

**February 2001**  
**India link International, UK**  
**Heart Disease in Asians to rise by 2010**

The British Heart Foundation recently awarded a grant to Wellhouse NHS Trust for two years. As a result an Asian Cardiac Rehabilitation Advisor has been appointed in order to raise awareness in the Asian community Sushma Sanghvi. Sushma has worked in many hospitals in Mumbai (Bombay) as a physiotherapist. She was awarded a Gold Medal for Masters Degree in Gujarati Language and Literature from Bombay University. Sushma has lived in the UK since 1986. She was a journalist with Garavi Gujarat and then worked at Dulwich Hospital. She now works at Edgware Harrow Hospital as a cardio - Respiratory Physiotherapist. India link is delighted to publish an article by this expert.

The Editor International Link International

A report by WHO concludes that a number of deaths from Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) has risen from the third to the most common killer in the UK. In 1992 26% of all deaths were caused by CHD. Northern Ireland and Scotland suffer the highest and the second highest incidence of CHD followed by England and Wales. In England alone, every year some 240,000 hospital admissions are for heart attack.

South Asians in Britain have a very high incidence of CHD. Over 1.5 million people have settled in Britain from the Indian subcontinent. (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) and East Africa. South Asians have 40% higher incidence of mortality from CHD increased by 8% in Asian men and 14% in Asian women from 1970 to 1985, at the same time overall mortality fell in all Western European countries. South Asians from higher socio- economic class have a higher mortality from CHD compared to the manual class. This is in contrast with the general population. South Asians who have settled in other parts of the world like Fiji, East Africa, South Africa and Singapore also have a higher incidence of CHD.

Why is this? A lot of research is going on. One finding suggests that's Asians are genetically predisposed to certain risk factors responsible for CHD and migration and westernization unmask these risks. There are many causes for CHD, but before we discuss those. Let us find out what do we mean by CHD.

**What is a heart attack?**

The function of the heart is to provide oxygen rich blood to all different parts of our body and to carry oxygen - poor blood back to the lungs. The heart has to beat to maintain this circulation. For this work, the heart itself needs food i.e. oxygen. This food is supplied by coronary arteries. High blood pressure, smoking, diabetes and obesity, can all increase the wear and tear of the coronary arteries and deposition of fat within them. This process is called

