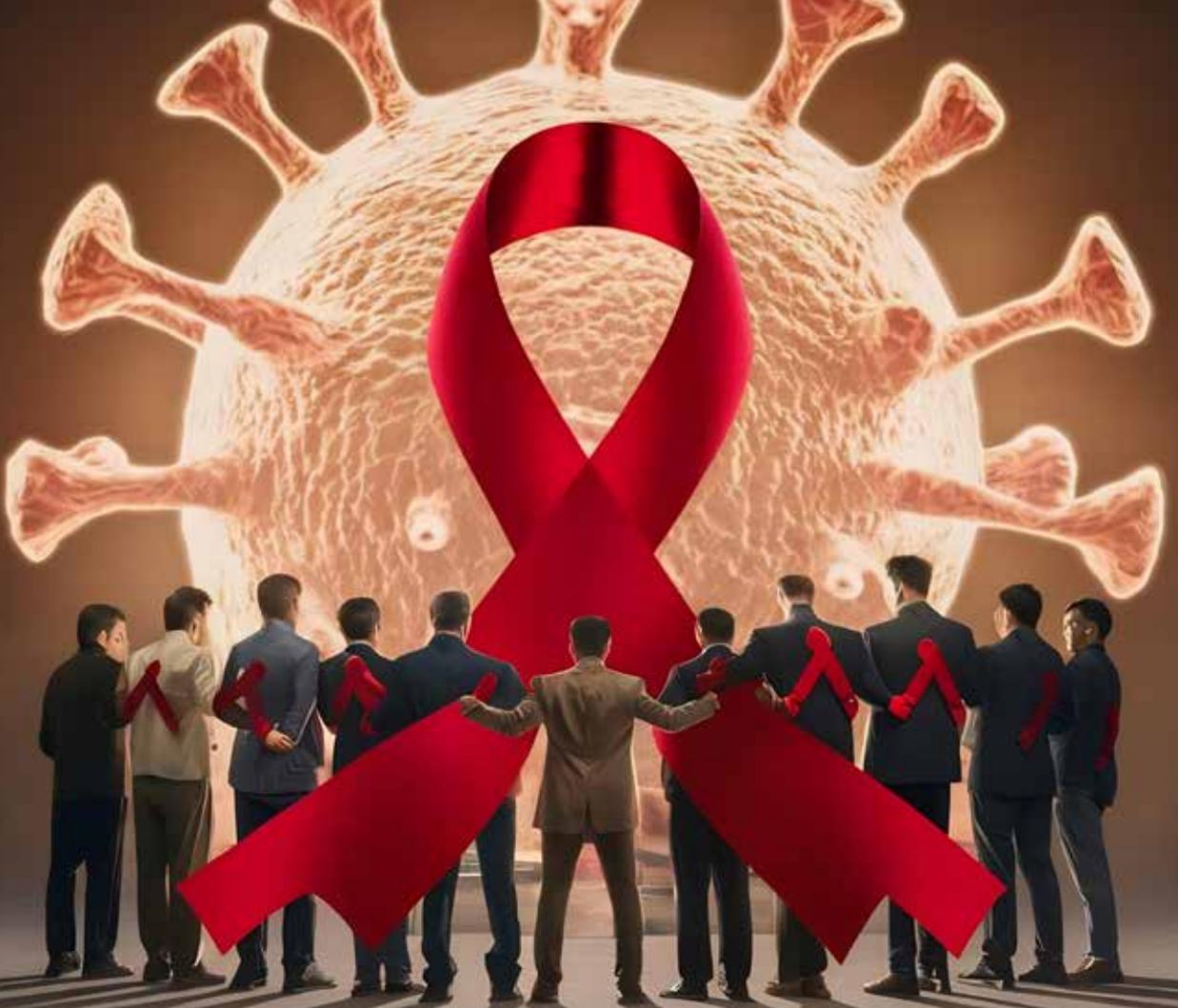


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GEMify Health

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Wellness Wisdom



On January 19, 2026, India's Vice President Shri C.P. Radhakrishnan released the Hindi edition of my autobiography, Palanivelu GUTS, at the Constitution Club of India in New Delhi. This moment is not just a personal milestone, but a bridge connecting India's diverse linguistic communities. Following our English edition (July 2024) and Tamil version, this Hindi release enables millions to access a story that began in a small Tamil Nadu village. From students in Bihar to doctors in Punjab, and young dreamers in Uttar Pradesh - now, my journey speaks in your language. A story's true power lies in its spreading.

In 1991, when we established South India's first laparoscopic surgery center in Coimbatore, the medical community was skeptical. Traditional

open surgery dominated, and many doubted this 'experimental' approach. However, I witnessed firsthand how keyhole surgery drastically improved the lives of India's working poor - farmers returning to the fields within days, daily wage laborers avoiding prolonged recovery. For them, faster recovery wasn't a luxury - it was survival.

This understanding shaped every innovation, every surgical procedure at GEM Hospital. It wasn't just technical expertise but ethical conviction - prioritizing patient welfare over convenience - that made laparoscopic and robotic surgery the gold standard in India today. We persevered through skepticism because the results spoke louder than words.

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Please Scan

At GEM, we've always believed advanced medical treatment should be a right, not a privilege. Our cost-effective techniques and outreach efforts have brought world-class care to underserved areas. Through GEM Medical Foundation, we've conducted free medical camps, served thousands of patients, and performed free laparoscopic surgeries. This isn't charity - it's responsibility. We remember the struggles of our journey, and we clear the path for others.

Our awards for teachers and mentors honor those who believed in us when we were still taking shape. I am particularly grateful to P. Vayapuri, my headmaster, and to President APJ Abdul Kalam, who, in 2006, urged me to write this book to inspire future generations. His words planted the seed for Palanivelu GUTS.

This autobiography isn't a memorial to achievements - it's a guidebook for those who dare to dream beyond their circumstances. From English to Tamil to Hindi, it reflects India's strength: unity in diversity. When stories transcend language, they transform from a regional narrative to national inspiration.

This journey isn't just mine; it's the story of every Indian who faced challenges and refused to surrender. As I approach 73, with techniques now taught worldwide, I understand: individual success matters less than the collective progress it enables.

Thank you for walking this journey with me.

With warm regards,
Dr. C. Palanivelu
Chairman, GEM Hospital
www.gemhospitals.com



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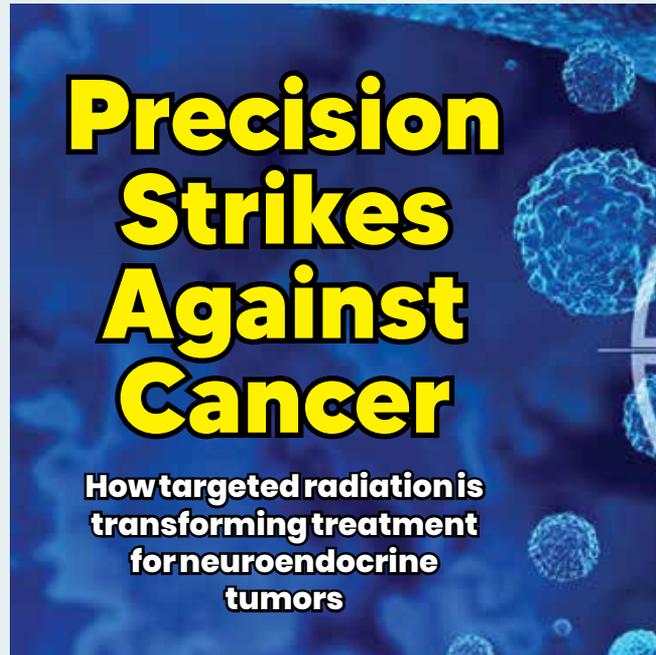


For patients diagnosed with neuroendocrine tumors affecting the pancreas, stomach, or intestines, a revolutionary treatment is offering new hope where conventional options have reached their limits. Lutetium - 177 DOTATATE therapy represents a paradigm shift in cancer treatment - precision medicine that targets tumor cells while largely sparing healthy tissue.

A Smarter Way to Fight Cancer

Traditional chemotherapy floods the entire body with cell - killing drugs, affecting both cancerous and healthy cells. Lu - 177 DOTATATE works differently. Think of it as a guided missile rather than a carpet bomb. This therapy uses a specialized molecule called DOTATATE that functions like a key seeking its specific lock. The 'key' travels through your bloodstream searching for somatostatin receptors - the 'locks' found on the surface of neuroendocrine tumor cells.

When the key finds its lock, it attaches and delivers a precise, microscopic dose of lutetium - 177 radiation directly inside the tumor. This radiation travels only a very short distance - about 2 millimeter - which means it destroys cancer cell DNA while substantially protecting surrounding healthy tissue. It's this remarkable precision that makes Lu - 177 DOTATATE a breakthrough in cancer care.



