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## Quote

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen, nor touched...but are felt in the heart".  
 -Helen Keller

*Dear Readers,*

In this era of knowledge management user demand is ever increasing and there is an urgent need for modernisation of conventional libraries and making improvements in the mechanism of collecting, processing, disseminating, storing and utilizing information. The CME conducted at Aravind discussed the revolutionary changes and challenges in the field of library and Information Science.

Being the back bone of Aravind Eye Care System, Mid Level Ophthalmic Personnel form a major chunk of the total work force. Retention awards were presented to the MLOPs who served Aravind for the last 5 years.

As part of the A2Z project that supports Aravind's paediatric department at Madurai on school based screening for refractive error, paediatric cataract surgery and Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) screening at neonatal intensive care units, a symposium was organised for the obstetricians and gynaecologists at Madurai.

For the first time, Aravind celebrated the joy of Christmas season in different centres with a variety of programmes.



*Aravind News Team*

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### A Family Function with a Difference



The Harris \*family with their roots in a small south Indian village is a family with a difference. It is believed to be one of the largest families with a strong glaucoma presence, a silent thief of sight. With three paternal uncles and one aunt in the family losing their sight completely to glaucoma, the family is too familiar with the devastating consequences of the disease. Dr Mohideen, Head, Glaucoma Clinic, Aravind - Tirunelveli has been closely associated with these members as they seek him out for their check up and to clarify their concerns.

Dr. Mohideen, encouraged by Aravind's senior leaders thought it worthwhile to study this family thoroughly as it surely will unearth new evidence about glaucoma which in turn would help them. Speaking with Dr. P. Sundaresan the geneticist, the need to identify a proband around which the family tree needed to be drawn to investigate further was identified. Immense effort and time was spent on developing the family tree termed the pedigree map around the proband. An astounding 350 members were identified.

Efforts were put in to identify how to offer some service to this group as well as doing an indepth research study with this group. Interacting with the members they mentioned how they would benefit from having an awareness

programme. An opportunity presented itself in the form of a family gathering the day after Bakrid. At Aravind it happened to coincide with the visit of Dr John Fingert, scientist from the University of Iowa and co-discoverer of the first ever glaucoma gene, myocilin. The research study was planned; the objective being to understand the genetic predisposition of the family and identify the gene which passes the glaucoma, including identifying potential family members who might be at risk of getting glaucoma within the family. A senior team of Glaucoma specialists - Dr Ramakrishnan, Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Aravind Eye Hospital- Tirunelveli; Dr.S.R. Krishnadas CMO, AEH Madurai and a team of researchers led by Senior Scientist, Dr.P. Sundaresan, Dr. G. Venkataswamy Eye Research Institute were put together besides a group of support staff drawn from AEH-Tirunelveli.

On November 18, 2010 the team did a camp where 125 members of the family were present. Family members from Chennai and as far as Hong Kong had come for this event. The main objectives of the camp were to screen the family members for any known mutations causing glaucoma and to counsel them about the nature of the disease and its inheritance pattern. The relevant tests were performed. Totally 126 blood samples were collected from the glaucoma patients and their unaffected family members with consent and preliminary pedigree analysis has been done. The blood samples were taken for genetic analysis to identify the candidate gene for primary open angle glaucoma. The remaining 225 patients are expected to be screened over the next one year.

An interesting incident that happened during the camp was the mother of a two year old (twins) came running and requested for his child to be checked for potential glaucoma! The team had to explain that it would not be necessary to check at so young an age.

This camp has been very special and is probably the first of its kind ever done in the history of Aravind Eye Care System. In fact, to the knowledge of the concerned investigators involved in this effort, this is perhaps the first ever time that such a large family has been enumerated and screened for an eye disease as well as genetic mutations in the world.

Note \*name shielded to protect identity.



