

High blood pressure is a growing problem

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Dubai: Hypertension, a condition more commonly known as persistent high blood pressure, is an increasingly common problem throughout the UAE and a major cause of strokes and heart attacks, according to a Dubai-based specialist speaking on World Hypertension Day (WHD) on Sunday.

This year's WHD theme is 'salt and high blood pressure' and, according to Dr Michael Grundmann of the German Centre for Neurology and Psychiatry (GNP) in Dubai Healthcare City, the UAE takeaway and dining out culture puts a large proportion of residents at risk of stroke and other deadly diseases.

In particular, the appetite for high salt and fat-based fast food and lack of exercise has, according to the most recent Obesity Review, accounted for 60 per cent of Emiratis being clinically obese. And World Hypertension Day highlights that high blood pressure is the biggest single cause of death through strokes, heart attacks and kidney disease.

With salt being the major factor behind increased blood pressure, it is estimated if salt intake was halved worldwide it would save around 2.5 million people.

Dr Grundmann said: "A plethora of studies have been conducted and all support the concept that salt intake is the major factor increasing population blood pressure... Hypertension does not ache, you can't feel it, but in the long run it is the most effective killer because it can spoil small vessels throughout the body without symptoms until it induces a stroke or heart attack."

(Gulf News)