

Issue 10, July 2022

Can Cure is the Nag Foundation's Newsletter that helps create awareness about various issues related to Cancer and its treatment. It is an opportunity for our members, both doctors and patients, to share their insights and testimonies with you.

Advances in Breast Cancer Surgery

Since times immemorial, breasts are considered to be a woman's symbol of beauty. But more important than that is their role as nourishment provider for the babies.

Any disease affecting the breasts is devastating to the ladies.

According to Globocan 2020, breast cancer is the most common cancer in the females in India. Approximately 1 in 22 women in urban areas and 1 in 60 women in rural areas in India have a risk of developing breast cancer in their lifetime. However the good news is that early diagnosis and treatment can render cure in cases of breast cancer.



**Dr. Anupama
Mane
Breast Surgeon,
MBBS, MS, D.H.A**

In the ancient days before the advancement of imaging techniques and modern medicine, patients with breast cancer were treated very aggressively. Amputation of the breasts was done with ghastly results. The presentation of the patients used to be at a very late stage and so the only treatment option available at that point of time was a mastectomy, which is complete removal of the whole breast. But now with advancement of imaging techniques and awareness among women, it is possible to diagnose breast cancer at a very early stage. As it is diagnosed early the tumor is smaller and there is no spread to other body organs. In early tumours it is possible to do a smaller surgery to remove the lump safely, known as a breast conservation surgery (BCS).

BCS is a technique in which the tumour along with a safe margin is removed. With this technique the cosmesis of the woman's breast is maintained. There is no need to sacrifice the whole breast in treatment of early breast cancer. There are multiple trials and studies to prove that breast conservation surgery is as safe as mastectomy. These studies show that outcome of patients with breast conservation surgery or mastectomy is equal. In fact some recent data have shown better outcomes for patients undergoing breast conservation surgery.

The first site where the tumour cells metastasize are the lymph nodes in the armpits. In the earlier days the only way to deal with these lymph nodes was complete removal from the armpit of the affected side. This used to lead to many complications of the affected arm like swelling of the arm known as lymphoedema, movement restrictions of the shoulder and arm, chronic pain of shoulder and arm, etc. In today's time with all the latest technology and imaging techniques available it is possible to conserve the axillary lymph nodes if they are not involved by the tumour cells. Sentinel node biopsy is one such technique in which a blue coloured dye or a radioactive dye is injected over the tumour area on the breast, which then travels via the lymphatics to these lymph nodes where the tumour cells could have possibly gone. These lymph nodes are then identified and checked if they have any tumour cells. If it is found to be negative, then the other lymph nodes are kept intact in the axilla and not removed via surgery. This technique helps to conserve the axillary lymph nodes and hence reduce the morbidity associated with it. It is called sentinel lymph node dissection.

Onco-plastic surgery is a recent branch of breast surgery which deals with the oncological aspect as well as the plastic surgery aspect of breast cancer surgeries. With this technique it is not only possible to remove the cancerous tumour but also gives the lady better cosmetic outcome. For example a lady with large breasts with breast cancer can undergo cancer lump removal surgery as well as a reduction mammoplasty in the same sitting. This makes both breasts look symmetrical. Some other procedures like reconstruction after mastectomy, scarless surgeries, etc., have upped the scales in favour of onco plastic surgery.

In today's time and scenario early diagnosis via screening is the key to identify early breast cancer cases and offer them a complete cure from the disease. With recent advances in medical science it is possible to offer the patients a custom tailor-made treatment approach to help them overcome this awful disease. But the bottom line remains - **early diagnosis**.



**Vaidehi
Rajshekhar
Patient &
Volunteer**

Meditation: The path towards insight!!!

What is meditation? It is not about becoming a different person, a new person or even a better person. It is about training oneself to focus in mind & getting a healthy sense of perspective. You are not trying to turn off your thoughts or feelings during meditation but you are learning to observe them without judgment. It is that simple.

We have linked meditation with spiritualism, religion. Common understanding is meditation is a way to connect to god or attain enlightenment, which is somewhat true. But today we are going to know the meditation from scientific perspective.

We have linked meditation with sages and saints so we have always assumed that meditation is a mysterious process or we gain some mystic powers doing it. In reality meditation is like riding a bicycle or driving a car. It is a skill. In simple language

meditation is a combined skill of physical and mental body. In which physically one can concentrate and mentally experience within.