## NEWS AND EVENTS

### World Diabetes Day Celebrations

Aravind – Coimbatore, November 10 – 16



On the occasion of World Diabetes Day, various programmes were organised in association with Lions Clubs and Diabetologists at Coimbatore, Pollachi, Tirupur and Nilgiris. 27 press persons participated in the press meet conducted at AEH – Coimbatore. At the Diabetes exhibition-cum-DR screening camp held at GD Naidu Hall in association with RRV Diabetes Specialty Centre, a total of 571 persons were screened for Diabetic Retinopathy. 352 persons were found to have diabetes in which 59 were diagnosed to have Diabetic Retinopathy. 105 free diabetes blood screening centres were opened for people above the age of 40 in Coimbatore, Pollachi, Tirupur and Nilgiris. 27,110 persons were screened and 6,159 persons were found to have diabetes of which 1,167 persons were newly diagnosed diabetics. All the patients who were diagnosed with diabetes at the free diabetes screening were asked to attend the Diabetic Retinopathy follow-up camps at Coimbatore from November 14 -15 and at Pollachi, and Tirupur on November 16. Total out-patients screened were 564, of which 388 cases were identified with diabetes and 68 DR patients were referred to the base hospital for further treatment. Dr. Jayshree Arunaprakash, Department of Vitreo Retina Services, AEH – Coimbatore delivered a Diabetic Retinopathy awareness lecture and handled an interactive session with the patients at GD Naidu Hall.



### Special Lecture by Dr. P.Namperumalsamy

November 14

Dr. P. Namperumalsamy, Chairman Emeritus – AECS was invited as an ophthalmic expert to deliver a lecture on diabetes and its eye complications on the occasion of World Diabetes Day at M.V. Hospital for Diabetes and Prof. M. Viswanathan Diabetes Center, Chennai.



## PMOA Refresher Training Programme

Aravind - Pondicherry, November 22 - 27



A total of 18 ophthalmic technicians attended the second batch of Paramedical Ophthalmic Assistant (PMOA) refresher training programme. Dr. R.Venkatesh, Chief Medical Officer welcomed the gathering and gave an overview of the training programme. The participants were from various health centers and Government General Hospitals in Puducherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam. The six day training programme covered all the clinical aspects and recent developments in ophthalmology.

The valedictory function was held on November 27. Dr.R.Venkatesh welcomed the gathering. Dr. K. Thiruvenkatakrishnan honoured the guests with a memento. Dr.D.Sentamizhan Rene, Programme Officer - NPCB and Dr.Y.V. Chandramouli, HOD of Ophthalmology, IGGGH and PGI, Pondicherry addressed the gathering. Dr.Vijaya Balakandan, Mission Director, NRHM, Puducherry and Dr.Dilip Kumar Balliga, Director of Health Family Welfare, Puducherry were the chief guests. Dr. Dilip Kumar Balliga distributed participation certificates to the participants. Mrs. Fathima, Optometrist shared her feedback about the training programme. Mr.Tamilvanan, Optometrist proposed a vote of thanks which was followed by a lunch. The training programme was coordinated and facilitated by Ms. V.Swetha, Manager-HR, Sr.R.V.Selvarani, Nursing Superintendent and Sr.Muruganandhi.

## Hospital Day Celebrations

Tuticorin, November 27



Aravind Eye Hospital, Tuticorin celebrated its fifth Hospital day with a variety of programmes. Dr.R.Ramkrishnan, Chief Medical Officer, Ms.Saradha Ramakrishnan, Sr.Chidambaram and representatives from each department of Aravind - Tirunelveli attended the function. This is the first time that Hospital Day is being celebrated at Tuticorin.

The grand gala function started with a prayer song followed by various cultural programmes by staff members of Tuticorin Community centre. Dr. Naveen presented the annual report for the year 2009 - 2010. Later Dr. R.Ramkrishnan addressed the august gathering. Dr.Varsha was the master of ceremony. The function came to an end with dinner.