Precision Strikes Against Cancer

How targeted radiation is transforming treatment for neuroendocrine tumors

Why This Changes Everything

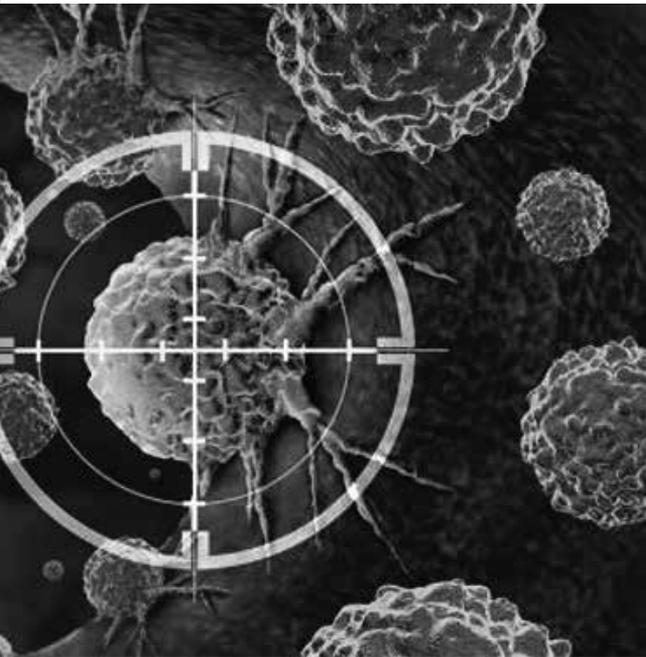
For years, patients with advanced neuroendocrine tumors had limited treatment options once their disease progressed. Lu - 177 DOTATATE, approved by the FDA in 2018 and expanded to adolescent patients in 2024, addresses

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this critical gap. Landmark studies, including the NETTER - 1 and NETTER - 2 clinical trials, demonstrated striking results: patients treated with Lu - 177 DOTATATE lived substantially longer without disease progression compared to standard therapy alone. The NETTER - 2 trial showed particularly impressive findings - 43% of tumors shrank significantly, with complete disappearance in over 5% of cases.

Equally important is quality of life. Side effects are generally milder and more manageable



than traditional chemotherapy. Patients often experience better symptom control and can maintain more normal daily activities during treatment.

The Treatment Experience

Before beginning therapy, you'll undergo a Gallium-68DOTATATEPET scan. This confirms your tumor cells have enough somatostatin receptors for the treatment to effectively bind and work. Think of it as verifying the locks exist before making keys.

Treatment day involves careful coordination. First, you receive amino acids through an IV infusion - this acts as a protective shield for your kidneys, preventing them from absorbing radiation. The amino acid infusion begins 30 minutes before Lu - 177 DOTATATE and continues for about 4 hours total, reducing kidney radiation exposure by approximately 47%.

The actual Lu - 177 DOTATATE infusion takes 30 to 40 minutes. You'll typically receive four treatments, spaced eight weeks apart, allowing your body time to recover between doses. Because this is radioactive medication, you'll receive straightforward instructions about maintaining distance from others - especially children and pregnant women - until the radiation exits your body through urine, typically within a few days.

Who Benefits Most?

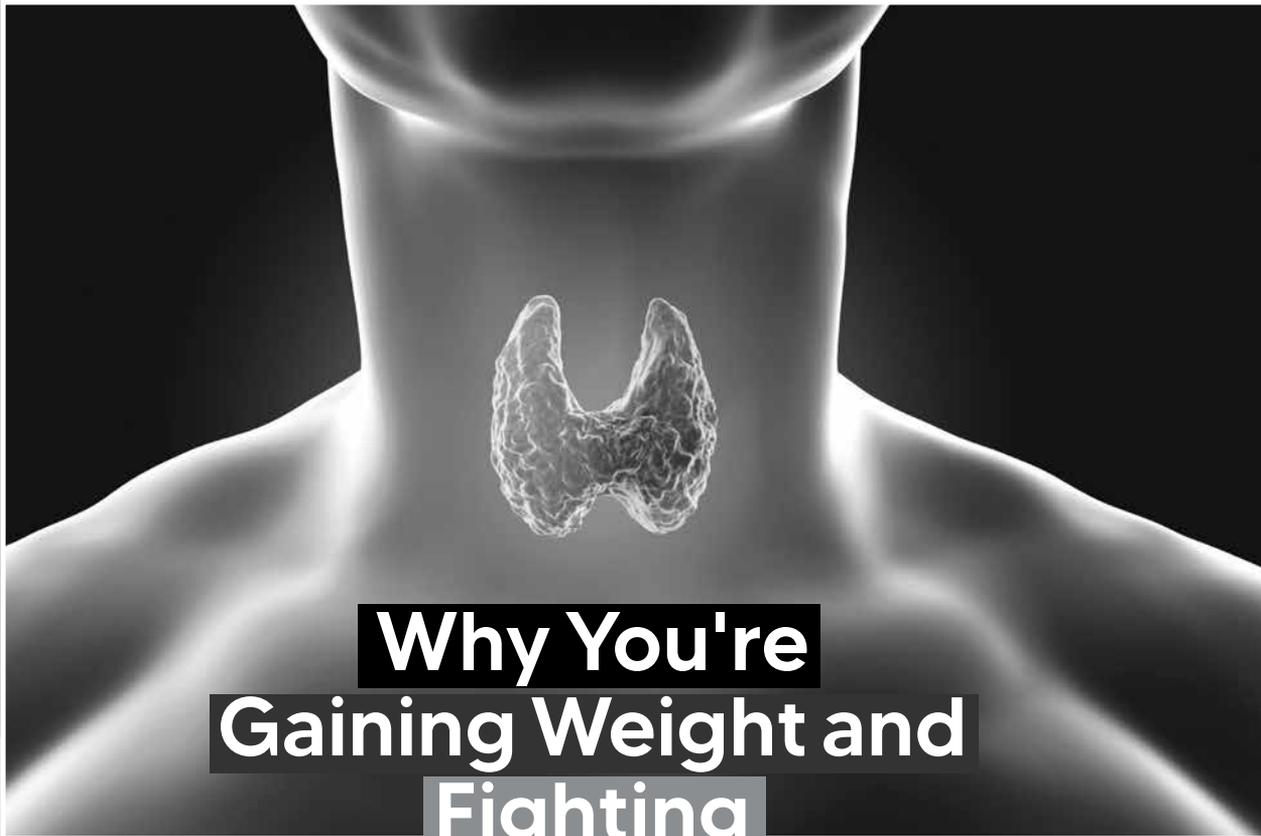
This treatment is specifically designed for patients with neuroendocrine tumors in the pancreas, stomach, or intestines whose tumor cells test positive for somatostatin receptors. It's particularly valuable for patients whose disease has progressed despite other treatments, or increasingly, as an earlier treatment option when disease is newly diagnosed at an advanced stage.

Looking Forward

Lu - 177 DOTATATE exemplifies precision medicine's promise - treatments tailored to specific tumor characteristics rather than one-size-fits-all approaches. For patients facing limited options, this therapy transforms what was once a life-threatening diagnosis into a manageable condition, offering extended survival with maintained quality of life.

This is more than a new treatment - it's a new chapter in how we fight cancer, one precisely targeted cell at a time.

For more information about neuroendocrine tumor treatment, consult with your oncologist or visit www.gembospitals.com



Why You're Gaining Weight and Fighting Constipation

When diet and exercise aren't enough, your thyroid might be the missing piece

No matter how little I eat, the weight keeps piling on. My stomach feels bloated constantly. Going to the bathroom has become a daily struggle...'

Sound familiar? If you're nodding along, you're not alone - and these aren't separate problems. They could all point to one culprit: an underactive thyroid gland that's quietly sabotaging your metabolism and digestion.

Your Thyroid: The Body's Master Controller

That butterfly-shaped gland at the front of your neck? It's your body's metabolic command center.

The hormones it produces - primarily T3 and T4 - regulate virtually every bodily function: heart rate, body temperature, energy usage, and crucially, digestion. When your thyroid underperforms (a condition called hypothyroidism), everything shifts into slow motion.

The Weight Gain Mystery Solved

When your thyroid function drops, your

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metabolism - the process of converting food into energy - slows dramatically. Even when you're eating less, calories aren't being burned efficiently. Instead, they're stored as fat. Worse, your body begins retaining excess water and salt. Research shows hypothyroidism can cause weight gain of 5 to 10 pounds, though individual experiences vary. This explains why diet and exercise alone often fail when thyroid function is compromised - you're fighting against a metabolic slowdown, not just calories.

Why Your Digestive System Has Stopped Cooperating

Your digestive tract depends on thyroid hormones too. Food moves through your intestines via rhythmic muscle contractions called peristalsis - think of it as a wave that pushes everything forward. When thyroid hormones drop, this wave slows to a crawl. Food lingers in your gut far longer than it should, allowing excess water absorption that turns stool hard and difficult to pass.

