

Pediatric liver transplantation in India turns 12

The importance of the liver and its health cannot be adequately underscored as the liver plays a crucial role in several functions of the body. Maintaining a healthy liver is, therefore, of utmost importance.

About Liver

The liver is the body's largest organ, weighing about 1500g in adults. The liver performs many complex functions in the body, including producing most proteins needed by the body, metabolizing nutrients from food to produce energy, preventing shortages of nutrients by storing certain vitamins, minerals and sugar. It also produces bile which is needed to digest fat and to absorb vitamins A, D, E and K. Certain proteins that regulate blood clotting are also produced in the liver. It helps our body fight infections. It also participates in removing potentially toxic byproducts of several medications. It performs numerous functions that are essential for the well being of the body.

Liver Transplant

The liver stops functioning adequately due to a variety of diseases and infections. This leads to liver failure. The only definite treatment for liver failure is liver transplantation. During a liver transplant, the diseased liver is removed and replaced with a healthy one. Two types of liver transplant are possible: living donor transplant and cadaveric transplant. In a living donor transplant, a portion of liver from a healthy person is removed and placed into the patient. Since the liver has the capacity to regenerate, both the donor and recipient liver portions grow to a normal size in a few weeks. The donor is usually a blood relative or spouse.

World Liver Day



Dr. Anupam Sibal

Blood type and body size are critical factors in determining who is an appropriate donor," says Dr Anupam Sibal, Senior Consultant, Pediatric Gastroenterology & Hepatology, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals. Dr Vidyut Bhatia, Senior Consultant, Pediatric Gastroenterologist, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals further adds, "In a cadaveric transplant, the donor is a brain dead person. Such a person is considered dead because his or her brain has permanently and irrevocably stopped functioning. The awareness level about cadaveric donation is still far from satisfactory in India. Hence, the only realistic option in India is living donor transplantation."

Life after liver transplant

Two of the common complications following liver transplant are rejection and infection. Anti-rejection medications called immunosuppressants are given to protect against the immune attack which must be taken for life. Because anti-rejection drugs are needed to prevent the liver from being rejected, the patient is at an increased risk for infections. This problem diminishes as time passes. Not all patients have problems with infec-

tions, and most infections can be treated successfully as they occur. "The average hospital stay after liver transplant is two to three weeks. Most patients return to a regular lifestyle within three to six months after a successful liver transplant. Children develop and grow normally and participate in activities just like other children. Girls who have had transplants have gone to develop normal pregnancies and have delivered healthy babies. Nearly 85% of liver transplant patients are alive 10 years after their transplants," says Dr Subhash Gupta, Senior Consultant, Liver Transplant, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals. In children, the most common reason for needing a liver transplant is biliary atresia. In biliary atresia, the bile duct connecting the liver to the intestine is missing. As a result, bile collects up in the liver and causes cirrhosis. About 50% of all liver transplants in children are due to biliary atresia.

Liver Transplant & Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals

Indraprastha Apollo Hospital set up a dedicated liver transplant unit in the year 1997. Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals created history by performing the first successful liver transplant in the country on 15 November 1998.

"In the last 12 years, Indraprastha Apollo has performed 500 pediatric and adult transplants (251 in the last 23 months). The cost of a liver transplant has come down considerably following increased number of transplants being performed. Nowadays, the average cost of a transplant in a child is between Rs 12-15 lakh. We have transplanted patients from 16 countries. As we celebrate the 12th anniversary of India's first successful pediatric transplant, we can say with pride that today we can offer hope to children with liver failure," says Dr Anupam Sibal, Senior Consultant, Pediatric Gastroenterology & Hepatology, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals.

By Dr. Anupam Sibal, Dr. Subhash Gupta, Dr. Vidyut Bhatia, Apollo Hospitals Delhi

Doctors save four lives in 36 hours

LIVER TRANSPLANTS Surgery upon 2 Iraqis, 1 each from Pak, India

Neyaz Farooquee

■ htreporters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: It took surgeons 10 hours to save the life of 16-year-old Swati Verma (name changed) following a liver collapse after she swallowed rat poison.

The Goa resident's liver transplantation was part of four back-to-back liver surgeries at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital.

The surgeries, which took 36 hours, were done by a team of 80 doctors and paramedics. The three other transplants were done on two children from Iraq and a woman from Pakistan.

Four-year-old Kawther Maher from Iraq needed a new liver because she had cirrhosis. "Her elder brother had already died because of liver complications, a fact that made this surgery more sensitive," said Dr Subash Gupta, senior consultant liver transplant and gastro surgery, Apollo.