## Library CME

Aravind - Madurai, November 26 - 27

Aravind Library and Information Centre, Madurai conducted a two day CME to evaluate the services and activities of Aravind libraries. The CME aimed to enrich the library services and to redefine the librarians' role in the further developmental activities of the library. Librarians from Madurai, Tirunelveli, Coimbatore, Pondicherry and Theni attended the CME. Dr. M.Srinivasan delivered the welcome address. In his address, Mr. R.D Thulasiraj, Executive Director - LAICO stressed the role of librarians in redefining the current practices. Dr. R.D. Ravindran, Chairman - AECS provided insights for improving the infrastructure of satellite hospitals. Ms. Preethi Pradhan, Senior Faculty -





LAICO explained the importance of archiving huge electronic resources for the benefit of the users.



### **Anniversary Celebrations of Anaimalai Vision Centre**

November 27



The second anniversary celebrations of the Anaimalai vision centre were organized at Govt. Boys Higher Secondary School, Anaimalai. An exhibition on the importance of eye care and the functions of vision centre was arranged. The students of Govt. Boys Higher Secondary School took part in the eye care awareness rally with a view to propagate the importance of eye care among the public. A Diabetic Retinopathy screening camp was held in the same premises, where the outpatient turnout was 304 with 104 known and 3 new diabetes patients. Various community leaders graced the celebrations with their presence.

Mr. Ravichandran, camp organiser welcomed the gathering and briefed on the functions and uses of vision centre in the community. A total of 400 persons formed the gathering. Sr Kanagalakshmi, vision centre coordinator read the annual report of the centre. Mr. Murugaraju, camp manager honoured the chief guests and proposed a vote of thanks. Dr. Nithya - Senior Resident and Incharge of Anaimalai centre and Dr. Naveen-Retina Fellow were the key persons in making the camp successful.



### **DOT Practical Examination**

Aravind - Pondicherry, December 8 - 9

DOT (Diploma in Ophthalmic Techniques) practical examination for the first and second year students was held at Aravind - Pondicherry. Dr.Chandramouli, Dr.Vijayapriya Ophthalmologist from Government Hospital -Pondicherry), Dr.Veena and Dr.Kavitha were the external examiners for the practical and viva-voce examination. A total of 29 first year students and 21 second year students fared the examination successfully.



### **Valedictory Function of Instruments Maintenance Course**

Aravind - Madurai, December 11



Dr. George Varghese Puthuran, Chief, Glaucoma Unit, Aravind - Madurai presided the valedictory function of the 68th Instruments Maintenance course and gave away the certificates and tool kits to the trainees. Ms. R. Jayalakshmi was the chief instructor for the course. Six trainees one each from Nigeria, Uganda and Zimbabwe and three from India underwent training.



### **School Students' Appreciation Letter for Aravind - Tirunelveli**

Tirunelveli

Students of Andrews Matric School, Tirunelveli were all praise for Aravind activities when Aravind - Tirunelveli

conducted a camp exclusively for them and dispensed spectacles to the needy. The camp was conducted as part of the project Eye Care for a Million Children. It is proposed to reach one million children in the age group of 0 – 17 years in three years starting from August 2010, through comprehensive eye screening and intervention both in preventive and curative aspects. This project is supported by Lavelle Fund for the Blind, a US based NGO. [View the original letter](#)



### **Distribution of Health Insurance Identity Cards**

Aravind – Tirunelveli, December 11

As part of employee welfare activities, health insurance identity cards were distributed to the employees by Chief Medical Officer Dr.R.Ramakrishnan. Ms. Lakshmi, HR Manager gave a brief introduction about the health insurance scheme on the occasion.



### **Retention Award for MLOPs**

Aravind – Tirunelveli, December 13



Retention award of Rs.20,000/- was distributed to each of the MLOPs who successfully completed five years of service at Aravind Eye Hospitals. A formal meeting was organized and the FD Certificates were distributed by Dr.R.Ramakrishnan, CMO and Dr.Meenakshi, MLOP in-charge. Dr.R.Ramakrishnan, medical officers, Mr. Mohammed Ghouse, Manager, Specialty Clinic, Sr.Chidambaram, MLOP supervisors and tutors attended the function.



