallying the medical reports of each participant hospitalization, deaths and diagnosis of each individual was studied independently.

Andersen continued, “Western world is dominated by sedentary lifestyle, many times with no healthy options of alternative transportation. Very few people know building have stairs and modern devices further encourage this sedentary behavior”. “By taking stairs to apartment or by riding bicycle to reach office are simple steps that could bring bigger difference in people’s health”. What researchers have to suggest here is, it is necessary that everyone should get out and start moving as early as possible.

To some extent it is clear that relation between exercise and heart failure is not so deeply studied, this report is enough to highlight the importance of exercise in maintaining normal human health. However, this report seems to be backing the research of American Heart Association advocating about 150 hours of moderate to intense exercise per week to stay healthy. People willing to reduce risks of blood pressure and increased cholesterol this time limit is about 40 minutes for 3-4 times in a week.