Another child from Iraq had biliary atresia, a complication in which the bile duct gets blocked, resulting in bile not being carried to the gallbladder.

"Since 1998, we have done 589 liver transplants at Apollo, including those of 60 children," said Dr Anupam Sibal, paediatric hepatologist and group medical director, Apollo Hospitals.

India is a popular destination for transplants because of highly skilled doctors offering the surgery at a fraction of the cost in the West.

The liver performs almost 400 functions, including the production of bile juice to aid diges-



■ Kawther Maher (top) and Abbas Mohammad from Iraq recuperating after their liver transplant surgeries at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital in New Delhi.

M ZHAZO/HT PHOTO

tion, and glycogen for energy. Since it has a unique property of growing back to normal after being cut, the donor's liver grows back to normal.

"The most common cause of liver transplant is due to biliary atresia, a congenital defect that is present from

birth," said Dr Sibal. It's the biggest cause among children needing liver transplants, he added.

The liver recipients have to take immuno-suppressant medicine throughout their lives to ensure their body does not reject the donated liver.

ANOTHER CHANCE TO LIVE

In 36 hours, 4 transplant surgeries performed on:

Shazia Begum, Pakistan
12pm to 10pm (last Sunday)

Swati Verma, Goa
10pm (last Sunday) to 8am
(Monday)

Kawther Maher, Iraq
8am to 3pm (Monday)

Abbas Mohammad, Iraq
3pm to 9pm (Monday)

How it is done...

■ A team of doctors and paramedics involved, including surgeons, anaesthesiologist and nurses.

■ A section of a healthy liver is taken from a donor whose blood and tissue is matching.

■ The patient's diseased liver is removed through an incision made in the upper abdomen.

■ The healthy liver is put in place and attached to the patient's blood vessels and bile ducts. The operation can take up to 18 hours to complete and may require, in some cases, 18 litres of blood of same group.

■ Each surgery costs in India: ₹15-20 lakh

■ Post surgery, a patient needs 2-3 weeks of hospitalisation, depending on the degree of illness.

■ The average time taken for full recuperation is three months but the patient has to take immuno-suppressive medicines for the rest of their lives to prevent rejection of the transplanted organ by immune system. It costs ₹8,000 to ₹10,000 per month.

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Cadaver organ donation still a taboo

HT Correspondent

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NEW DELHI: With 70% of India's 1.4 lakh accident victims diagnosed as brain dead every year, the country has 80,000 potential organ donors.

Yet, organs from only about 100 are retrieved, making the percentage of cadaver donations a dismal 0.3%.

Though there are more than 10 lakh people suffering from end-stage organ failure, only around 3,500 organ transplants are performed every year.

At least 10 people in the country die every day for want of an organ, and every 10 minutes a new name is added to the waiting list of people who need an organ transplant.

RECYCLABLE ORGANS

Organs and tissues that can be retrieved

- Heart
- Lungs
- Liver
- Pancreas
- Kidneys
- Eyes
- Heart valves
- Skin
- Bones
- Bone marrow
- Connective tissues
- Middle ear
- Blood vessels

"Things have improved somewhat over the last few years, but overall cadaver organ donation is still negligible. There is no other way but to create awareness about cadaver donation," said Dr RK Srivastava, Director General of Health Services (DGHS), government of India at

THE MAIN CHALLENGE BEFORE THE DOCTORS IS TO CONVINC THE FAMILY

MOHAN Foundations 4th annual transplant coordinators workshop.

Since the Organ Transplantation Act came into existence 17 years ago, the country has seen a little more than 1,000 cadaver donations. "There's an indefinite waiting period for cadaver organ donation. In my department, people registered since 2004 are still waiting for an organ," said Dr SK Aggarwal, professor and head, department of nephrology, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (Aiims).

For the cadaver liver transplant donations, the country is able to meet only 4% of the requirement.

"Of 20,000 people who need a liver transplant, of which 2,000 are children, we manage only about 800 or so in a year," said Dr Anupam Sibal, group medical director and pediatric hepatologist, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, at the annual meet of Indian Society of Organ Transplantation.

The main challenge that lies before the doctors is to convince the family, in the wake of weak laws on the issue.

"By law, we can't take a patient off ventilator unless the family agrees, even if the patient is brain dead," said Dr Manav Wadhawan, surgeon, liver transplant unit, Apollo.