The numbers tell the story: studies show that 15% of hypothyroid patients have bowel movements fewer than three times weekly. But constipation is just the beginning.

The Gut Complication Nobody Talks About

Slow digestion creates another serious problem: Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth, or SIBO. When food sits too long in your intestines, bacteria multiply excessively. A landmark study found that 54% of hypothyroid patients had SIBO, compared to just 5% of healthy individuals. That's a ten-fold increase.

SIBO brings its own misery: chronic bloating, gas, abdominal discomfort, and unpredictable digestive symptoms. Reduced stomach acid - another thyroid-related issue -



When to Test Your Thyroid

- **Unexplained weight gain:** Gaining weight despite diet and exercise efforts, typically 5 - 10 pounds that won't budge
- **Chronic constipation:** Fewer than 3 bowel movements weekly, chronic bloating, feeling constantly full
- **Persistent fatigue:** Exhausted even after adequate sleep; no energy for daily activities
- **Cold intolerance:** Feeling cold when others are comfortable; always needing extra layers
- **Other thyroid signals:** Dry skin, hair loss, brain fog, low mood, slowed reflexes
- **The SIBO connection:** Hypothyroidism increases risk of small intestinal bacterial overgrowth (54% vs 5% in healthy people), causing additional digestive symptoms that won't improve without treating underlying thyroid condition

compounds the problem by allowing harmful bacteria to thrive unchecked.

How to Know If Thyroid Is Your Problem

A simple blood test can reveal thyroid dysfunction. Doctors measure TSH (thyroid stimulating hormone), T3, and T4 levels. High TSH combined with low T3 and T4 confirms hypothyroidism. Don't ignore the warning signs beyond weight and constipation: persistent fatigue, cold intolerance, dry skin, hair loss, brain fog, and low mood often cluster together in thyroid disorders. ●



When the Feast Becomes a Fight

**Why that wonderful meal leaves
you feeling miserable - and what to
do about it**

The food was amazing...but now my stomach feels heavy and my chest is burning! Whether it's a wedding, birthday celebration, or holiday gathering, this experience is universal. Caught up in delicious flavors, we eat beyond fullness without realizing it. But that hour of culinary pleasure often leads to hours of digestive misery.

What's Happening Inside?

Your stomach has a fixed capacity for comfortable food storage. When you overeat, it stretches uncomfortably, creating that bloated, heavy feeling. To digest the excess, your stomach produces extra acid - and when there's too much food present, this acid pools on top, waiting to work. Bend over or lie down, and that acid surges backward into your esophagus, causing the familiar burn of heartburn. Studies show approximately 14-20% of adults globally struggle with chronic acid reflux (GERD), and overeating episodes significantly worsen these symptoms.

The Immediate Aftermath

Bloating and fullness: Excessive food stretches your stomach beyond its comfort zone,



creating pressure and tightness. Gas production from fermentation makes your abdomen visibly distended.

Heartburn: Stomach acid backs up into your esophagus, creating that characteristic chest burn. Fatty, oily foods intensify this problem by relaxing the valve that normally keeps acid contained.

Nausea: Overwhelming your digestive system triggers queasiness. When your stomach is stretched to capacity, even the smell of food can become repulsive.

Food coma: That irresistible drowsiness after a big meal isn't imagination. Your body diverts massive energy resources to digestion, leaving less for your brain. Blood sugar spikes from carbohydrate-heavy meals compound the fatigue, leaving you sluggish and unfocused.

The 20 - Minute Rule You're Probably Ignoring

Here's the crucial fact: your brain takes approximately 20 minutes to register fullness after you start eating. During that delay, you can consume far more than your body needs. There are two satiety signal systems at work: fast

Smart Strategies to Prevent Overeating

Stop at 75% full: Honor that 20 - minute delay by pausing before you feel completely stuffed. Give your brain time to catch up with your stomach.

Slow down deliberately: Chew thoroughly. Put your fork down between bites. These simple actions significantly reduce overeating.

Use smaller plates: This psychological trick genuinely works - your brain perceives a full small plate as more satisfying than a partially - filled large one.

Time it right: Finish eating at least 3 hours before bedtime to prevent nighttime acid reflux. Staying upright aids digestion naturally.

Walk after eating: A gentle 10 - 15 minute stroll accelerates digestion and reduces bloating. Don't lie down immediately after eating.



nerve signals from your stretching stomach arrive almost instantly, but slower hormonal signals from your intestines take 20 - 30 minutes to fully develop. Most people rely too heavily on the delayed hormonal feedback - and by then, they've already overeaten significantly.

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Long - Term Consequences of Habitual Overeating

Occasional overindulgence won't harm you. But regular overeating triggers serious problems. Excess calories get stored as fat, driving weight gain. Your pancreas must work overtime producing insulin, elevating diabetes risk. Chronic acid reflux can damage and ulcerate your esophageal lining. Your digestive enzymes, already limited in supply, get overwhelmed - meaning digestion takes longer and more food converts to fat storage rather than energy.

The Bottom Line

Celebrations deserve enjoyment without suffering. Remember: eating slightly less means you'll actually enjoy it more, and you'll feel better afterward. Sustainable pleasure comes from listening to your body's signals, not ignoring them. The goal isn't deprivation - it's eating mindfully enough that you can genuinely savor both the meal and how you feel afterward.



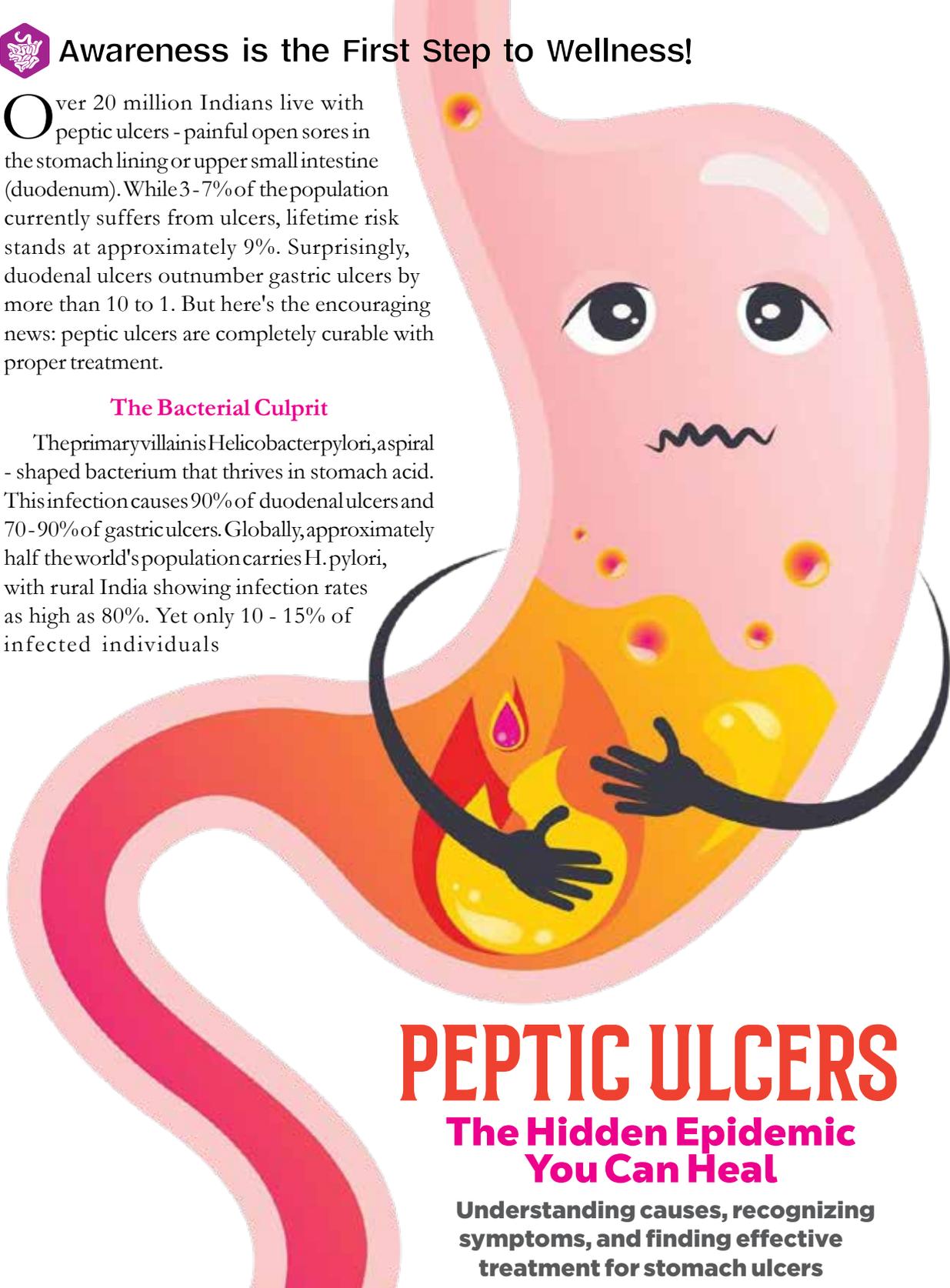


Awareness is the First Step to Wellness!