Aravind – Pondicherry, December 17



Sr.Dhanabakiyam welcomed the gathering and the Fixed Deposit Certificates for Rs. 20,000 were distributed by Dr.R.Venkatesh, CMO, Dr.Thiruvengkatakrisnan, Chief-Cornea Clinic, Dr.Veena, MLOP-Incharge and Mr.Poobalan, Manager-Administration. Sr.Vasanthi delivered a vote of thanks on behalf of all the MLOPs. Ms. Swetha.V, Manager-HR, facilitated the whole programme.



### **Electroretinography (ERG) Workshop**

Aravind – Coimbatore, December 13 - 15



A total of 18 participants from ophthalmic institutes across India participated in the workshop. Dr. Eric Sutter from USA was the chief instructor.



### **School Students' visit to Aravind – Pondicherry**

December 17

A team of 36 students from class 12 of Government Higher Secondary School, Thavalakuppam visited Aravind –

Pondicherry. The team was divided into different batches and were taken on a hospital tour.



### Art from Waste Competition

Aravind – Pondicherry, December 17



As part of the employee developmental activities for MLOPs, the HR Department organised a competition on making handicrafts from waste materials. The participants were divided into different teams. The teams Nermai and Anbu got the first and second prize respectively.



### Seminar on Diagnosis and Management of Diabetes Mellitus

Aravind – Tirunelveli, December 17



The seminar meant for the MLOPs was organised by Bayer Healthcare in association with American Academy of Continuing Medical Education (AACME). The seminar started with prayer song followed by Ms. Lakshmi.R, Manager - HR welcoming the gathering. Dr. R. Ramakrishnan, CMO gave an introductory talk. Dr. Manakavala Perumal, Physician who was invited as the guest speaker spoke about the crucial role of nursing care in diabetes. At the end of the session, certificates were distributed to all the participants.



### Training on the use of Fire Extinguisher

Aravind – Pondicherry, December 18



A training programme on the use of fire extinguisher was organised for the staff members of Catering, Housekeeping, Electrical, Maintenance and Internal Security departments, lift operators, drivers, clinical and non Clinical staff. Mr. Sankar-Regional Manager, Usha Fire Safety Services demonstrated different types of fire extinguishers, types of fire accidents and also briefed on how to manage the same. Mr. Krishnamoorthy, Transport Manager facilitated the programme.



### Christmas Celebrations

Aravind – Tirunelveli, December 20

An evening of carols, cakes, cultural programmes, glittering stars and candles marked the grand Christmas celebrations at Aravind – Tirunelveli. This is the first time that such a programme is being organized at Aravind. All the staff members including doctors, MLOPs and Admin staff members shared the joy and happiness of the season. The legendary Santa Claus distributed gifts to the audience.





Aravind – Madurai

December 23



It was a spectacular evening of celebrations where the LAICO auditorium was fully packed with the staff and employees. The highlight being the grand carol service by the American College choir team, the staff and some of the employees' children also rendered melodious Christmas songs. The staff performed skit depicting the Nativity Scene. Relevant passages from the Bible were read. Ms. Jesly Titus compered the whole programme.

Aravind – Pondicherry

December 23



The joyous evening was marked with all the paraphernalia of Christmas - glittering lights, stars, cakes and candles. Cultural programmes put up by the staff sent across the message of Christmas and delighted the audience.

## CONFERENCES ATTENDED ELSEWHERE

### Orissa State Ophthalmological Conference

Orissa, November 13

Dr. Haripriya

- *Safe and predictable technologies in cataract surgery.*

### Confluence 2010

Organised by IIM, Ahmedabad,

November 26

Dr.P.Namperumalsamy was invited as a distinguished speaker for Confluence 2010-annual business summit towards the theme *Inspiring Innovations, Expanding Horizons.*

### Conference on Ocular Leptospirosis

Trichi, November 29

Dr. Rathinam Sivakumar attended a conference on *Ocular Leptospirosis* at Trichi on November 29.