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200th Pakistani gets new liver at hospital

Karachi Boy Gets New Lease Of Life At Apollo

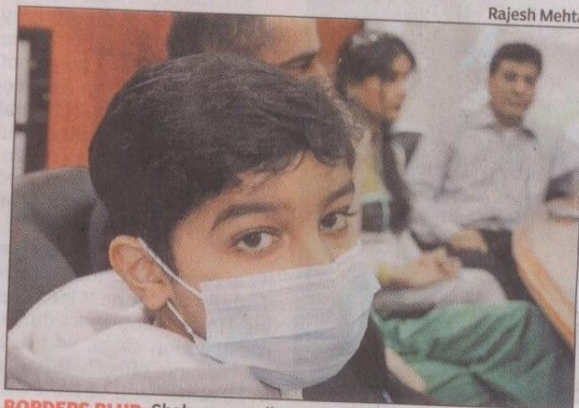
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Rajesh Mehta

New Delhi: Ten-year-old Shehyar, a resident of Karachi, has become the 200th Pakistani patient to undergo liver transplant at Apollo Hospital in the last six years. Hospital authorities say Pakistanis prefer India for specialized treatment despite the strained relationship between the countries.

"Shehyar is the 200th patient operated upon for liver transplant at our hospital. He was flown to Delhi on October 3 with liver failure. He was operated upon within three days and is now ready to be discharged," said Dr Anupam Sibal, group medical director and senior paediatric gastroenterologist at Apollo Hospitals.

Sibal said Apollo did the first liver transplant on a Pakistani in 2005, seven years after it started the procedure. The number of Pakistani patients coming for specialized treatment has increased 30-40% in recent years, he added, citing "better medical facilities, expertise and reasonable costs".



BORDERS BLUR: Shehyar was diagnosed with chronic liver disease in May this year. His mother donated the liver for transplant

Dr Subhash Gupta, chief liver transplant surgeon at the hospital, said, "Most of the transplants are based on family-related donors. We are now trying to promote cadaver donation which will increase transplants and reduce costs."

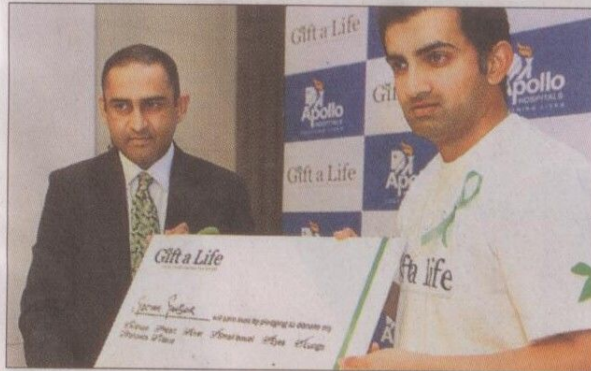
Shehyar's father, Syed Shujaat Ali, said it was his first visit to India. "People in Pakistan and even the doctors have a lot of trust and confidence in Indian hospitals. When I came here to seek

treatment for my child, I was apprehensive about the people's attitude towards us, but now I am happy and satisfied," he said.

Shehyar had jaundice three years ago that led to the diagnosis of chronic liver disease (CLD) in May this year. Zainab Shujaat, his mother who donated her liver for transplant, said she will like to come to India again. "Doctors here have given a new lease of life to my child," she said.



City hospital launches website for organ donation



■ Cricketer Gautam Gambhir at the launch of Indraprastha Apollo Hospital's initiative to encourage organ donation. M ZHAZO/ HT PHOTO

HT Correspondent

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NEW DELHI: In a country where a dismal 0.1 organ donation happens per million population, there is a strong need for awareness among masses. On Thursday, Indraprastha Apollo Hospital's transplant institute launched an online initiative to create large-scale awareness about organ donation.

Cricketer Gautam Gambhir, launched the website - www.giftalife.org - as part of the hospital's 'gift a life' initiative to reach out to maximum people and

encourage them to register for organ donation through the website from anywhere in the world.

"The need is immense, so we should come forward in large numbers to pledge our organs," said Gambhir, who announced his wish to donate his organs.

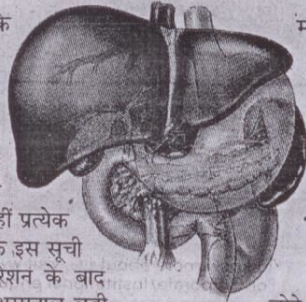
Talking about the huge demand and supply gap, Dr Anupam Sibal, paediatric liver specialist, Apollo, said, "We need 200,000 liver transplants in a year; what we get is a meagre 60,000. Every three minutes someone in needs a liver to survive."

