**Myths and facts about the outbreak of Dengue in the National Capital**

**New Delh, September 19:** Given the large-scale panic that the increasing incidence of dengue has created, it is essential that awareness is raised about the myths and facts of the disease.

Clearing the common misconceptions about dengue fever, Padma Shri Awardees Dr A Marthanda Pillai National President Indian Medical Association (IMA) and Dr KK Aggarwal Honorary Secretary General IMA and President Heart Care Foundation of India said, “Dengue incidence will continue to exist in the coming one month and instead of creating unnecessary chaos and panic, it is essential that awareness is created about prevention and timely steps are taken towards disease management. One must remember that only 1% of the dengue cases are life-threatening. Most dengue cases can be handled on an outpatient basis and do not require hospitalization".

**Dengue Myths vs. Facts**

**Myth:** We are facing a dengue epidemic
**Fact:** Delhi is at present going through a dengue outbreak, and it is not yet an epidemic

**Myth:** All dengue cases are the same and must be dealt with in the same manner
**Fact:** Dengue can be classified as dengue fever and severe dengue. A person is said to be suffering from severe dengue when there is capillary leakage. Patients who have dengue fever do not have capillary leakage. Type 2 and type 4 dengue are more likely to cause capillary leakage.

**Myth:** Everyone suffering from dengue must be hospitalized
**Fact:** Dengue fever can be managed on an outpatient basis and patients who do not have severe abdominal pain or tenderness, persistent vomiting, abnormal mental status or extreme weakness, do not need hospitalization. Only patients suffering from severe dengue need hospitalization basis the discretion of their consulting doctor. One must always remember that 70% of the dengue fever cases can be cured just through the proper administration of oral fluids. Patients must be given 100-150 ml of safe water every hour, and it must be ensured that they must pass urine every 4-6 hours.

**Myth:** Dengue can never re-occur if you have had it once in the past
**Fact:** There are four types of dengue infections, which exist in our country.While dengue from the strain cannot re-occur, that from a different strain can. A second occurrence dengue (secondary) is more serious than first infection (primary). In the primary infection, IgM or NS1 will be positive and in secondary infection IgG will also be positive.

**Myth:**This is the worst outbreak of dengue that Delhi has ever witnessed
**Fact:** The present outbreak of dengue in the Capital is that of Dengue 4. The reason for a large number of cases is that Dengue 4 has spread in the capital for the first time. The outbreak of Dengue 2 in 2013 was more dangerous than the present Dengue 4 outbreak.

**Myth:**Platelet transfusion is the primary treatment option for people suffering from dengue fever
**Fact:** Platelet transfusion is only needed in cases where the patient's counts are less than 10,000, and there is active bleeding. Unnecessary platelet transfusion can cause more harm than good. The best treatment for dengue is to administer large amounts of oral fluids to patients. For patients who are unable to take oral fluids, intravenous administration may be necessary.

**Myth:** Machine platelet count is accurate
**Fact:** Machine platelet count reading may be less than the actual platelet count, and a difference of about 30,000 can occur

**Myth:** Testing platelet levels alone accounts for complete and effective management of dengue
**Fact:** A complete blood count (especially hematocrit) is needed to monitor prognosis and increased capillary permeability, which is the starting point of all complications. Falling platelet counts with rising hematocrit levels are most important