Over 20 million Indians live with peptic ulcers - painful open sores in the stomach lining or upper small intestine (duodenum). While 3-7% of the population currently suffers from ulcers, lifetime risk stands at approximately 9%. Surprisingly, duodenal ulcers outnumber gastric ulcers by more than 10 to 1. But here's the encouraging news: peptic ulcers are completely curable with proper treatment.

The Bacterial Culprit

The primary villain is *Helicobacter pylori*, a spiral-shaped bacterium that thrives in stomach acid. This infection causes 90% of duodenal ulcers and 70-90% of gastric ulcers. Globally, approximately half the world's population carries *H. pylori*, with rural India showing infection rates as high as 80%. Yet only 10 - 15% of infected individuals



PEPTIC ULCERS

The Hidden Epidemic You Can Heal

Understanding causes, recognizing symptoms, and finding effective treatment for stomach ulcers

actually develop ulcers - the difference lies in bacterial virulence, genetics, and environmental factors like smoking.

The NSAID Factor

Non - steroidal anti - inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) - including aspirin and ibuprofen - represent the second major cause. These common painkillers weaken the stomach's protective mucous lining, creating vulnerability to acid damage. Here's the critical warning: when H. pylori infection combines with NSAID use, ulcer risk skyrockets dramatically. The combination isn't merely additive - it's multiplicative.

Warning Signs to Watch

Peptic ulcer symptoms vary depending on location. Duodenal ulcer pain typically worsens on an empty stomach and improves after eating. Gastric ulcer pain often intensifies after meals. Common symptoms include upper abdominal burning or gnawing pain, nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, unexplained weight loss, and nighttime pain severe enough to disrupt sleep.

Pay attention to these warning patterns - they're your body's distress signals.

Accurate Diagnosis Matters

Endoscopy remains the gold standard - a flexible tube with a camera directly visualizes the ulcer and allows tissue sampling. For H. pylori detection, the urea breath test offers impressive accuracy and simplicity. Stool antigen tests and blood tests provide additional diagnostic options,



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though blood tests can remain positive even after successful treatment, making them less useful for confirming eradication.

Treatment That Works

For H. pylori - related ulcers, triple therapy - combining two antibiotics with a proton pump inhibitor (PPI) for 10 - 14 days - transforms outcomes dramatically. This regimen reduces ulcer recurrence from 50 - 60% down to nearly 0 - 2%. That's essentially eliminating future ulcers.

PPIs like omeprazole and pantoprazole heal 80 - 100% of ulcers within 4 - 8 weeks by reducing stomach acid production. For NSAID - induced ulcers, stopping the offending medication allows 95% of ulcers to heal naturally.

Prevention Strategies

Never self - medicate with NSAIDs long - term without medical supervision. If you require chronic pain management, discuss safer alternatives or protective medications with your physician. Tobacco and alcohol significantly impair ulcer healing - abstinence accelerates recovery. Reduce spicy, oily foods that aggravate symptoms. Eat smaller, frequent meals rather than letting your stomach remain empty for extended periods. Stress management through yoga and meditation genuinely helps; chronic stress affects stomach acid production and healing capacity.

The Critical Message

Peptic ulcer disease is not a life sentence. With modern treatment, complete healing occurs within weeks. Your stomach health demands attention. Recognize symptoms early, seek proper diagnosis, and commit to complete treatment. Healing awaits. ●



Your Mouth

The Unsung Hero of Health

**From digestion to heart health -
understanding the amazing
gateway to wellness**

Every time you take a bite of food, an extraordinary performance unfolds in your mouth. Over 50 muscles coordinate seamlessly, enzymes launch the digestion process, and a tiny 'traffic controller' ensures food doesn't enter the wrong pathway. Your mouth isn't just an eating chamber - it's digestion's first station, taste's laboratory, and a mirror reflecting your overall health.

The Swallowing Symphony: A Three - Act Performance

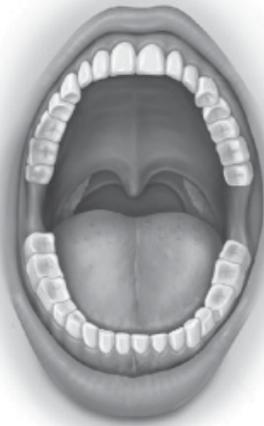
Swallowing feels effortless, but it's actually a precisely choreographed process involving three distinct phases.

Act One begins voluntarily - you consciously decide to swallow. Your tongue transforms chewed food mixed with saliva into a bolus (food ball) and pushes it backward. You control this initial phase completely.

Act Two happens automatically within one second. Once the bolus reaches your pharynx (throat), multiple protective mechanisms activate simultaneously:



Essential Oral Care Practices



- Brush twice daily for 2 minutes minimum using fluoride toothpaste and soft - bristle brush in circular motions - especially crucial before bed when saliva production decreases
- Floss daily to remove food particles and bacteria from between teeth where toothbrushes cannot reach
- Clean your tongue daily using scraper or toothbrush back to remove bacteria causing bad breath
- **Choose tooth - friendly nutrition:** Calcium - rich foods strengthen teeth, Vitamin C supports gums, Vitamin D enhances absorption - minimize sugar to prevent cavity - causing acid production
- Visit dentist twice yearly for professional cleaning (scaling), early problem detection, and comprehensive oral health monitoring

The soft palate lifts to seal your nasal passages - preventing food from entering your nose. The epiglottis - a small, leaf - shaped flap of tissue - folds down to cover your trachea (windpipe). This is your body's 'traffic controller,' ensuring food travels down the esophagus, not the airway. The upper esophageal sphincter opens, creating a pathway to your stomach. Your breathing pauses momentarily. The bolus enters the esophagus safely, and the sphincter closes behind it.

This explains why talking or laughing while eating can be dangerous. When you speak, your airway stays open. If the epiglottis can't close at the right moment, food enters the 'wrong pipe,' triggering coughing, difficulty breathing, and potentially choking - a genuine medical emergency.

Act Three involves peristalsis - wave - like muscle contractions that push food through your esophagus toward your stomach. This involuntary process continues digestion's journey automatically.

Your Mouth's Digestive Power

Digestion actually begins before food reaches your stomach. Saliva contains amylase, an enzyme that starts breaking down starches into simpler sugars. Try this: chew a small piece of bread or rice for 60 seconds without swallowing. Notice it tasting sweeter? That's amylase converting starch to maltose. This early breakdown makes later digestion more efficient.



Adults produce 32 permanent teeth (children have 20 baby teeth), each designed for specific tasks. Incisors cut, canines tear, premolars crush, and molars grind. Your molars, positioned closest to jaw muscles, can exert remarkable force - averaging 50 - 70 kg (110 - 154 lbs), with some individuals generating up to 120 kg (265 lbs). That's equivalent to a person's body weight concentrated in one bite.

Essential Oral Care: Beyond Basic Brushing

Proper oral hygiene requires more than cursory tooth - brushing. Here's what actually protects your dental health:

Brush twice daily - for two minutes minimum, especially before bed. Use soft bristles in small circular motions. Choose fluoride toothpaste - fluoride strengthens enamel and promotes remineralization, the process of restoring lost minerals to teeth.

Clean your tongue. Bacteria and food particles accumulate on tongue surfaces, causing bad breath and potentially affecting taste perception. Use a tongue scraper or your toothbrush's back surface daily.

Floss daily. Toothbrushes can't reach between teeth where food particles lodge and bacteria thrive. Dental floss removes debris from these vulnerable spaces, preventing cavities and gum disease.

Choose tooth-friendly nutrition.

Calcium - rich foods (dairy, cheese, leafy greens) strengthen teeth. Vitamin C (citrus fruits, guava) supports gum health. Vitamin D (sunlight, fish) enhances calcium absorption. Minimize sugar - bacteria metabolize sugar, producing acids that erode enamel, creating cavities.



The Cavity Creation Process

Understanding how cavities form helps prevent them. When you eat sugar, oral bacteria (*Streptococcus mutans*) consume it, secreting acid as waste. This acid demineralizes tooth enamel - essentially dissolving its mineral structure. Repeated exposure creates microscopic holes that gradually enlarge. Once decay penetrates enamel into dentin (the softer layer underneath), pain begins. The solution? Fluoride toothpaste, reduced sugar intake, rinsing after meals, and regular dental visits for early detection.