20 हजार लीवर प्रत्यारोपण की जरूरत

प्रतिवर्ष अपोलो में 18 लाख का आता है खर्च, अमेरिका में डेढ़ करोड़

रांची : अपोलो ग्रुप के चिकित्सा निदेशक डा. अनुपम सिब्बल ने कहा कि भारतीय उपमहाद्वीप में हर वर्ष बीस हजार लोगों को लीवर ट्रांसप्लांट की आवश्यकता होती है। वहीं प्रत्येक तीन मिनट पर एक व्यक्ति इस सूची में जुड़ जाता है। ऑपरेशन के बाद डोनर को दस दिन में अस्पताल छोड़ी कर दी जाती है। लेकिन मरीज को 21 दिन के बाद अस्पताल से छोटी मिलती है।

सर्जरी के बाद मरीज को सावधानी बरतने की जरूरत है। अधिकतर प्रत्यारोपण पूरी तरह से सफल रहता है। अपोलो में 18 लाख के खर्च पर इसका इलाज संभव है। जबकि अमेरिका में इसके उपचार में 1.5 करोड़



मरीज के परिजनों को खर्च करने पड़ते हैं।

बच्चों का प्रत्यारोपण भी संभव

डा. सिब्बल ने बताया कि छोटे बच्चों का लीवर ट्रांसप्लांट संभव है। खुद उन्होंने छह माह के बच्चे का ऑपरेशन किया है, जो आज पूरी तरह से स्वस्थ है।

सावधानी बेहद जरूरी

कैपिटल हिल में गुरुवार को अपोलो, इरबा

की ओर से भारत में लीवर ट्रांसप्लांट के बारह साल होने पर आयोजित कार्यक्रम में डा. सिब्बल ने कहा कि लीवर रोग से बचाव के लिए सावधानी बेहद जरूरी है।

सावधानी रखें ताकि प्रत्यारोपण की नौबत ही ना आए। जैसे ही इसके लक्षण आए, तत्काल मरीज को चिकित्सक की सलाह पर जांच करानी चाहिए। जांच रिपोर्ट के आधार पर मरीज को रोग का उपचार कराना चाहिए। थोड़ी सी भी लापरवाही मरीज की जान जा सकती है। खासकर मरीज को पीलिया होने पर मरीज को ज्यादा सतर्क रहने की आवश्यकता है। इसके लिए मरीज को हैपेटाइटिस की जांच करानी चाहिए। इस मौके पर इंद्रप्रस्थ अपोलो हॉस्पिटल के डॉ. सुजीत चौधरी, अपोलो के चिकित्सा निदेशक डॉ. पीडी सिन्हा और डायरेक्टर प्रोजेक्ट एसए अंसारी उपस्थित थे।

लापरवाही से फेल हो सकता है लीवर

बच्चों के लीवर प्रत्यारोपण की सुविधा अब देश में भी उपलब्ध, सफलता शत-प्रतिशत, छह माह तक के बच्चे का इलाज संभव

संवाददाता

रांची

देश में भी छोटे बच्चों के लीवर प्रत्यारोपण की सुविधा मौजूद है। इंद्रप्रस्थ अपोलो अस्पताल के ग्रुप मेडिकल डायरेक्टर एवं जाने-माने पेट्रियोलोजिस्ट डॉ अनुपम सिब्बल ने यह जानकारी दी। डॉ सिब्बल गुरुवार को पत्रकारों से बातचीत कर रहे थे। उन्होंने बताया कि लीवर प्रत्यारोपण पहले दुनिया के चुनिंदा मेडिकल अस्पताल में होता था, लेकिन यह सुविधा अब देश में और काफी कम खर्च में संभव है। कहा कि जटिल



संवाददाता सम्मेलन में उपस्थित डॉ अनुपम सिब्बल, डॉ सुजीत चौधरी और अन्य। • हिन्दुस्तान

ऑपरेशन की वजह से इसका इलाज दुनिया में काफी महंगा है। यहां छोटे बच्चों का ऑपरेशन 12 लाख में एवं वयस्क का लीवर प्रत्यारोपण 18 लाख में हो रहा है। उन्होंने बताया कि लीवर प्रत्यारोपण की सफलता शत-प्रतिशत है। इंद्रप्रस्थ अपोलो में छह माह तक के बच्चे एवं पांच किलो वजन तक के बच्चों के लीवर का प्रत्यारोपण कर

