

Fortis Hospitals Mumbai Launches Citywide Campaign for Brain Health Awareness on World Brain Day

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On the occasion of World Brain Day 2025, Fortis Hospitals Mumbai launched a unique citywide awareness campaign titled '**Helmet Pehna Kya**', in an attempt to spark public dialogue around the importance of brain health and proactive care. The campaign, saw more than fifty volunteers walk the streets of Mumbai wearing helmets in unexpected places.



Fortis Mumbais Helmet Pehna Kya squad all set to engage Mumbaikars on World Brain Day 2025

Volunteers wearing helmets attracted attention and struck up conversations everywhere from local trains and flower markets to office parks and roadside food stands, leading Mumbaikars to wonder, “Why are they wearing the helmet here?” The answer To emphasize a crucial point: your brain should be protected every day, not only in the event of an accident. Fortis Hospitals Mumbai questioned common belief that brain safety is solely related to accident-related trauma by introducing a symbol of physical protection (the helmet) in routine, low or no-risk situations. Instead, the campaign reframed helmets as a symbol of routine checkups, mental wellness, early detection, and lifestyle modification. The initiative aims to remind people that brain health is a daily priority rather than an emergency, this innovative activation not only attracted Mumbaikars attention but also struck the relevant conversations.

This initiative couldn't be timed better. Across India, neurological disorders are becoming an everyday reality for more and more families. Over the past three decades, cases of conditions like Stroke, Epilepsy, Migraine, and Dementia have more than doubled. Today, these account for almost 10% of the nation's overall disease burden; Stroke alone took the lives of nearly 7 lakh people in 2019. What's alarming is that stressors we live with daily: high blood pressure, poor diet choices, rising pollution levels, and chronic mental strain are the triggers. A comprehensive study led by the India State-Level Disease Burden Initiative-supported by ICMR, PHFI, IHME, and the Ministry of Health-highlighted these trends and published the findings in *The Lancet Global Health*. It is a wake-up call, our brain health is far more fragile than we realise. That's what makes the Fortis Mumbai campaign so meaningful. By turning helmet into a powerful symbol, and carries a message that's hard to miss: protecting your brain is not just about reacting to emergencies; it's about living more mindfully, every single day.

Talking about the initiative, **Dr S Narayani, Business Head – Fortis Hospitals, Maharashtra**, said, *"At Fortis, our mission goes beyond treating illness, we aim to prevent it through education and awareness. The helmet is a powerful choice for the campaign as it reminds us that just as we protect our head from injury on the roads, we must also protect our brain through awareness, timely action, and healthy choices. For us preventative healthcare is the foundation of a healthy society and through this campaign, we hope to engage the community, and empower them to take proactive steps towards better brain health."*

As part of World Brain Day, Fortis Hospitals in Mumbai brought brain health awareness to the forefront with a unique, people-first approach. At all four units-Mulund, Kalyan, Vashi, and Mahim-Patient Care Services staff wore helmets within hospital premises, sparking heartfelt conversations with patients and

their families about the importance of brain health. Community sessions hosted at open spaces helped Neurologists share insights on recognizing early warning signs, and stressed the value of timely care. The initiative extended to notable locations across Mumbai, as reactions and real-time moments were shared across Fortis Mumbai's social media pages, helping the message of brain health reach the community at large.

"When it comes to brain health, lifestyle plays a very important role and should not be overlooked. One particular acronym that tell my patients to lookout for is termed SHAAADOWSSS, which stands for Smoking, Hypertension, Age over 60 years, Alcohol Abuse, Atrial fibrillation, Diabetes, Obesity, Wellspring (family history), Stress, Sedentary Lifestyle and Sleep Disorders. True to its name, these conditions follow you around like a shadow and if left unmanaged they significantly increase your risk of developing issues like Stroke. The good news is simple, conscious changes in your daily routine can drastically lower that risk and protect your brain for the long run," said **Dr Ashok Hande, Director – NeuroSurgery, Fortis Hiranandani Hospital, Vashi**, while talking about the role lifestyle awareness plays in brain health preservation.

Dr Sreelakshmi N. Consultant-Neurology, S.L. Raheja Hospital, Mahim, said, *"Everything you experience flows from the brain. Yet, your brain remains the body's most sensitive organs. Issues like Stroke can appear suddenly, while conditions such as Dementia may develop gradually and quietly. That's why paying attention to even subtle changes matters. Don't ignore the signs your body may be giving you. Acting early can change outcomes."*

Highlighting the role family history, **Dr Gurneet Singh Sawhney, Director-Stereotaxy and Functional Neurosciences, Fortis Hospital, Mulund** said, *"Family history plays a crucial role when managing disease burden. If someone in the patient's family has had ailments like Dementia, Stroke etc. then one's*

chances of developing neurological complications may be higher. That makes it even more critical to be aware of the warning signs, get regular health check-ups, and adopt a healthy lifestyle to reduce your risk."

DrRushabh Chheda, Consultant, Neurosurgery and Stroke Intervention Specialist, Fortis Hospital Kalyan, said, *"Brain health is too important to take chances with. Any warning sign you observe should be taken as a medical emergency, not be considered a wait-and-watch situation. There is a common saying in Neurology which says – time is brain – thus the quicker you act, the more brain function can be saved and every minute counts when it comes to protecting your brain and your life, so act fast to preserve what matters most."*

The message is clear: it's time for Mumbai to act decisively with stronger strategies for prevention, better awareness, and more accessible neurological care-before this silent epidemic grows louder.

About Fortis Healthcare

Fortis Healthcare Limited – an IHH Healthcare Berhad Company – is a leading integrated healthcare services provider in India. It is one of the largest healthcare organizations in the country with 27 healthcare facilities, ~4,750 operational beds (including O&M facilities), and over 400 diagnostics centers (including JVs). The Company is listed on the BSE Ltd and National Stock Exchange (NSE) of India. It draws strength from its partnership with a global major and parent company – IHH, to build upon its culture of world-class patient care and superlative clinical excellence. Fortis employs over 23,000 people (including Agilus Diagnostics Limited) who share its vision of becoming the world's most trusted healthcare network. Fortis offers a full spectrum of integrated healthcare services ranging from clinics to quaternary care facilities and a wide range of ancillary services.