The Mouth - Heart Connection: Why Dentists Care About Your Cardiovascular Health

Recent research reveals compelling links between gum disease (periodontitis) and heart disease. In December 2024, the American Heart Association updated its scientific statement, confirming that gum disease associates with increased risk of heart attack, stroke, atrial fibrillation, and heart failure.

The biological mechanism involves both direct and indirect pathways. Oral bacteria can enter the bloodstream through bleeding gums, potentially causing vascular infections. More significantly, chronic gum inflammation triggers systemic inflammation - elevated C - reactive protein, interleukins, and other inflammatory markers that contribute to arterial plaque formation and atherosclerosis.

Studies show people with gum disease have two to three times higher cardiovascular event risk. Treatment of periodontitis improves inflammatory markers and certain cardiovascular risk factors. While researchers haven't definitively proven that treating gum disease prevents heart

disease, reducing chronic inflammation appears beneficial. More frequent tooth brushing correlates with lower cardiovascular risk - brushing three times daily shows 7.35% 10 - year risk versus 13.7% for once - daily brushing.

The takeaway? Oral health isn't isolated - it's integral to whole - body wellness.

Fascinating Mouth Facts

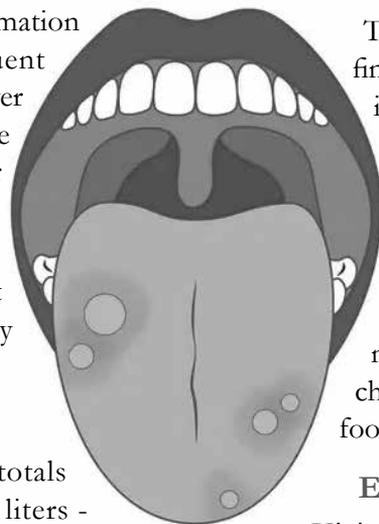
Lifetime saliva production totals approximately 20,000 - 30,000 liters - enough to fill a small swimming pool. This constantly recycled fluid moistens food, contains antimicrobial compounds, initiates starch digestion, and maintains pH balance protecting enamel.

The tongue ranks among the body's strongest muscles relative to its size, capable of remarkable dexterity in speech, chewing, and swallowing.

The taste map myth: That diagram showing sweet taste at tongue's tip, bitter at back? Completely false. All tongue regions detect all five tastes - sweet, sour, salty, bitter, and umami - though some areas show slightly heightened sensitivity.

Bacterial exchange through kissing: A 10 - second French kiss transfers approximately 80 million bacteria between partners, according to 2014 research published in *Microbiome*. While this sounds alarming, most oral bacteria are harmless or beneficial, potentially strengthening immune responses through exposure.

Enamel doesn't regenerate: Unlike bone that repairs after fractures, severely damaged enamel cannot grow back. However, fluoride can remineralize weakened areas before complete breakdown occurs, making prevention critical.



Tooth patterns are unique: Like fingerprints, your dental arrangement is exclusively yours - which is why dental records help identify remains.

Children taste more intensely: Kids have more taste buds than adults. As we age, taste bud numbers decline, explaining why children often reject bitter or spicy foods adults enjoy.

Essential Professional Care

Visit your dentist twice yearly for professional cleanings (scaling) that remove hardened plaque toothbrushes can't eliminate, early problem detection, and monitoring wisdom teeth - which erupt between ages 17 - 25 and frequently cause complications requiring extraction.

Foods and Habits to Avoid

Excessive sugar consumption accelerates cavity formation. Acidic beverages (soda, energy drinks) erode enamel through chemical action. Tobacco use dramatically increases gum disease and oral cancer risk.

The Comprehensive View

Your mouth performs countless functions daily - digestion initiation, taste perception, speech articulation, facial structure support - while hosting its own complex microbiome. Maintaining oral health through proper hygiene, nutritious choices, and regular dental care protects not just your teeth and gums, but potentially your cardiovascular system and overall wellness.

Remember: those 32 teeth represent far more than chewing tools. They're guardians of your comprehensive health, deserving consistent, conscientious care. ●



Your Digestive Health

GEM

Questions Answered

Expert insights on SIBO, medications - straight talk from gastroenterology

Q: What is SIBO, and how does it differ from regular IBS?

A: SIBO stands for Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth - a condition where bacteria multiply excessively in your small intestine. Normally, your small intestine contains relatively few bacteria (less than 10^3 colony-forming units per milliliter). In SIBO, this count increases significantly, causing symptoms remarkably similar to irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

Here's the connection that surprises many patients: research indicates that 30 - 40% of people diagnosed with IBS actually have SIBO as an underlying cause, with some

gastroenterologists estimating rates may reach 60% depending on diagnostic methods and patient populations.

We diagnose SIBO using hydrogen - methane breath testing. You drink a glucose or lactulose solution, then we measure gases released in your breath at specific intervals. If hydrogen levels exceed 20 parts per million (ppm) or methane levels surpass 10 ppm within 90 minutes, this suggests SIBO.

The distinction matters because while IBS is primarily managed through dietary modifications and symptom control, SIBO often responds to targeted antibiotic therapy combined with addressing underlying factors that allowed bacterial overgrowth - like low stomach acid, motility problems, or structural abnormalities.

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Surgeon, GEM Hospital, Chennai



Think of IBS as an umbrella term describing a symptom pattern, while SIBO represents one specific, treatable mechanism that can produce those symptoms. Many patients experience dramatic improvement once SIBO is properly diagnosed and addressed.

Q: I've been taking PPI tablets (acid-reducing medications) for a long time. Are there side effects I should know about?

A: Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) are remarkably effective for gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) and acid-related conditions, but long-term use does carry potential consequences that deserve attention.

Primary concerns include:

Increased SIBO risk. Stomach acid serves as your body's natural bacterial defense system. When PPIs suppress acid production, bacteria that would normally be destroyed in the stomach can survive and migrate to the small intestine, potentially



causing SIBO. This creates an unfortunate cycle - treating one digestive issue while potentially enabling another.

Nutrient deficiencies. Stomach acid facilitates absorption of several essential nutrients. Long-term PPI use may reduce magnesium, calcium, iron, and vitamin B12 levels. Magnesium deficiency can cause muscle cramps and irregular heart rhythms. Low B12 produces fatigue and neurological symptoms. Calcium deficiency affects bone health.

Slightly elevated kidney and bone risks. Large studies have identified small but measurable increases in chronic kidney disease risk and bone fracture rates among long-term PPI users, though the absolute risk remains relatively low for most individuals.

The solution isn't necessarily stopping PPIs immediately - especially if you have conditions like Barrett's esophagus or severe erosive esophagitis. Instead, consider these strategies:

Use the lowest effective dose. Many patients succeed with half their original dose or every-other-day dosing. Explore lifestyle modifications: elevating your bed's head, avoiding late meals, limiting trigger foods (coffee, alcohol, chocolate, spicy foods), and maintaining healthy weight. These changes often reduce GERD symptoms significantly. Try H2 blockers (like famotidine) as alternatives for less severe symptoms. Discuss periodic 'PPI holidays' with your doctor if appropriate for your condition.

Work with your gastroenterologist to find the minimal medication needed to control symptoms while reducing long-term exposure. Many patients who thought they required lifelong PPIs discover they can manage with lower doses or alternative approaches once proper lifestyle changes are implemented. ●

From Fear to Hope

At 24, Priya arrived at GEM Hospital looking seven months pregnant - but there was no baby. A massive uterine fibroid weighing 3 kilograms had grown to the size of a 34-week pregnancy, stealing her appetite, compressing her bladder and bowel, and transforming her life into a daily struggle with pain and discomfort.

Multiple specialists had delivered the same devastating verdict: such a large fibroid required major open surgery, carried high risks of bladder or bowel injury, and might necessitate removing her uterus entirely if bleeding couldn't be controlled. For an unmarried young woman, this felt like losing her future before it had begun.

Understanding Uterine Fibroids

Uterine fibroids - benign tumors developing in the uterine muscle - are remarkably common, affecting 30 - 40% of women over 35. While many fibroids cause no symptoms and are discovered incidentally, large ones can create serious problems: heavy menstrual bleeding, pelvic pressure and

pain, urinary frequency or difficulty emptying the bladder, constipation, and abdominal enlargement.

For women hoping to have children, the standard treatment recommendation - hysterectomy - eliminates the problem but also eliminates fertility. This creates an impossible choice: immediate relief versus future family.

The Minimally Invasive Alternative

Dr. Kavitha Yogini, Chief Gynecologist at GEM Hospital, proposed a different path: laparoscopic myomectomy - removing the fibroid through keyhole surgery while preserving the uterus.

'Large fibroids are technically challenging for laparoscopic surgery,' Dr. Yogini explained, 'but with advanced techniques and experienced teams, we can often achieve results that preserve both recovery and fertility.'