इंद्रप्रस्थ अपोलो अस्पताल के सीनियर कंसल्टेंट व पेट्रियोलोजिस्ट डॉ सुजीत चौधरी ने बताया कि दूषित जल, अत्यधिक शराब, पोलियो एवं दूषित रक्त चढ़ाने से लीवर फेल होने की समस्या आती है। वहीं, कई बच्चों में यह बीमारी जन्मजात होती है। उन्होंने कहा कि समय रहते जांच एवं दवाई शुरू करने से लीवर जनित रोग का निदान

कारण

- दूषित जल
- अत्यधिक शराब पीना
- पोलियो रोग
- दूषित रक्त चढ़ाने

रखें ध्यान

- लीवर संबंधित बीमारी के इलाज में लापरवाही नहीं बरते
- समय रहते जांच एवं दवा शुरू करने से निदान संभव

संभव है। इधर, दोनों चिकित्सकों ने लीवर प्रत्यारोपण एवं पेट्रियोलोजिस्ट पर आयोजित कार्यक्रम में व्याख्यान प्रस्तुत किए। कार्यक्रम में अब्दुर्रजाक मेमोरियल लीवर्स अस्पताल के अधीक्षक डॉ पीडी सिन्हा, पीआरओ जावेद अहमद समेत कई चिकित्सक मौजूद थे।

THE TIMES OF INDIA



**GOLDMAN SACHS BOARD MEMBER
RAJAT GUPTA SLAPPED WITH
INSIDER TRADING CHARGES 25**

**MALINGA SCALPS KENYAN TRIO,
BECOMES FIRST BOWLER WITH
2 WORLD CUP HATTRICKS 27**

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4

TIMES CITY

THE TIMES OF INDIA, NEW DELHI
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2011

Non-alcoholic fatty liver harmful

ICMR Decides To Set Up Task Force, Seeks Research Proposals By May 2

Kounteya Sinha | TNN

New Delhi: India has woken up to the serious threat of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) that causes serious liver disorders like cirrhosis and cancer.

With an increasing number of youngsters being struck down by the disease, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has decided to set up a taskforce that will oversee research on NAFLD and devise ways to prevent, diagnose and treat it.

India's primary research body has sought proposals that will study various aspects of NAFLD like clinical, epidemiological, mechanistic and what it means for public health. May 2 is the last date for receiving proposals.

ICMR estimates that between 9% and 32% of the population suffers from NAFLD. There is higher prevalence among over-

weight, diabetic or pre-diabetic individuals.

Pediatricians, however, say almost 17-40% of obese children in India — in the 8-20 years age group — are now being diagnosed with fatty liver.

According to Dr Anupam Sibal, pediatric gastro-entologist in Apollo Hospital, NAFLD is a significant consequence of childhood obesity. The majority of children who have NAFLD are undiagnosed since it has received little attention to date.

Dr Sibal, medical director of Apollo Hospitals, said, "Usually, NAFLD is asymptomatic. Hence, most parents don't know that their children are suffering from it. An ultrasound test is the easiest way of early diagnosis of NAFLD. The primary cause behind the disease is faulty lifestyle among children."

He added, "We know that obese children run a high



FATTY LIVER

Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease occurs when your liver has trouble breaking down fats, causing fat to build up in your liver tissue

Steps to control your non-alcoholic fatty liver disease

Lose weight	One should exercise and be more active	Do care to lower your cholesterol
Choose a healthy diet	Control your diabetes	Cut down on alcohol

have been described, including cardiac, renal and reproductive. "It is being reported in adults and children and the rising prevalence of obesity and metabolic syndrome is likely to escalate the condition several folds and rapidly. The uniqueness of the Asian-Indian metabolic syndrome poses the need for a better understanding of NAFLD in our context. Effective lifestyle intervention is the cornerstone to its prevention and management, besides medical and surgical options. ICMR has identified it as a thrust area," the note explains.

Experts say fatty liver among children is a result of their faulty lifestyle such as excessive consumption of junk food and less physical exercise. For instance, more and more children prefer to stay indoors and watch TV, thanks to lack of playgrounds. The disease is more common among boys than girls.

minutes a day."

ICMR's scientific proposal note says, NAFLD comprises liver injury in persons in the absence of intake of significant amount of alcohol, where fat deposition in the liver is a major feature and trigger for damage.

Several co-morbidities