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Health

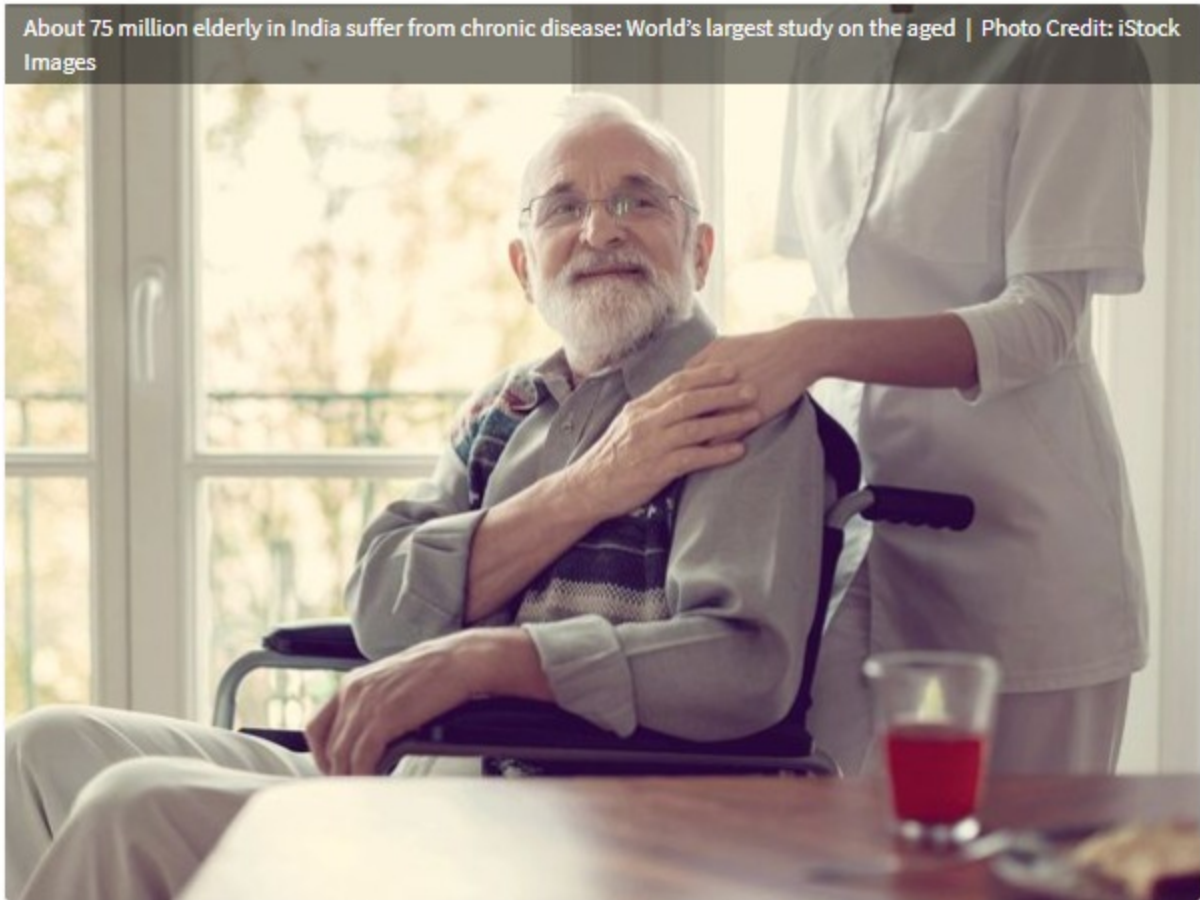


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Growing at around 3 per cent annually, the number of elderly age population will rise to 319 million in 2050, finds Health Ministry survey.



About 75 million elderly in India suffer from chronic disease: World’s largest study on the aged | Photo Credit: iStock Images

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- A survey released by the Health Ministry shows that around 75 million elderly persons in India suffer from some chronic disease
- LASI will provide evidence base for national and state level programmes and policies for elderly population
- A unique feature of LASI is the coverage of comprehensive biomarkers

New Delhi: A survey has found that about 75 million people above 60 years of age in India suffer from a chronic disease. The findings of the first part of the world’s largest study on the elderly - Longitudinal Ageing Study of India (LASI, Wave 1) - released by the Health Ministry on Wednesday showed that about 40 per cent of them have some form of disability and 20 per cent have issues related to mental health.

According to the Health Ministry, the survey covered a baseline sample of 72,250 individuals aged 45 and above and their spouses, including 31,464 elderly persons aged 60 and above and 6,749 oldest-old persons aged 75 and above from all States and Union Territories (UTs) of India (excluding Sikkim).

The LASI, Wave 1 found that about 27 per cent of the elderly have multi-morbidities, adding that the prevalence of single morbidity and multi-morbidity conditions increases with age.

“It is India’s first and the world’s largest-ever survey that provides a longitudinal database for designing policies and programmes for the older population in the broad domains of social, health, and economic well-being,” said Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan as he expressed his happiness on the release of the report.

“In 2011 census, the 60+ population accounted for 8.6 per cent of India’s population, accounting for 103 million elderly people. Growing at around 3 per cent annually, the number of elderly age population will rise to 319 million in 2050. 75 per cent of the elderly people suffer from one or the other chronic disease. 40 per cent of the elderly people have one or the other disability and 20 per cent have issues related to mental health. This report will provide base for national and state-level programmes and policies for the elderly population,” he added.

The study revealed that about a third (32 per cent) of elderly age 60 and above have hypertension, 5.2 per cent were diagnosed with chronic heart disease and 2.7 per cent with stroke. The self-reported prevalence of diabetes mellitus among older adults age 45-59 is 9 per cent and among the elderly age 60 and above is 1 per cent, as per the study.

“Overall, in India, the self-reported prevalence of diagnosed cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) is 28 per cent among older adults age 45 and above. The prevalence of CVDs increases with age from 22per cent among those in age 45-59 to 34 per cent among those in age 60-74, and further to 37 per cent among those age 75 and above,” the study said.

The study also showed that overall, in India, the prevalence of asthma, bronchitis, and COPD is higher among elderly age 60 and above (5.9 per cent, 1.6 per cent, and 2.8 per cent, respectively) than in older adults age 45-59 (3.1 per cent 0.7 per cent, and 1.6 per cent, respectively).

The ministry noted that the coverage of comprehensive biomarkers is a unique feature of the survey.

“No other survey in India collects detailed data on health and biomarkers together with information on family and social network, income, assets, and consumption”, it said.

Dr Vardhan added that the evidence from LASI will be used to further strengthen and broaden the scope of National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly and also help in establishing a range of preventive and health care programmes for older population and most vulnerable among them.