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Devices impede cardiac implants

Nikita Priya

Wearable fitness trackers have become increasingly popular among people who want to monitor their fitness and wellness. However, a recent study suggests that individuals with pacemakers or other implanted cardiac devices could be at risk from using these devices.

The study found that the bioimpedance sensing technologies used in wearable fitness trackers could interfere with pacemakers and other implanted devices, potentially causing serious health problems.

Cardiologist Dr Prakash Chand Shahi said, "Wearable fitness trackers are marketed as tools to help people improve their health, but we need to be aware of the potential risks associated with using these devices." For individuals with implanted cardiac devices, interference from wearable fitness trackers could have severe health consequences, said Dr Chand.

Pacemakers and other cardiac implants rely on electrical signals to function correctly. When a wearable fitness tracker is worn on the same arm as an implanted device, the electrical signals from the tracker could interfere with the signals from the implant, potentially causing the implant to malfunction or not function at all.

He emphasised the importance of consulting a doctor about the use of wearable fitness trackers and taking steps to minimise any potential interference if one has an implanted device.

A provision to pursue one's passion

Sreeja & Dhamini

Bengaluru: Graduation students under colleges affiliated with public universities, recognised by University Grants Commission (UGC), can now transfer to colleges under the same university or any other public university. As per the National Education Policy (NEP), students will have the option to temporarily discontinue their course and resume their studies after a gap of a few years.

NEP is a step towards making the Indian education system more flexible. On July 29, 2020, the Ministry of Education (previously known as MHRD) made significant changes to the existing education policy. This revised version is being implemented by the central government in 2023 and is portrayed as a quantum shift in the age-old system.

"It is an ambitious



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endeavour and has been under process since 2020, which is being implemented by the government and will be useful for students. In the new system, the students can take up the subject of their choice at the initial stage," said Gautam Deb, a faculty from St. Edmund's College, Shillong. The policy called for

innovative teaching methods involving online programs and applying technology to aid learning. It is based on four fundamental principles: Access, equity, quality, and accountability. The NEP has brought a shift in the structure by replacing the traditional 10+2 educational framework with a more adaptive and

inclusive 5+3+3+4 system.

This new system will also emphasise the employment of regional language/mother tongue as the medium of education till the fifth grade. There will also be options to study the literature of India and other classical languages.

This has been met with mixed reactions from

intellectuals and the public alike. "It is a disastrous move because neither the student will get a job nor will they get a proper degree certificate or wholesome knowledge," opined Rajashekar VN, the vice president of the All India Save Education Committee.

Speaking to The Beacon, Rajashekar expressed that with this integrated education system, the students will not receive a decent education because they will not learn more about a particular subject if they drop out within the three or five-year period. Only a minimal amount of information, which is highly compartmentalised, will be provided, he said.

The policy is anticipated to address several issues, such as expanding educational opportunities and fostering diversity and inclusivity.

Unveiling the nuances of widowmaker

Kannika S

Hart attacks have become a major public health issue globally and can be caused by various hereditary and behavioural factors. While all heart attacks are serious and require medical attention, the 'widowmaker' heart attack or ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI) is a hazardous type of heart attack that necessitates immediate medical intervention.

A widowmaker heart attack is a type of heart attack that occurs when the left anterior descending (LAD) artery, which supplies blood

to the front of the heart, is blocked. This type of heart attack is particularly dangerous because it can cause sudden cardiac arrest and death.

Speaking to The Beacon, Dr Altaf Hussain, a heart specialist said, "The most common cause of a widowmaker heart attack is atherosclerosis, which is the buildup of plaque in the arteries. Plaque is made up of cholesterol, fat, and other substances that can narrow and harden the arteries, making it difficult for blood to flow through them. When the plaque ruptures, a blood clot can form and completely block the LAD artery, leading

to a widowmaker heart attack." The symptoms of a widowmaker heart attack are similar to those of other types of heart attacks, but they can be more severe and sudden. The most common symptoms include chest pain or discomfort that may spread to the arms, neck, jaw, back, or stomach, shortness of breath, nausea or vomiting, sweating, and lightheadedness or fainting, said Dr Hussain.

"A widowmaker heart attack is a medical emergency that requires immediate treatment. The goal of treatment is to restore blood flow to the heart as quickly as possible to

prevent further damage and save the person's life. Treatment may include cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). If the person experiences a cardiac arrest, medications such as aspirin, nitro-glycerine, and thrombolytics to help dissolve the blood clot and restore blood flow to the heart, angioplasty and stenting to open the blocked artery and restore blood flow, or coronary artery bypass surgery if angioplasty and stenting are not successful", said Dr Fazal.

Preventing a widowmaker heart attack requires making lifestyle change These changes include quitting smoking and avoiding or managing stress.

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KSCPCR stand with waste pickers

Shariq Ahamed

Bengaluru: A meeting between the Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (KSCPCR) and children from waste-pickers communities examined the difficulties the children encounter in leading their day-to-day lives.

Children from three different communities attended the State Child Rights Commission office on March 2 and discussed the difficulties that they are facing. The meeting was organised by Save The Children (STC) and partner organisation Saamuhika Shakti.

The children expressed how issues like child marriages and unavailability of resources like electricity are coming in the way of their education. "Despite having concerns like no electricity and problems like child marriage, the children said that as they become more aware of their rights, they are developing confidence to recognise their problems and create solutions," said a member of Saamuhika Shakti.

The meeting created a space for children and the State Child Rights Commission to discuss the issues faced by the children. The KSCPCR chairperson launched 'Baatchet', the first edition of a newsletter created by the children.

Alcohol hastens Alzheimer's

Angeline & Ishika

A recent study has found that alcohol consumption may accelerate brain damage, increasing the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease. With 60% to 80% of dementia cases attributed to Alzheimer's, understanding the potential risk factors associated with this condition is crucial for the prevention and treatment.

The study conducted by a group of scientists at Wake Forest University, North Carolina, shows that even modest doses of alcohol



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might accelerate loss of brain cells, leading to deadly protein buildup in Alzheimer's disease.

Speaking to The Beacon, Hiteshree M Dudani, a psychotherapist, said, "A person who consumes alcohol is much more likely to develop Alzheimer's or

dementia quickly and severely than someone who has never touched alcohol. It is because alcohol causes brain shrinkage and increases the number of amyloid plaques, which could build the stage for enhanced plaque growth later in life, causing Alzheimer's."

There is no cure for this, but if we practise moderation in our consumption, it won't cause any adverse effects. However, if the consumption is making a person physically unwell, that will cause damage to the entire body, added Dudani.

Tibetan culture in light

Yachi Jebisow

The Tibetan Chamber of Commerce has organised a Tibet festival to showcase the Tibetan culture to the rest of the world and emphasise learning about other cultures.

The seven-day Tibetan festival features meditation and yoga, authentic Tibetan food, a live demo of Tibetan arts, Tibetan craft stalls, talks on Tibetan culture, Buddhist Tang-up paintings, a Tibetan medical camp and a Tibetan film festival. The festival

takes place in Bylakuppe at Kushalnagar opposite to Golden Temple from February 23 to March 1.

Tashi Wangdu, the president of the Tibetan Chamber of Commerce while speaking to The Beacon, said, "We also refer to this as the Tibetan New Year celebration, and here we are showcasing our traditional heritage. We have a vibrant cultural history and the entire globe must see this as it benefits villagers, tourists, and non-Tibetans by giving them exposure to the unseen culture of Tibet."