

HEALTH

Big C may affect 70m Indians by 2021

Country will need about 550 treatment centres, and over 5000 oncologists: IIHMR

OUR BUREAU

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The Indian Institute of Health Management Research (IIHMR University) revealed that Indian population is among the most vulnerable to diseases like cancer, due to drastic changes in the lifestyle, and

by 2021, over 70 million Indians are likely to be suffering of one or the other type of cancer.

IIHMR noted that the surge in cancer patients will pose a major threat as the mortality rate among cancer patients in India is 4-6 times higher than that in the US.

The baseline cost of treatment hovers around ₹3-4 lakh, which is at times higher than the annual income of over 80-85 per cent households.

C Ramesh, Dean, School of Pharmaceutical Management, IIHMR University,

Jaipur said: "Though there has been advancement in cancer care programme and an improvement in technology, there is still lack of accessibility, affordability, awareness and late detection in case of the disease."

Quoting an EY report on Call for Action: Expanding Cancer Care in India, he said tobacco-related cancers for males are estimated to go up to 225,241 and 93,563 for females by 2020.

Breast cancer cases are estimated to touch approximately 1.23 lakhs in the country till 2020. During the World Cancer Week programme at IIHMR, Aseem Samer, Oncologist, Mahaveer Cancer Hospital highlighted the growing need of healthcare professionals in India to tackle the future challenges.

Shortage of oncologists

"India currently has a doctor-to-patient ratio of about 1 in 2000, and aims to bring down the ratio to achieve a figure of 1 in 1000. India will need about 450-550 dedic-

The IIHMR report notes that there are only 200-250 comprehensive cancer care centers, which comes to 0.2 per million population in India

ated cancer centres by 2020. Currently, India has over 1250 oncologists currently and will need over 5000 oncologists by 2020.

This states that the total number of healthcare professionals needed including the oncologists will be over 8000 by the year 2020," said Aseem Samer, Oncologist, Mahaveer Cancer Hospital. There are an estimated 2,700 mammograms installed in the country. Only 30 per cent of the cancer centres in India have advanced imaging technologies such as PET-CT.

The IIHMR report also notes that there are only 200-250 comprehensive cancer care centers—0.2 per million population in India vs 4.4 per million population in US.



A cancer patient undergoing radio therapy