

Weekend

Today

Delhi's Afternoon Newspaper

Miracle cured Shashank, say doctors at Apollo

At 13, Shashank's jaundice turned fatal. His blood pressure dropped, kidneys failed, he was delirious, suffered from fits and convulsions and needed a liver transplant. But a miracle gave life back to him and his parents.

Neha Seth

ISHAN TANKHA

NEW DELHI: It was nothing short of a miracle that saved Shashank Bansal, 13, from death last week. For, what happened to occupants of Room 3051 at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital and its team of medical experts happens to a minuscule 0.1 per cent of children.

Shashank, from NK Bhagoria School in Rohini, was diagnosed with severe jaundice and was in dire need of a liver transplant. Though Shashank was initially diagnosed with Hepatitis A, the commonest cause of jaundice, his health suddenly took a turn for the worse.

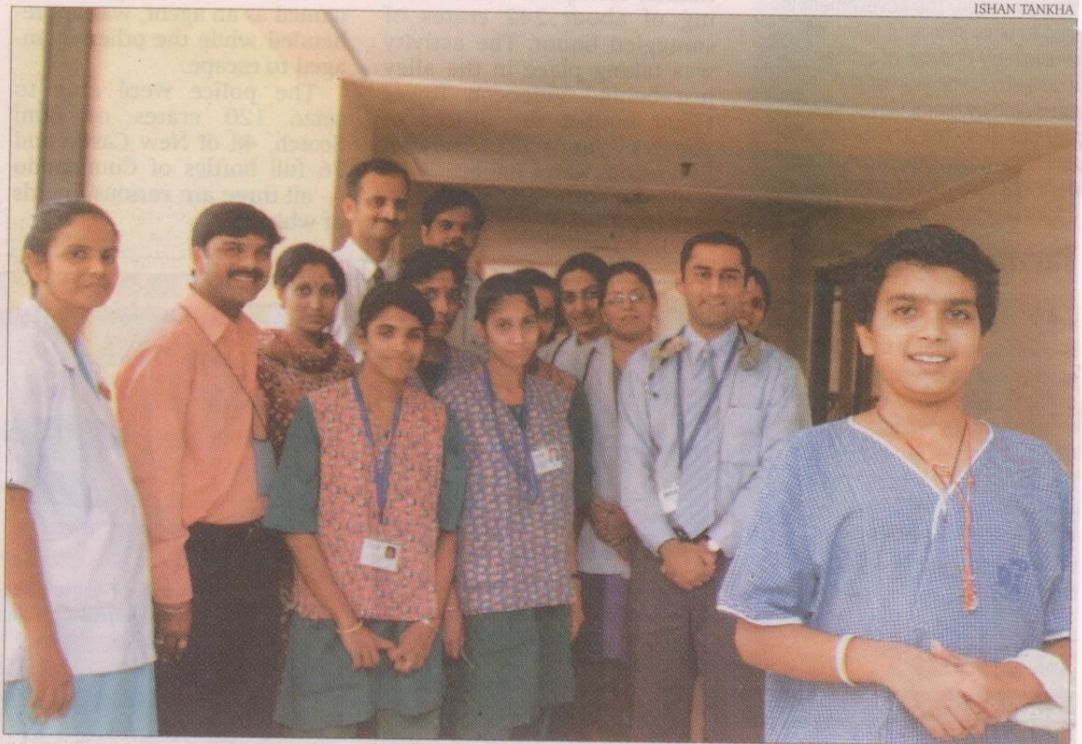
Shashank's State

When Shashank was initially diagnosed with jaundice his parents were not unduly worried. Recalls his father Jagminder Bansal, "Jaundice being so common among kids, we were not too concerned. However, on the night of August 2 there was rapid deterioration in Shashank's condition."

Their son became so delirious he couldn't even recognise his parents who then panicked and admitted him in Apollo.

A Terrible Turn

But by then the jaundice had already done serious damage. Says Dr M.R. Rajasekar, senior consultant and head of the liver transplant department, "Shashank was one of



Shashank who is one his way to recovery with the medical team at Apollo Hospital.

PREVENT IT

Hepatitis A can be kept at bay by being careful about the purity of food and water you take in. Raw vegetables and fruits can be carriers. Hepatitis A injections should only be taken after a test to assess whether an individual has natural immunity for the virus or not.

from 0 to 25 to 30 ml per hour. This saved us from the dilemma of putting him on dialysis." Next, his blood pressure improved, which allowed the doctors to withdraw the medication for his heart and BP.

And on the fourth day the medical team finally heaved a sigh of relief — Shashank's condition had stabilised. Says Dr Rajasekar, "I had been giving cautionary advice to the parents not to get their hopes up. Finally, I could tell them their child was going to live."

ONLY A MIRACLE



"Seeing our child come back to us after we had

nearly lost him makes us believe in the power of prayers and faith."

— Rajni Bansal, mother

"The

Baby wins rare war on a deadly jaundice

35-day-old Sneh would have become another victim of Biliary Atresia, one of the most dangerous forms of jaundice, if not for timely detection and surgery.



good
stuff

Neha Seth

NEW DELHI: Barely 23 days old, Sneh cannot yet realise the value of the life she didn't lose. Nor how close she was to losing it — just six days ago, she was operated for Biliary Atresia, the deadliest form of jaundice among newborn babies.

She was one of the youngest patients to have ever undergone this operation.

When 35-day-old Sneh initially showed symptoms of jaundice, her parents thought it was physiological jaundice which most babies get at birth. But when it persisted beyond two weeks, her parents brought her to Apollo Hospital. Her father Suresh says, "When we were advised to take her to Apollo, we knew it was serious. Sneh being our first child, we were shattered."

