

ICMR study: Heart disease connection to maternal deaths

written by iasexam.com | 19/04/2024



Context

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has embarked on a pivotal study to explore the link between heart disease and maternal deaths, an area that has become increasingly significant in India's public health landscape. This comprehensive study aims to analyse the number of maternal deaths due to heart diseases and develop a treatment protocol to prevent future mortality.

Key Points

- Maternal mortality remains a critical issue in global health, with India making significant strides in reducing its maternal mortality rate (MMR) by 70% over two decades.
- Despite this progress, emerging challenges such as heart disease have been identified as a growing risk factor for maternal deaths

The ICMR Study

- The ICMR study aims to analyse heart disease prevalence among pregnant women in India, identify cardiovascular conditions leading to maternal deaths, develop a standardised treatment protocol, and establish guidelines for early screening and

diagnosis.

- The study will involve retrospective analysis, prospective studies, and collaboration with experts.
- The potential outcomes include improved understanding of heart disease's relationship with maternal mortality, enhanced screening protocols, better management options, and a reduction in maternal deaths due to heart disease.

The Link Between Heart Disease and Maternal Deaths

- The cardiovascular diseases are being widely taken as a crucial factor that cause death in women during the period of labour. The findings of some researchers reveal that the cardiac system formed the biggest portion of these maternal deaths
- **Prevalence and Impact:**
 - Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the most significant contributor leading to maternal mortality, with it being reported to about 30 percent of maternal deaths.
 - In the United States today, CVD is ranked as the first leading cause of premature deaths among pregnant women and postpartum moms.
- **Risk Factors:**
 - Common risk factors for pregnancy-related CVD include being African American, older (age 35 and above), and having obesity.
 - Conditions such as preeclampsia, gestational hypertension, and preterm birth, which are related to placental dysfunction and vascular abnormalities, are associated with an increased risk of CVD in later life.
- **Challenges in Addressing Maternal CVD:**
 - The maternal death rate in the USA, which increased by approximately 58 % from the year 1990 to present, is just one example of challenges encountered in addressing maternal CVD.
 - Disparities in health outcomes, particularly among minority races and ethnic groups, do not shrink, in fact they become even bigger, threatening with complications during pregnancy.
- **Research and Interventions:**
 - Researchers are working on unravelling the mysteries of cardiovascular disease perinatally causing. They do this to find ways of either preventing or treating the disease.
 - Discovery of blood markers corresponding with disorders such as preeclampsia and peripartum cardiomyopathy could transform diagnosis and treatment regimen by providing an accurate diagnosis early enough and therefore lead to realistic treatment approaches.
- **Preventive Measures:**
 - Female parents needing obstetric outcomes monitoring and continuous

prevention schemes after such births deserve to be offered early preventive measures in the postpartum period and long-term follow-up.

- Nowadays, preventive cardiology is a crucial part of what is known as cardio obstetricians.

Current Status of Maternal Mortality

- As haemorrhaging, infection and hypertension remain the leading reasons of maternal deaths, the study of ICMR points out the need for wider focus on the noncommunicable factors like heart diseases.
- Some Indian states became successful in accomplishing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) goals on maternal deaths but that is not to say that the fight against heart-related death remains unpredictable.

Conclusion

The ICMR study on heart disease linked to maternal deaths is a crucial step towards understanding and mitigating a growing risk factor for maternal mortality in India. By joining the dots between heart disease and maternal health, the study not only aims to save lives but also to improve the quality of healthcare for mothers across the nation. The success of this study could serve as a model for other countries facing similar challenges, ultimately contributing to the global effort to reduce maternal mortality and improve maternal health outcomes. The study's findings and recommendations are eagerly awaited, as they promise to bring about a paradigm shift in the way maternal health is approached and managed in the context of cardiovascular risks.

Source: [Indian Express](#)

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Q.Discuss the impact of heart disease on maternal mortality rates and suggest strategies to mitigate this health concern in maternal healthcare systems.