After MRI imaging confirmed the tumor was benign, Priya chose hope over fear.

When 'Impossible' Surgery Becomes Possible

A 24-year-old's journey through massive fibroid removal without losing her future



The Laparoscopic Advantage

Compared to traditional open surgery, laparoscopic myomectomy offers:

- Minimal pain from smaller incisions
- Faster recovery (2 - 3 days hospitalization versus 5 - 7)
- Reduced blood loss through precise surgical technique
- Lower infection risk with smaller wounds
- Preserved fertility - critical for young women
- Barely visible scars instead of large abdominal incisions
- Quicker return to work and normal activities



Precision Surgery, Remarkable Results

The procedure exemplified modern surgical innovation. Through multiple small incisions (under 1 centimeter each), Dr. Yogini used specialized laparoscopic instruments with magnified visualization to carefully separate the massive tumor from healthy uterine tissue. Advanced cautery techniques controlled bleeding throughout, eliminating the catastrophic hemorrhage risk other surgeons had warned about.

The challenge: extracting a 3-kilogram mass through tiny openings. The solution: a Safety Isolation Endobag - a specialized containment system. The fibroid was placed inside this sealed bag, safely fragmented under controlled conditions, and extracted through a minimally enlarged incision. This critical safety measure prevents tissue dispersion while enabling minimally invasive removal of even enormous tumors.

The uterus was then meticulously repaired using laparoscopic suturing, restored to near-normal anatomy.

Life Transformed

The recovery was nothing short of remarkable:

Dr. Kavitha Yogini
M.S., OG
GEM Hospital, Coimbatore



Same day: Priya walked with assistance and ate light meals.

Day 2: Discharged home, comfortable, already noticing the absence of pressure and distension.

Week 1: Back to daily activities, tiny incisions healing cleanly.

Follow-up: Ultrasound confirmed excellent healing. Menstrual cycles normalized. Digestive and urinary symptoms vanished.

When to Seek Evaluation

Contact a gynecologist if you experience:

- Heavy menstrual bleeding (soaking through protection hourly, large clots, periods exceeding 7 days)
- Pelvic pain, pressure, or discomfort during intercourse
- Abdominal enlargement unrelated to weight gain
- Urinary frequency, urgency, or difficulty emptying bladder
- Constipation or difficulty with bowel movements
- Difficulty conceiving or recurrent pregnancy loss

Your symptoms deserve evaluation. Your future deserves protection. And 'we haven't done it' doesn't mean 'it can't be done.'

The Power of Food and Prevention

Simple dietary choices and one vaccine can protect your body's silent workhorse

Your liver works tirelessly behind the scenes, performing over 500 essential functions - detoxifying blood, producing bile for digestion, and metabolizing proteins and fats. Yet this remarkable organ receives little attention until something goes wrong.

The wake - up call: approximately one in three Indians now has non - alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), according to recent research. This silent epidemic doesn't announce itself with symptoms until significant damage has occurred. The good news? Proper nutrition and preventive measures can safeguard your liver for life.

Foods That Love Your Liver

Think of your liver as a sophisticated filter requiring high - quality fuel. These foods actively support liver function:

Vegetables should fill half your plate daily. Leafy greens, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, beets, garlic, and onions enhance the liver's natural detoxification capacity.



Fruits - especially papaya, apples, oranges, lemons, and berries - provide antioxidants that protect liver cells. Choose whole fruits over juices to benefit from fiber that slows sugar absorption.

Whole grains like hand - pounded rice, oats, ragi, jowar, bajra, and whole wheat bread regulate blood sugar and prevent fat accumulation in the liver.

Lean proteins including lentils, chickpeas, tofu, fish (salmon, sardines), egg whites, and skinless chicken provide building blocks for liver cell repair without excess fat.

Healthy fats in moderation - walnuts, almonds, flaxseeds, chia seeds, olive oil, and mustard oil - support overall health without overburdening the liver.

Beverages matter enormously. Drink 8 - 10 glasses of water daily. Here's a surprise: unsweetened black coffee significantly protects liver health. Multiple studies confirm that 2 - 4 cups daily reduce risks of fibrosis,

Beyond Food: Complete Liver Care

Nutrition and vaccination work best alongside:

- Maintaining healthy weight through balanced eating and portion control
- Daily 30 - minute exercise to combat insulin resistance
- Avoiding unnecessary medications, especially pain relievers and unregulated supplements that strain the liver
- Controlling diabetes and cholesterol, as both worsen liver disease
- Sleeping 7 - 8 hours nightly for liver regeneration



cirrhosis, and liver cancer. Both caffeinated and decaffeinated coffee work, though caffeinated shows slightly stronger effects. Green tea and lemon water also support liver function.

What Harms Your Liver

Alcohol tops the list of liver toxins - complete avoidance is ideal for liver health.

Eliminate or drastically reduce: deep-fried foods, fast food, sugary drinks, candies, refined white rice and bread, excessive red meat and processed meats (sausages, bacon), butter, ghee, and cream in large amounts, and packaged processed foods laden with preservatives.

The Hepatitis B Shield

While diet protects against NAFLD, vaccination prevents hepatitis B - a viral infection causing chronic liver disease, cirrhosis, and liver cancer.

The hepatitis B vaccine is safe, effective, and follows

WHO's recommended three - dose schedule:

- **First dose:** Day zero
- **Second dose:** One month later
- **Third dose:** Six months after the first

This vaccine prevents infection - it doesn't treat existing hepatitis B. Those already infected require medical monitoring rather than vaccination.

Who should get vaccinated? Nearly everyone benefits, including pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers - the vaccine is safe during both conditions. However, those with severe allergic reactions to previous doses or those currently severely ill should postpone vaccination until recovered.

Alcohol tops the list of liver toxins - complete avoidance is ideal for liver health

Your Liver's Amazing Resilience

Unlike many organs, your liver possesses remarkable regenerative capacity. Even with existing fatty liver, hepatitis, or cirrhosis, proper nutrition - customized to your specific condition - combined with lifestyle changes can dramatically improve liver health and slow disease progression.

Early intervention makes all the difference. Your liver serves you silently every moment. Return the favor with nourishment it deserves.

Dr Rajiv Maharaj

MS, DNB
GEM Hospital, Coimbatore



Early Detection Saves Lives

United by Unique - Every cancer journey is different, but together we can beat this disease

Every February 4th, the world unites for a common cause: raising awareness about cancer prevention and early detection. Led by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), World Cancer Day challenges misconceptions and emphasizes that catching cancer early can mean the difference between life and death.

This year's theme - 'United by Unique' - reminds us that while every cancer experience is deeply

personal, we're all connected in the fight against this disease. And the most powerful weapon in that fight? Early detection.

Why Early Detection Changes Everything

When cancer is caught in its earliest stages, treatment success rates soar. Stage 1 breast cancer carries over 90% survival rates. Detect it early, and cure becomes not just possible but probable.

Dr. R. Arulmurugan

MBBS, MS, MCh
GEM Hospital, Coimbatore





Early Detection = Higher Survival:

- Stage 1 breast cancer: >90% survival rate
- India's current rates far lower due to late diagnosis
- Screening catches cancer before symptoms appear
- Treatment is more effective when cancer is small and localized

Yet India faces a heartbreaking reality: survival rates lag far behind this potential. Five - year survival stands at approximately 51% for breast cancer, 46% for cervical cancer, and 37% for oral cancer. Why the gap? One devastating reason - late diagnosis.

India's Silent Crisis

Here's the sobering truth: 75 - 80% of cancer patients in India are diagnosed only at stage 3 or 4 - when the disease has already advanced significantly and treatment becomes far more challenging.

Multiple factors fuel this crisis. Lack of awareness tops the list - many people simply don't know cancer's warning signs. Social stigma prevents others from seeking help. Limited screening facilities, especially in rural areas, create geographic barriers. Healthcare access remains challenging for millions.

Perhaps most alarming: screening rates remain shockingly low. According to the National Family Health Survey - 5, only 1.9% of Indian women have undergone cervical cancer screening and just 0.9% have had breast cancer screening. These numbers represent a public health emergency.

Recommended Screening Guidelines

Breast Cancer: Women over 40 should get annual mammograms. Starting at age 20, monthly breast self - examination helps detect changes early.

Cervical Cancer: Beginning at age 30, women should have Pap smear or HPV testing every 3 - 5 years. This simple test has nearly eliminated cervical cancer deaths in countries with strong screening programs.

Oral Cancer: Tobacco users need annual oral cavity examinations. Visual screening by healthcare professionals can detect precancerous lesions.

Colorectal Cancer: Adults over 45 should undergo colonoscopy screening to detect polyps before they become cancerous.