Says Dr Anupam Sibal, Director (Medical Services) at Apollo, "After a liver biopsy and an ultrasound, we confirmed Biliary Atresia. It can be fatal if not for the timely Kasai operation (named after the Japanese doctor who had invented the technique)."

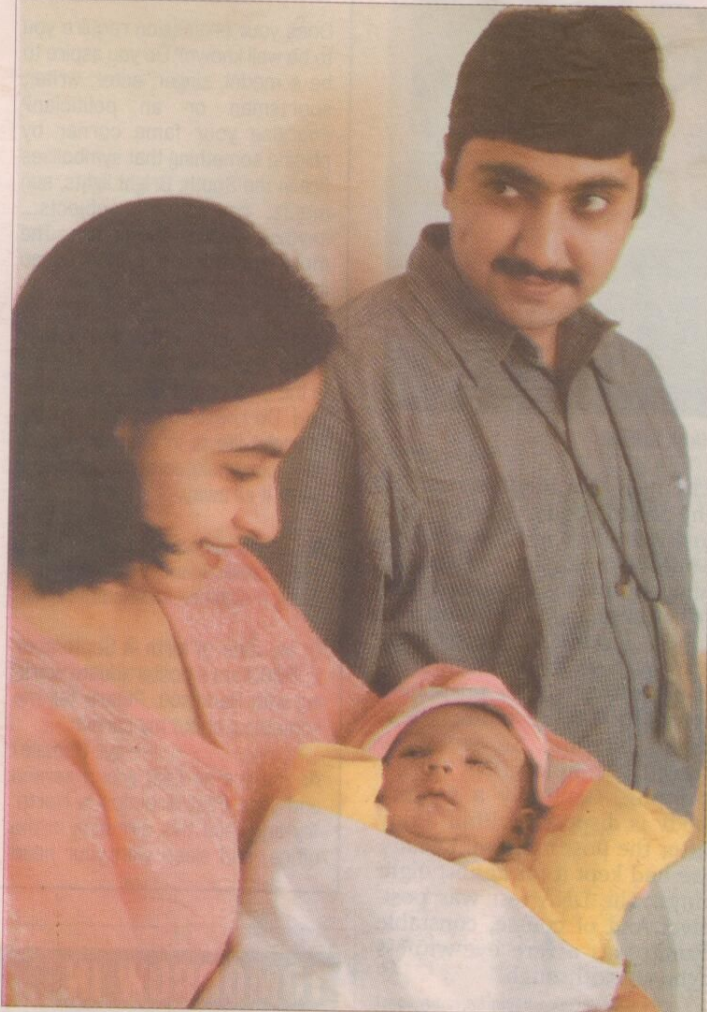
An elusive illness

Biliary Atresia causes 70 per cent of liver transplants in babies in the country. Commonly known as surgical jaundice, around 1,500 babies are annually affected by this condition in India.

Unfortunately, with 90 per cent babies developing physiological jaundice which is benign in the first two weeks, most parents and doctors fail in timely detection of Biliary Atresia.

Says Dr Sibal, "In Biliary Atresia, the earlier the detection, the better the chances for a successful operation." If the condition is detected after 90

ISHAN TANKHA



Proud parents of 35-day-old Sneh feel blessed today. Their little girl was one of the youngest to have undergone an operation for Biliary Atresia, a condition feared as the deadliest form of jaundice among newborn babies. Doctors say if this disease is detected after three weeks, a liver transplant is the only hope for survival.

WATCH OUT FOR THESE SYMPTOMS

- > Yellow eyes
- > Deep yellow urine
- > White stools
- > Biliary Atresia is a condition where inflammation develops within the bile ducts around the time of birth. This leads to damage of the bile duct and reduces bile flow, which subsequently damages the baby's liver.

days, chances of this success are slim while after 100 days, a liver transplant is the only hope for survival.

Sneh's mother couldn't accept her little one had a

life-threatening complication. Says Daisy, "Doctors were our only hope."

Says Dr M.R. Rajasekar, Senior Consultant Surgeon, Apollo, "Although the X-ray

showed the presence of a gall bladder, which is not common in Biliary Atresia, we insisted on the operation." Usually, the gall bladder is the worst affected in such cases and either appears shrunk or damaged in an X-ray. But Sneh's X-ray report showed the gall bladder, indicating the problem could be fixed.

Finally, what put to rest their doubt was the Cholangiogram conducted after opening the baby's abdomen. Says Dr Rajasekar, "With organs that are as tiny as 1 mm, one has to be extremely careful. Even a small error could lead to liver failure."

After almost four hours of intense concentration and immense skill, the bile was soon flowing out of the baby's liver. Thankfully, the operation was a success.

Says Dr Pankaj Garg, Consultant Neo-Natologist at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, "23 days is indeed very early for a baby to be operated upon for Biliary Atresia. This is a relatively rare condition that is not detected too early."

Says Dr Veena Kalra, HOD, Paediatrics at AIIMS, "If this condition goes undetected beyond three months, it is aggravated into Biliary Cirrosis. Any more delay can cause irreversible damage."

Fit Now

But Sneh is fit as a fiddle now. Cuddling her, the Kapoors feel blessed today. They remember how the doctors had thought it best to keep them in the dark about the seriousness of the situation. Says Daisy, "The doctors told us this was a common problem and a simple operation would take care of it. Only after they completed the operation did they let us know what a close shave Sneh had had."

Smiling through misty eyes, Suresh says, "The first thing we do when Sneh gets discharged is to visit the Sai Baba temple in Noida."

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