



Can Cure

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Can Cure is the Nag Foundation's quarterly 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.



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Dental Health: What Don't You Know?

Dental health closely relates to overall health. It is estimated that in India, 75% of the population has some grade of periodontal disease (bone loss around teeth, with gum disease). Dental assessment at 6-month intervals is accepted worldwide as the standard of care. This ensures that any sources of infection in the mouth, such as badly decayed teeth and gum problems are pre-emptively addressed, since these can flare up.

It is also important to get an assessment done from a periodontist (gum and implant specialist) at least once a year, since the bacteria around the gums, via the blood stream, can have an effect on the rest of the body, and increase risk of other diseases such as diabetes and heart disease.

Susceptibility to cavities and periodontal bone loss can be exaggerated in smokers, and diabetics, sometimes owing to decreased salivation, decreased blood flow in capillaries, and delayed healing. Since India has a large incidence of diabetes, it is recommended that HBA1C levels (which provide a 3-month average of blood sugar) be done at least once a year. Family history of diabetes and early tooth loss can also increase risk of periodontal disease (bone loss around teeth). One of the signs of

periodontal disease is lack of pain, so patients often fail to realize the presence of disease. If periodic assessments are done, any early onset disease can be treated in time.

It is also a mistaken belief that flossing is optional. This is not the case, since the toothbrush cannot reach areas in between teeth. The only solution to this is to use dental floss, or a water flosser.

The American Dental Association recommends regular 6-month checkups to ensure optimum oral hygiene. If there are missing teeth, these can be successfully replaced using dental implants. In summary, early diagnosis of dental problems, effective home oral hygiene care, and early rehabilitation of missing dentition can ensure a better quality of life.



8TH INDIAN BREAST CANCER SURVIVORS' CONFERENCE

What's next? What should I look for? How do I know I have a problem? Is life going to be different? What can I eat to prevent a recurrence? Will my child face the same problem? How often should I see the doctor?

These are some of the many questions that often go unasked and unanswered.

The Indian Breast Cancer Survivors' Conference was organized to address these questions. The conference is a mix of technical and practical sessions along with activities that focus on helping patients and caregivers cope with issues that arise after completion of treatment. The conference was established by the Nag Foundation to help patients understand, adjust and cope with the new normal of their lives.

November 2019 saw the 8th Conference attended by more than 300 participants from Pune, Mumbai, Goa, Ahmednagar, Aurangabad, Hyderabad, etc.

The sessions were planned to address various issues faced by patients and survivors.

The inaugural session was simple but powerful as the Chief Guest, Dr. Jaya Apte, acknowledged the silent courage and bold confidence of the survivors.

The session on 'Follow Up Care' by Dr. Shona Nag had the following take home messages:

- ✓ Everyone's treatment for breast cancer is not the same
- ✓ Follow up with the specialist is important after completing treatment
- ✓ Post treatment annual checkup is a must
- ✓ There is no need for PET scans or CT scans during routine follow up

The importance of bone health was emphasized by Dr. Joy Ghose. His emphasis on nutrition and exercise for better bones was taken seriously and survivors vowed to change lifestyles to have a better quality of life.

Sameera Singh, our compere, lightened the mood by her session on laughter as therapy. A bellyful of laugh makes life more enjoyable.

Dr. Bhuvaneshwari Sunil from the Indian Cancer Society spoke on Survivorship Clinics. Survivorship Clinics focus on helping survivors set goals and practice skills to optimize their health and wellness after cancer treatment. An idea well received. Nag Foundation has started a survivorship clinic every Friday at Sayadri Hospital, Hadapsar.

Our panel discussions were an opportunity for patients to clarify, ask, question, share and relate their experiences and doubts.



One panel had doctors representing medical, surgical, radiation, neurology, dentistry and gynaecology. Dr. Sudeep Gupta and Ms. Devieka Bhojwani steered the discussion to a fruitful conclusion.