Warning Signs Never to Ignore

Seek immediate medical attention if you experience:

- Unexplained weight loss or persistent fatigue
- New lumps or swelling anywhere on your body
- Sores that don't heal or moles that change color or size
- Persistent cough, voice changes, or difficulty swallowing
- Abnormal bleeding - in stool, urine, vomit, or when coughing

These symptoms don't necessarily mean cancer, but they deserve professional evaluation.

'I will not neglect recommended screenings. I will prioritize my health. I will encourage others to do the same.'





GASTROINTESTINAL CANCERS - A GROWING CONCERN

While some GI cancers decline, others surge - here's what you need to know

Gastrointestinal (GI) cancers - affecting the esophagus, stomach, liver, pancreas, gallbladder, and colorectal system - present a complex picture in India. While some decline, others rise alarmingly, making awareness and prevention more crucial than ever.

Dr. Bharath Rangarajan

MD, DM
GEM Hospital, Coimbatore



The Gender and Geographic Divide

GI cancers strike 60.5% men and 39.5% women in India. Northeast India bears the heaviest burden, with some of the world's highest rates of esophageal and stomach cancers.

But here's the concerning shift: colorectal, liver, gallbladder, and pancreatic cancers are rising, particularly in urban areas, while esophageal and stomach cancers decline - a pattern reflecting India's changing lifestyle and risk factors.

India's GI Cancer Burden (GLOBOCAN 2022 estimates)

Cancer Type	New Cases	Deaths	Trend
Esophageal	70,600	66,400	Declining
Stomach	64,600	57,000	Declining
Colorectal	64,900	38,400	Rising
Liver	38,000	36,000	Rising
Gallbladder	28,000	23,000	Rising
Pancreatic	16,000	15,000	Rising

Understanding the Risk Factors

Esophageal & Stomach:

H. pylori infection (60 - 70% of stomach cancers), tobacco, alcohol, salted/pickled foods, spicy foods, very hot beverages

Colorectal: Red meat, processed foods, low fiber intake, obesity, diabetes, family history, inflammatory bowel disease

Liver: Hepatitis B & C infection, heavy alcohol use, NAFLD (fatty liver), aflatoxin (fungal toxin in improperly stored grains/nuts)

Gallbladder: Gallstones (major risk), obesity, higher risk in women

**“
Maintain
Healthy
Weight:
Obesity
increases risk
for multiple
GI cancers.
Even 7 - 10%
weight loss
dramatically
reduces risk
”**



Pancreatic: Smoking (doubles risk), diabetes, obesity, chronic pancreatitis, family history

Warning Signs Demanding Attention

- Difficulty or pain swallowing
- Persistent abdominal pain or burning
- Blood in stool or black tarry stools
- Unexplained weight loss
- Jaundice (yellowing of skin/eyes)
- Persistent nausea and vomiting
- Loss of appetite
- Fatigue and weakness

The Silent Danger

Most GI cancers show no early symptoms - making prevention and screening absolutely critical. By the time symptoms appear, cancer has often advanced significantly.

Your Prevention Strategy

Eat Smart:

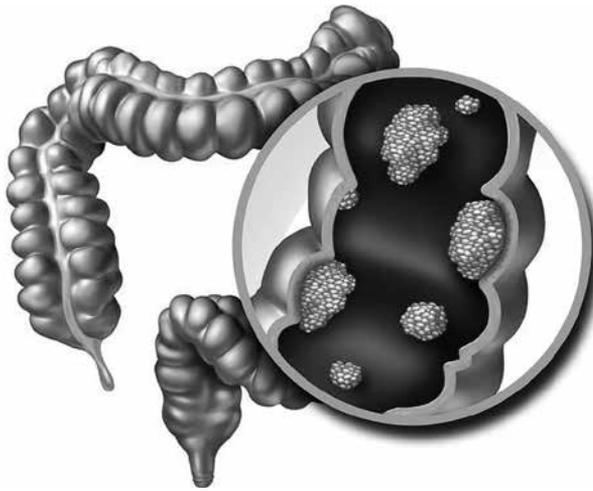
- **Increase:** Vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes
- **Decrease:** Red meat, processed meats, salted/pickled foods
- **Fiber is key:** Protects against colorectal cancer

Eliminate Major Risks:

- Tobacco and alcohol are the most preventable GI cancer causes - complete avoidance ideal
- Even moderate alcohol significantly increases risk

Maintain Healthy Weight:

Obesity increases risk for multiple GI cancers. ●



Colorectal Cancer Screening After 45

New guidelines lower screening age as younger adults face doubled risk - here's what you need to know

Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer globally and fourth in India. In 2022 alone, India recorded 64,863 new cases and 38,367 deaths. Over the past decade, colorectal cancer rates in India have risen approximately 20%, with urban areas showing significantly higher incidence than rural regions.

These aren't just statistics - they represent a preventable crisis demanding urgent attention.

Why Age 45 Became the New Benchmark

Until recently, colorectal cancer screening began at age 50. That changed in 2021 when mounting evidence revealed a disturbing trend: younger adults are increasingly developing this cancer.

The data is stark. **People born between 1981 - 1996 (Millennials) face double the risk of colon cancer** and quadruple the risk of rectal cancer compared to those born around 1950. This dramatic generational shift prompted the American Cancer Society, U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, and American College of Gastroenterology to lower the screening age to 45 years in 2021.

India must urgently adopt these updated guidelines.

Who Faces Higher Risk?

While everyone over 45 should get screened, certain factors elevate your risk:

Diet & Lifestyle:

- High consumption of red meat and processed foods
- Deep - fried foods and excessive sugar intake
- Smoking and alcohol use
- Obesity and diabetes
- Sedentary lifestyle

Medical History:

- Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)
- Family history of colorectal cancer or polyps
- Genetic conditions like Lynch syndrome

Demographics: Men face nearly twice the risk compared to women.

Your Screening Options Explained

Colonoscopy (Every 10 years) The gold standard. A flexible tube with camera examines

your entire colon. Crucially, polyps can be removed immediately - preventing cancer before it starts. This is why colonoscopy can prevent up to 90% of colorectal cancers.

FIT Test (Annual) Fecal Immunochemical Test detects hidden blood in stool. Simple, at-home kit. Requires colonoscopy if positive.

CT Colonography (Every 5 years) Virtual colonoscopy using CT imaging. Less invasive but cannot remove polyps - abnormal findings require traditional colonoscopy.

The Power of Prevention

Here's the hope: colorectal cancer is among the most preventable cancers when caught through screening. Why? Because most colorectal cancers develop from polyps - abnormal growths that take years to become malignant. Find and remove polyps during colonoscopy, and you've likely prevented cancer entirely.

When detected at early, localized stages, colorectal cancer has over **90% five-year survival rate**. But here's the critical point: most early-stage colorectal cancers cause **no symptoms**. By the time symptoms appear, cancer has often advanced significantly.

Prevention Through Lifestyle

Increase:

- Fiber - rich foods (vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes)

Your family needs you. Your future needs you. Schedule that screening. For your loved ones, for yourself - take this one crucial step today.

- Physical activity (minimum 30 minutes daily)

Decrease:

- Red meat and processed meats
- Deep - fried and high - sugar foods
- Alcohol consumption

Eliminate:

- Tobacco in any form

Maintain:

- Healthy weight
- Active lifestyle

Warning Signs Never to Ignore

- Blood in stool or black tarry stools
- Persistent changes in bowel habits (diarrhea or constipation)
- Continuous abdominal pain or discomfort
- Unexplained weight loss
- Persistent fatigue and weakness
- Feeling of incomplete bowel evacuation

Any of these symptoms warrant immediate medical evaluation - don't wait.

Your Action Plan

If you're 45 or older: Schedule a colorectal cancer screening discussion with your doctor today. Your risk assessment will determine which screening method suits you best.

If you have family history: You may need screening before age 45. Discuss this with your physician immediately.

If you have symptoms: Don't wait for 'routine screening age' - symptoms demand immediate evaluation regardless of age.

The Bottom Line

Colorectal cancer screening after 45 isn't optional - it's essential. This is one of the few cancers we can actually prevent through screening, not just detect early.

Dr. R. Madhu Sairam

MBBS, MD

GEM Cancer Centre, Coimbatore





India's Silent Killer Demands Your Attention

**February awareness month highlights
deadly cancer that strikes women
3 - 4 times more than men - early detection saves lives**

February is Gallbladder and Bile Duct Cancer Awareness Month - a critical observance for India, which carries 10% of the global gallbladder cancer burden despite comprising less than 18% of the world's population.

This isn't just statistics. It's a preventable tragedy unfolding across North, Northeast, Central, and increasingly South India, where changing lifestyles are fueling a dangerous rise.

India's Unique Vulnerability

Gallbladder cancer remains relatively rare globally, yet India faces disproportionate burden. Northern India shows incidence rates approaching Chile and Bolivia - the world's highest-risk regions. While South India historically had lower rates, dietary changes and urbanization are eroding this protection.

