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## World Heart Day 2020 - Use Heart to Beat Cardiovascular Disease



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On World Heart Day this year (29 September), the World Heart Federation (WHF) cautions heart patients to be aware of COVID-19 and its impact on the heart. According to the WHF, COVID-19 is creating a perfect storm for heart health. Three factors are contributing to this:

1. People with COVID-19 and heart disease are at the highest risk of death and complications.
2. The heart might be adversely affected by the coronavirus, even in people who do not have any pre-existing heart conditions.
3. Fear of the virus has resulted in a sharp decline in hospital visits by heart patients for both routine and emergency care.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) kills approximately 17.9 million people every year. There are several causes of CVD, including smoking, diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity and air pollution.

On World Heart Day, the WHF aims to unite the global health community to beat cardiovascular disease and is encouraging people to "use heart" and make better choices for themselves, for their families and for the society as a whole.

To combat this disease, there is a need for not only a change in individual behaviour but also changes in our society. There is a need for greater equity in healthcare and better access to services. In addition, there is a need to ensure healthy foods and a healthy way of life is something that regular people can afford. Unhealthy products must be regulated, and governments and communities should strive to create healthy environments. Keeping in mind the COVID-19 pandemic and the fact that healthcare workers are on the frontline battling with this disease, there is also a need to better protect our healthcare providers.

Professor Karen Sliwa, the President of the World Heart Federation, says, "In these trying times, it is paramount that we pay special attention to those who are at greater risk of complications from COVID-19 and better understand how the virus is affecting the hearts of otherwise healthy people. COVID-19 has created a perfect storm, in which those people with CVD fare poorly, and those at risk don't seek the treatment that they need to keep their hearts healthy. The heart and the entire vascular system are in danger, and we need to act now. Today we have a unique opportunity to unite, to mobilise our skills and to use our heart to act."

A [study has also been launched by the WHF](#), which will evaluate cardiovascular disease and COVID-19 to understand the outcomes and risk factors in hospitalised patients with COVID-19. A series of debates will also be launched by the WHF that will focus on how behavioural and societal change can be used to beat CVD.

Source: [World Heart Federation](#)

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Published on : Mon, 28 Sep 2020