

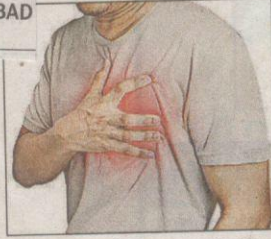
Fit enough to take nine nights' strain?

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Vadodara: It's been an annual practice for Shardul Patel to collect Navratri-appropriate accessories much before the revelry sets in. Be it the Kediya, the colourful Safa Pagdis, or polishing his garba steps — Patel never left anything to chance.

However, this time, the list started with a caveat — a complete heart check-up before the nine nights of revelry. "I workout regularly but wanted to be sure if my heart can take the strain of playing garba for nine nights," Patel, who is in his forties, told TOI after getting an echo-TMT test done.

Like him, many more are undergoing eco-TMT tests in various hospitals and clinics across the state ahead



of Navratri. Dr Anand Ahuja, director of Rhythm Hospital, Vadodara said, "There has been a sudden increase of about 30% in the number of people, especially men, walking in to get their heart checked. Most of them are garba enthusiasts and do not want heart complications to wreck the flow," he said. Dr Jay Shah, an Ahmedabad-based interventional cardiologist, confirmed checking at least six patients in the age group of 25 to 35 ye-

ars in the past couple of days. "All had come with the same question — 'Can I play garba with the same rigour as I did in my youth?' None had any major heart issues, but the risk factors including hypertension, tobacco chewing habit, or even diabetes made their fitness card sketchy. We advised them less exertion and hydration along with regular breaks," said Shah.

Other Ahmedabad-based cardiologists have reported a 20 to 30% rise in tests such as ECG, TMT and PFT ahead of Navratri. "In the past 10 days, there has been a spike in heart check-ups at all our hospitals," said Dr Parul Banker, medical director, Bankers Group of Hospital.

(With inputs from Ahmedabad's Parth Shastri)

Will rain play spoilsport?

Ahmedabad: The India meteorological department (IMD) on Thursday forecast that Ahmedabad and Anand may get light rain on Saturday — the day of the much-anticipated India-Pakistan World Cup match. IMD officials, however, said that due to the lack of a strong system, it is likely that the rain will be sporadic and affect only a few areas. "The match may not be affected. Another forecast will be issued on Friday," said a senior official. Rain is likely in the city on Sunday and Monday as well. TNN