

Heart Disease: Is Managing Stress the Key?

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ABSTRACT Of late, Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) has emerged as a major contributor to total global mortality and India accounts for about sixty percent of the world's heart disease cases. Stress has been identified as one of the psychosocial factors influencing the onset, development and progression of CHD. It is therefore important to keep stress at bay to ensure a reduction in CHD cases. The paper attempts to understand how stress leads to CHD and develop a model based on interviews with cardiologists, and review of literature. 63 doctors, from both government and private hospitals, were contacted for appointment for the interview out of which 37 agreed. In depth interviews with doctors suggested that stress has a severe impact on human hearts. Further, the medical reports provided by the doctors suggested that it is the daily hassles of life that is more responsible for chronic stress leading to heart diseases. The paper also suggests simple yet effective ways of coping stress as many times the prescriptions we get for stress management prove to be more problematic than the problem itself.