

Keeping Your Heart Healthy During a Pandemic

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UGM Academic Hospital (RSA) organized an online health talk show entitled "Healthy Heart, Smooth Activities" on Tuesday (29/10). This event was a celebration of the World Heart Health Day commemoration. This talk show was held online through the Google Meet platform and broadcasted live on the UGM Academic Hospital Youtube channel.

dr. Firman Fauzan Arief L., Sp.JP., as one of the speakers, said that this year's World Heart Day was in the middle of Covid-19 pandemic conditions. Therefore, the committee raised the proper theme related to nowadays conditions.

Firman said there was a bond between Covid-19 and the health of the human cardiovascular system. This system can accurately block 90 percent of the blood vessels' diameter so that Covid-19 infection can worsen coronary heart attacks.

Besides, Firman also said that Covid-19 could also cause coagulation in blood vessels that can clog the lungs. It can be possible to have a fatal impact on humans. "For people who have a history of smoking, if they are exposed with Covid-19, it will worsen coronary heart attacks, and there would be an increase in the risk of death," explained the UGM RSA Cardiologist.



Meanwhile, Okta Haksaica Sulistiyo, S.Gz., another source person, affirmed that the pandemic condition that requires the government to impose various restrictions on its citizens also impacts heart health. That's because these restrictions induce changes in our physical activity and diet. These changes can affect our health, including increasing the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Moreover, as a nutritionist from UGM Academic Hospital, Okta said people tend to buy stocked packaged food due to this pandemic. This condition eventually resulted in weight gain and reduced intake of antioxidants. "The decline in antioxidants causes increased oxidative stress, which also increases the risk of hypertension and other heart diseases," he explained.

In order to subdue this condition, Okta recommends several diets as a preventive measure for cardiovascular disease. These are the low-fat diet, low-carbohydrate diet, Mediterranean diet, and dietary approaches to stop hypertension (DASH). "The most recommended are DASH and Mediterranean because both are protective vascular," he explained.

According to him, the good types for consumption during this pandemic are plentiful in antioxidants, low in sodium (low processing level), nuts, seeds, fruit, vegetables, and protein sources such as fish and seafood. He also suggested people reduce the consumption of lean red meat.

"Heart disease sufferers do not only happen to the elderly. Those who are less than 30 years old are also at risk, especially in the middle of the pandemic condition. Therefore, hopefully, all these tips will be useful. If we have the proper diet, it can keep our heart healthy. Happy World Heart Health Day," he concluded.

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