The crisis deepens with late diagnosis. Most Indian patients present with advanced - stage disease when treatment options dwindle to

palliative care. Only 10% reach diagnosis early enough for potentially curative surgery.

Understanding Your Gallbladder

This small, pear-shaped organ nestles beneath your liver, storing bile to digest fats. When cancer develops in the gallbladder's inner lining, it spreads rapidly to the liver and surrounding structures, making early detection absolutely critical.

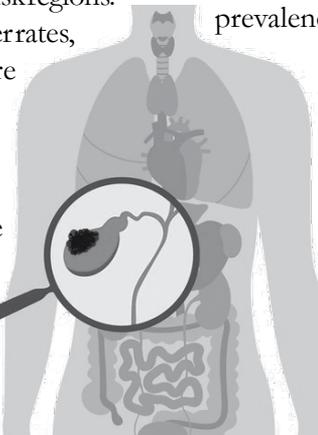
Who Faces Highest Risk?

Women bear the heaviest burden - affected 3 - 4 times more frequently than men. This stark gender disparity likely stems from hormonal factors, reproductive history, and higher gallstone prevalence in women.

Additional risk factors include:

Age: Peak incidence in 50s - 60s (younger than Western populations)

Gallstones: Present in 70 - 80% of Indian gallbladder cancer patients - the single most significant risk



factor. However, while gallstones are common, gallbladder cancer thankfully remains rare

Large polyps: Any gallbladder polyp exceeding 1 cm requires immediate evaluation

Porcelain gallbladder: Calcium deposits in gallbladder wall dramatically increase cancer risk

Chronic inflammation: Long - standing gallbladder infection or inflammation

Family history: Genetic predisposition plays a role

The Detection Dilemma

Early - stage gallbladder cancer's insidious nature makes it particularly lethal. Located deep within the abdomen, tumors remain hidden from routine physical examinations. No blood test reliably detects it.

Many diagnoses occur accidentally during gallbladder removal surgery for presumed benign gallstone disease. By the time symptoms appear, cancer has often advanced beyond curative treatment.

Warning Signs You Cannot Ignore

Seek immediate medical evaluation for:

- Right upper abdominal pain (persistent or recurring)
- Jaundice (yellowing of eyes or skin)
- Unexplained weight loss
- Persistent nausea or vomiting
- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal swelling or palpable lump

Dr. N. Anand Vijai

MBBS, MS, DNB
GEM Hospital, Kovai



An ultrasound truly can save your life. Don't wait for symptoms to worsen - early evaluation changes everything.

These symptoms mimic common gallbladder conditions like gallstones or cholecystitis, causing dangerous delays in diagnosis. Never dismiss persistent upper abdominal symptoms.

Diagnosis & Treatment

Diagnostic tools include:

- Abdominal ultrasound (first-line imaging)
- CT or MRI scans (detailed assessment)
- Blood tests (liver function, tumor markers)
- Biopsy (if needed for confirmation)

Treatment depends on stage:

Early - stage disease: Surgical removal offers best cure chance. Robotic or laparoscopic cholecystectomy with partial liver resection and lymph node removal can achieve 85 - 100% cure rates for very early tumors.

Advanced disease: Combination chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and palliative care to manage symptoms and improve quality of life.

Prevention Strategies That Work

Address gallstone disease promptly: Don't ignore recurrent right upper abdominal pain. Chronic gallstones warrant medical surveillance or surgical removal.

Remove suspicious polyps: Polyps >1 cm require removal regardless of symptoms.

Regular monitoring: If you have known gallbladder abnormalities, maintain consistent medical follow - up.

Healthy lifestyle: Maintain normal weight, eat balanced diet, exercise regularly, avoid tobacco and excessive alcohol.

YOUR DAILY CHOICES CAN PREVENT 40% OF CANCERS

India faces 1.5 million+ new cancer cases annually - simple lifestyle changes dramatically reduce your risk



Cancer ranks as the second leading cause of death globally. In India alone, more than 1.5 million new cancer cases are diagnosed every year - a growing health crisis demanding immediate attention and preventive action.

Here's empowering news: approximately 40% of all cancers are preventable through lifestyle modifications. That's nearly half - prevented simply through daily choices you control completely.

India's Cancer Reality

Tobacco - related cancers account for roughly 27% of all Indian cancer cases - making tobacco the single largest preventable cancer cause. Among women, breast cancer leads. Among men, lung cancer dominates. Both are significantly influenced by modifiable risk factors.

The Major Risk Factors

Tobacco use: Cigarettes, bidis, gutkha, pan - all tobacco forms directly cause lung, mouth, and throat cancers. India's diverse tobacco products (smoked and smokeless) create widespread cancer risk across all demographics.

Obesity and poor diet: Unhealthy eating patterns and excess weight increase breast, colorectal, and liver cancer risks significantly. India's rapidly changing dietary landscape - more processed foods, less traditional fiber - rich meals - contributes to rising cancer rates.

Excessive alcohol consumption: Heavy drinking links directly to mouth, liver,

esophageal, and breast cancers. The risk intensifies when combined with tobacco use.

Environmental hazards: Prolonged sun exposure, asbestos, industrial chemicals, and air pollution all contribute to cancer development. Urban India's worsening air quality creates additional cancer burden, particularly for respiratory system cancers.

Simple, Powerful Prevention Strategies

1. Eliminate tobacco completely

Stop smoking immediately. Avoid all tobacco products - gutkha, pan, zarda, bidis, cigarettes. If quitting feels overwhelming, seek professional cessation programs or counseling support. Quitting tobacco at any age dramatically reduces cancer risk - it's never too late.

2. Eat for cancer prevention

Fill your daily plate with colorful fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. Reduce red meat, processed foods, sugary beverages, and ultra-processed snacks. Traditional Indian diets rich in vegetables, lentils, and whole grains offer excellent cancer protection when prepared healthfully.

3. Move your body daily

Engage in at least 150 minutes weekly of moderate exercise - brisk walking, cycling, yoga, swimming, or sports. Physical activity maintains healthy weight, balances hormones, and significantly reduces

Dr. Pinak Das Gupta
MS,
GEM Hospital, Chennai



Prevention remains the most cost-effective, accessible cancer-fighting strategy available to everyone.

multiple cancer risks. Even household activities count - gardening, climbing stairs, active cleaning all contribute.

4. Control alcohol intake

Follow recommended limits strictly or eliminate alcohol entirely. The less you drink, the lower your cancer risk.

Additional Protection Measures

Regular health screenings:

Age - appropriate cancer screenings - mammography, Pap tests, colonoscopy - detect cancer at early, highly curable stages. Early detection transforms treatment outcomes dramatically.

Vaccination: HPV vaccine prevents cervical cancer. Hepatitis B vaccine prevents chronic infection, thereby reducing liver cancer risk significantly.

Sun protection: Use SPF 30+ sunscreen, wear protective clothing, sunglasses, and hats. Avoid peak sun exposure between 10 AM and 4 PM. India's intense sunlight demands consistent sun safety.

The Power of Daily Choices

Every healthy decision you make possesses cancer - prevention power. Quitting tobacco, eating nutritious foods, exercising regularly, getting vaccinated, and attending screening appointments secure your healthy future.

Prevention truly surpasses treatment.

Daily healthy choices accumulate over time, substantially reducing cancer risk while improving overall life quality. You don't need perfection - consistent progress creates transformation.

Make those choices count. Your future self will thank you. ●



Do you know?

CANCER PREVENTION ESSENTIALS



India's burden: 1.5 million+ new cancer cases annually (2024 - 2025)

Preventable percentage: 40% of cancers preventable through lifestyle changes

Tobacco's toll: 27% of Indian cancers tobacco - related - biggest preventable cause

Top cancers: Breast cancer (women), lung cancer (men)

Quit tobacco: ALL forms - cigarettes, bidis, gutkha, pan, zarda

Eat smart: More vegetables/fruits/whole grains, less red meat/processed foods

Move daily: 150 minutes weekly moderate exercise

Screen regularly: Mammography, Pap tests, colonoscopy save lives

Vaccinate: HPV (cervical cancer), Hepatitis B (liver cancer)

Sun safety: SPF 30+, avoid 10 AM - 4 PM peak exposure

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Dr. DIVYA G

Consultant Pathologist and HoD

Dr. ASWIN CHANDRAN VELUTHATTIL

MBBS, MD(RT), Consultant Radiation Oncologist

DR. MUTHU LINGESH KUMAR

MBBS, MD, DNB, DrNB Consultant Medical Oncologist

Dr. BHARATH RANGARAJAN

MD, DM., ECMO., Clinical Director & Senior Consultant Medical Oncology | Precision Oncology Immunotherapy Stem Cell Transplant Physician

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MBBS, M.S, M.Ch Consultant Surgical Oncologist

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