Another panel had a Chartered Accountant, Social Worker, Survivor, Insurance representative, etc. moderated by Dr. Shilpa Rao who summarized the rights and responsibilities of patients.

Through the session, 'Heal Your Life', Ms. Sushma Patil, Genetic Counsellor spoke on the importance of letting go of negatives: the shame, the guilt and the anger. She ended her session with meditation.

Day 1 ended with a blast of energy and enthusiasm as Prashant and his troupe got the participants grooving to the beats of Bollywood music.

Day 2 began with Dr. Manpreet Kaur from the Asian Hospital, Mumbai, discussing lymphoedema, its causes, preventions and treatments. She patiently answered every question.

A session on 'Art As Therapy' was led by Ms. Diva Singh, with the message that life is a clear canvas for us to write on. Through the group activity, she was able to bring out the human tendency to be reticent. So often we fail to ask for help because we want to manage our problems by ourselves but there is no shame in reaching out.

The session on 'Sexuality' by Ms. Rebecca D'Souza emphasized the importance of acknowledging and accepting oneself, and the role of communication in building intimacy.

'What Is Genetics And Who Needs It?' was discussed by Ms. Sushma Patil. She helped participants understand the medical and psycho-social implications of genetics in cancer.

A Q & A session with Dr. Neeta Dhamejani, Nutritionist and Dietician, concluded the conference with a change in the way we see food and inspired our participants to healthier eating and improved living.

Some glimpses of the Conference-





Acknowledgements From Conference Attendees-

“Thanks for helping me build my confidence, for introducing me to the Breast Friend Support group and giving me a social life. Thanks for helping me express my feelings. Thank you for the counselling you gave me at the time of my chemo. It helped me overcome the fear of chemo and helped me face it bravely. Thank you for guiding me about lymphoedema, care to be taken and the exercises to be done, etc. They have helped me a lot. As for our group it has become like a family for me. I have learnt a lot from each member. They have looked after me and supported me like a family would. Thanks for organising such a wonderful, well-organised conference. You did a great job. I would like to thank Dr Shona Nag and her team for the wonderful informative conference. It is only through the conference that we get to know a lot about the latest developments in the field of breast cancer treatment and also get knowledge and information about the different aspects related to it.”

Mahajabeen

“Forgot all stresses and strains, enjoyed like child fulfilled with valuable information and knowledge. Thank you so much to the team.” **Rajani**

“To begin with, the pin-on badges were very innovative and beautiful and the goodie bags given to the participants with reading material and goodies was very thoughtful. The logistics were excellent. All the participants’ needs were catered to. We thank the organizers for making wonderful arrangements at the conference.” **Mughda**



WELCOMING 2020 – A Twist on New Year Resolutions

Mental Health Decluttering:



- Things that make you laugh / smile
- A list of things you're grateful for
- People who lift you up
- Activities / hobbies that are fulfilling
- Spare time to practice self-care
- A list of positive affirmations
- Patience and compassion towards yourself / your journey

- Overuse of social media
- Perfectionism
- Poor sleep routine
- Toxic people / relationships
- Past circumstances that no longer serve you
- Regret
- Guilt
- Shame



@RealDepressionProject



Our activities reflect our vision and mission of Cancer – Care to Cure. Our dedicated team of doctors, professionals and survivor volunteers reach out into the community to destigmatise Cancer and to educate and inform women and men about the curative aspects of Cancer. The survivorship programmes for patients and caregivers help them navigate life after Cancer.

THE LAST QUARTER (1st October to 31st December 2019)

Total No. of patients supported in the last quarter - 20

Total No. of Herceptin vials given in the last quarter - 04

Total No. of patients helped for radiation - 03

Awareness camps - 09

Support group meetings - 06

Continuing Medical Education programmes for professionals - 02

If the Nag Foundation has made a difference in 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 –

DR KPV RAO
MR BHUSHAN TIKOO
ROBERT AND MARY HELSABECK

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