

THE TIMES OF INDIA

# Bumpy rides a back-breaking experience

Risha Chitlangia | TNN

**New Delhi:** Driving is stressful. And on Delhi roads, it is doubly so, all courtesy poor maintenance. Backache is a common problem among those who travel a lot and doctors say, in majority of the cases, it can be put down to bad roads. The spine is the worst affected due to the constant bumps.

"It is the most sensitive part of the human body. Due to constant jerks it gets fatigued and backache is the most common presentation. The spine has 33 vertebrae

of the annulus, the outer wall of the intervertebral disc, as it is subjected to constant pressure. "Most patients complain of backache, especially in the lower part of the spine and feel urgent need for rest. It is important to drive carefully on a bumpy road as a sudden jerk due to a large pothole can lead to a slip disc. If there is a 4-6 inches deep pothole and if you're not sitting properly then chances are that you might just injure your spine," says Dr S K S Marya, head of the department, Orthopedics, Max Healthcare.

Doctors say that the worst affected are those who drive two-wheelers or use public transport. The impact of shock and chance of serious damage is higher in two-wheelers, as the jerk is divided only between two wheels.

"In a car, the jerk is evenly divided between four wheels. Besides, in two-wheelers, the impact is greater, and if the pothole is deep, then one can injure the disc. Those who travel in buses too are at risk of injuring their spine. The impact of the jerk is even greater for those sitting on the rear seats of the bus. A man actually fractured his heels after the bus passed over a pothole," says Dr Dave.

Bones in the neck and shoulders don't get affected due to minor jerks. However, muscles get fatigued. "Patients have this burning sensation in the shoulders and the pain just spreads," says Dr Manoj Kumar, senior consultant, Orthopedics, Moolchand Medcity.

**Potholed roads put the spine under stress. The disc comes out of the annulus, the outer wall of the intervertebral disc, as it is subjected to constant pressure**

and between any two vertebrae is a disc, which gives flexibility to the spine. During all movements, it is the disc that bears the pressure. Thus, whenever the body is subjected to a jerk, it is the disc that suffers. We get a lot of cases of disc degenerative disease, in which the disc is fatigued due to constant jerks," says Dr Harshvardhan Hedge, head of the department, Orthopedics, Artemis Health Institute.

While driving on bumpy roads, the spine is under constant stress. In many cases, doctors say, the disc comes out

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