

When the computer gives you a cold

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THERE are more repercussions to long hours spent before the computer than just Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. Pot bellies, low back aches, hair loss, irritability and frequent colds are some of the other ailments that plague those in the information technology industry. The number of IT pros who are suffering from work-related ailments has hit such a high in the city that a holistic health centre is offering special treatment facilities for this segment alone.

ARTH (Atreya Resort for Traditional Healing), which uses an integrated approach to treat maladies, recently conducted a survey on the illnesses common among software professionals and, based on the findings, has come up with a combination treatment package for ailments common to IT professionals.

In the course of its survey, ARTH established that it was not only working on the computer that emerged as the cause of all the trouble; diet, stress, work environment and posture were some of the other culprits. From their study, computer vision syndrome, headaches, hair loss, eye irritation, respiratory disorders, low back ache, pot belly, carpal tunnel syndrome stress and dark circles under the eyes emerged as some of the common ailments among IT pros.

Says Dr Sanjay Sharma, managing director, ARTH, "When IT pros consulted us for various ailments,

we found a common thread among most of them. Our curiosity prompted us to back up our hunch with research and based on the findings that emerged, we came up with specific treatments that would help them." Dr Sharma adds that their next step was to come up with ways to help the IT pros maintain their health on their own on a day-to-day basis and give them tips on how to reduce the causes for the illness.

"Continuous work on the keyboard, staring at the monitor for hours, restricted movement at work, not eating on time and working late hours can wreak havoc on the system. We feel that simply treating the illness is not enough, the person should also know that preventing the illness is in his hands," says Dr Sharma. He adds that people in other professions who also spend more than four hours on the computer are likely to have the same symptoms and can avoid the onset of the ailments by simple precautionary measures and a healthy lifestyle.

While it seems timely that such treatments are being offered exclusively for IT pros it also brings the realisation that the technology-driven profession has as many minuses as pluses. Says Pramod BY, a software engineer from the US, "Though the IT boom is favourable in terms of revenue, more people in the field are neglecting their health and the warning signs must be heeded."