

Glaucoma patients see light of day with new technique

TIMES NEW NETWORK

Gurgaon: Fifty six-year-old Neelam (name changed) had been under medication for over a year after being detected with glaucoma. However, the heavy dosage of medication brought little relief in the eye pressure and improvement in her condition. She was recently operated for the medical condition using Ex-Press Shunt, a safe and effective technique to treat glaucoma patients. Post operation, Neelam's eye pressure is well under control even without medication.

This is one of the first surgeries to be carried out in the NCR using Ex-Press Shunt, a microscopic instrument used to drain out the fluid exerting excess pressure on the eye of a glaucoma patient.

According to the doctors, glaucoma is one of the leading causes of preventable blindness affecting about 12 million Indians. According to the statistics, glaucoma in India ranges from two to four in every 100 persons.

Glaucoma is a complex eye disease in which circulation of the fluid in the eye is disrupted. The eye has pressure just like blood vessels, and when this intraocular pressure increases to dangerous levels, it damages the optic nerve. This can result in decreased peripheral vision and eventually blindness if left untreated. Vision loss is caused by damage to the optic nerve. The nerve acts like an electric cable containing over a million wires.

It's responsible for carrying images from the eye to the brain.



Look out for these symptoms

- ▶ Subtle loss of contrast
- ▶ Difficulty in driving at night
- ▶ Loss of peripheral vision
- ▶ Rainbow coloured rings or halos around lights
- ▶ Frequent need to change eyeglass prescriptions

"It's a condition where the eye pressures become high and slowly damage the optic nerve and disrupt vision. The treatment is in form of eye drops, lasers or surgery to control the eye pressure. The conventional filtering surgery for glaucoma has a limited success rate and can have few complications," said Dr Parul M Sharma, head of department, Max Hospital, Gurgaon.

The shunt is a small 2.6mm device which is inserted in the eye

SAFE & EFFECTIVE: Ex-Press Shunt, a microscopic instrument, drains out the fluid exerting excess pressure on the eye of a glaucoma patient

through which the aqueous-eye fluid flows out in a controlled manner, reducing the eye pressure.

"It's a half an hour procedure done under local anaesthesia and the patient is discharged the same day. For a glaucoma surgeon it's an added tool as he requires cutting less tissues in this surgery, decreases surgery time and has greater controlled and predictable outcomes with lesser rate of complications," Dr Sharma added.

The surgery is priced at an estimated cost of around Rs 50,000, added the senior ophthalmologist, who claimed that the first such surgery was done on a 44-year-old patient in Gurgaon in June this year, also the first in north India.

eme to reward
ns for helping

rewarded by the
police for helping an

using the media."
There is no risk involved

Similar is the rate of in
open air theatre in Kam