But why meditation is needed? Who can do it? The answer is we all can do it and get benefit from it. Let us see an example: if we assume that our brain is a super computer with lot of wanted and unwanted files open. Now unwanted files will make the computer slow which would hamper the productivity, to enhance the functioning we need to close down the computer. Like kind of giving him a break. Cool, Right? Similarly in our brain, lot of unwanted thoughts, feelings and emotions are running in the background, which hampers our relations, professional/personal life, emotional wellbeing.

If we practice “Meditation” on a regular basis, then this all can be avoided. It will surely help us in improving physical and mental wellbeing and achieve a better desired life style.

To connect with Vaidehi, email her at espritefoundation@gmail.com

Last 3 Months Activities at the Foundation

Support Group Meetings:

8th April - Breast Friends Support Group – Topic Survivorship & Nutrition.

A question and answer session to understand the role of Nutrition in reducing risk of recurrence as well as maintaining a healthy body and mind was held at our monthly support group meeting



On 20th April, an interactive Support Group meeting was organized for the patients and their caregivers in the Daycare of Sahyadri Hospital, Shastrinagar. Issues related to coping with side-effects of chemotherapy and the emotional and psychological impact on the cancer was addressed.



'Celebrating Mothers' was the theme of Breast Friends Support Group Meet held on 21st May. The meeting was filled with activities to emphasize the 3 pillars of health, Eat Well, Exercise Well and Feel well. The meeting ended with lots of laughter and sumptuous food made with love by our patients and survivors.



Vaidehi Rajshekhar, a psychologist and survivor, conducted an Emotional Mindfulness session on 18th June Breast Friends Support Group. She took our patients and survivors through a 30 minute of guided meditation which ended with personal sharing of the participants. It also made many realize the benefit of sitting in silence and enjoying the stillness of the mind and body.



Cancer Awareness and Screening Programs at Nag Foundation

On 2nd May, Cancer Awareness Talk was given by Dr. Perana Kulkarni and Rebecca de Souza for the faculty of the Pharmacy College of the Vishwakarma University



In the scenic village of Parinche, about 52 kms away from Pune, a Breast cancer Screening Camp was held on 1st June.



3rd June, a screening camp at the Sant Shiromani Rohidas Maharaj Samaj Mandir, Mundhwa.



At the Corporate Office of K.K. Nag Pvt Ltd, on 15th June a Breast Cancer Awareness & Screening camp was conducted for the women Staff



Another Breast Cancer Screening Camp was conducted on 19th June at the village Garade, 26.5 kms from Pune.



Celebrating Compassion and Caring for Caregivers

6th May - The doctors and nurses at the daycare help make the journey through cancer less difficult. To appreciate their compassion and dedication a fun evening with Karaoke, dance and dinner was organized for the Oncology Nurses and Doctors of three Sahyadri Hospitals: Hadapsar, Shastri Nagar and Deccan. A short talk about the Nag Foundation was also given.



What's New at the Nag Foundation?

- ✓ Our Volunteer counselling program began at Sahyadri Deccan with Vaidehi Rajshekhar and Smruti Gujrathi of the Esprite Foundation in May 2022. The much need Survivourship program has been well received by the patients and caregivers.

- ✓ On 20th May, the Nag Foundation new and updated Website was launched <https://www.nagfoundation.org/>. Please do take the time to visit our website.

Training Workshops

A two day Volunteer training program for our Survivorship program was organized on the 4th and 11th of April. The focus of the training was-

- Introduction to cancer and its treatments.
- Psychosocial Impact of Cancer
- Handling Mental health issue in cancer patients.

The training Program was facilitated by Rebecca D'Souza.

A special training workshop was organized in 13 May, for the Genetic Counselors of Neuberger Centre for Genomic Medicine. The workshop had practical approaches to breaking bad news and understanding the emotional behaviors of patients and caregivers. The session was facilitated by Sushma Patil and Rebecca D'Souza.

BEING THE DIFFERENCE

24th April, saw The Live Life Love Life Charity Foundation Fund Raiser Gala which was held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel with an Art Auction and some toe tapping music, wherein the Nag Foundation was one of the beneficiaries for the Herceptin Fund.



Patient Aid (April – June 2022)

General Aid to Patients – **₹ 1,90,680.44**

If the Nag Foundation has made a difference to the lives of our patients and enabled individuals to reconsider health priorities, it is because of the empathy and the generosity of our patrons and donors. We would like to thank –

Rooma Dubey
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