### Vitreous Retinal Society of India Conference

Kolkata, December 2-4

Dr. Parag K. Shah

- *Outcome of Group C/D Retinoblastoma after Sub Tenon Carboplatin Injections* (free paper)

Dr. V.R. Saravanan

- *Micro incision vitrectomy surgery instrumentation*

- *Macular hole surgery in RRD high myopia*



### Asia – Pacific Joint Glaucoma Congress

Taipei, Taiwan, December 3 – 5



Dr.R.Ramakrishnan (invited faculty)

- *How to manage complications of Trabeculectomy*

Dr. P.Sathyan

- *Manual SICS Trabeculectomy* (video)

Dr. Ganesh Raman

- *To study the accessibility and ability to use mobile phone for follow-up and medication reminders in patients attending glaucoma clinic* (poster)

Dr. Sharmila

- *Trabeculectomy with subconjunctival biodegradable implant (Ologen) for the treatment of glaucoma* (poster)



### 3rd Annual conference Poona Ophthalmological Society

Poona, December 18 – 19

Dr. Usha Kim

- *Management of Blepharoptosis*

- *Management of congenital NLD obstruction*

- *Orbital tumours: Clinical spectrum*

She chaired a session on *Oculoplasty* at the conference.



## LAICO HAPPENINGS

### Evaluation Visit on Pilot County Eye Care System Strengthening Project

Jiangxi Province, China, November 22 – 26



Mr. R. Meenakshi Sundaram, Senior Manager – Community Outreach made an evaluation visit to assess the developments and proceedings of the Pilot County Eye Care System Strengthening Project in Jiangxi Province, China. The project has been initiated by Fred Hollows Foundation in 2008 in Xiushui County, Jiangxi Province which aimed to provide accessible, affordable, and high quality of eye services to the poor rural population in partnership with the Jiangxi Provincial Bureau of Health (PBOH) through the Xiushui Hospital.



### Symposium on Prevention of Blindness in Neonates, Infants and Children

LAICO, December 3





Around 57 Gynecologists participated in the half day symposium conducted for obstetricians and gynaecologists as part of A2Z project. The aim was to convince them the need to create awareness among the parents of premature and low birth weight babies about early eye examination and prevention of blindness due to ROP. This was a joint effort of Paediatric Ophthalmology department, Aravind Eye Hospital – Madurai and The Madurai Obstetrics Gynecologists' Society.



### Visit to Eerste River Hospital, South Africa

Cape Town, South Africa, November 29 – December 3



Ms. Sashipriya, Mr. Sanil Joseph and Ms. Dhivya from LAICO along with Dr. Dayakar (Aravind- Pondicherry), Dr. Viji Rangarajan (Aravind-Coimbatore)– visited Eerste River Hospital for a Needs Assessment Visit as part of the IAPB Capacity Building Grant Fund Programme. The team studied the overall health structure and the hospital's work processes towards improving the output of the hospital.



### Workshop on Eye Care Programme Management

East London, South Africa, December 6 – 10



Ms. Sashipriya, Mr. Sanil Joseph and Ms. Dhivya from LAICO along with Dr. Dayakar (Aravind-Pondicherry), Dr. Viji Rangarajan (Aravind-Coimbatore) conducted a week-long workshop on Eye Care Programme Management supported by Fred Hollows Foundation, South Africa. This workshop was organised for the District Managers of the Eastern Cape province of South Africa to help them understand common eye diseases, their magnitude in South Africa and the basics of eye care programme design and implementation.



### Evaluation Visit to Oman

December 11 – 15

Dr. R. Kim, Chief - Retina Services, Aravind – Madurai and Mr. Suresh Kumar, Faculty – LAICO made an evaluation visit to Oman to review the current situation of diabetic retinopathy program approach to address visual disabilities due to DR in relation to type 2 diabetes and its complications.

[Click here to view Consultancy statistical report](#)



## TRAINING PROGRAMMES

Course title	Training Centre	Total Number Trained as on October 2010	Enrollments for November 2010
<b>Long Term Courses - For Ophthalmologists</b>			
<b>Fellowship in Cornea</b>	<b>Madurai</b>	38	1
	<b>Tirunelveli</b>	0	0
	<b>Coimbatore</b>	18	0

	<b>Pondicherry</b>	2	0
<b>Fellowship in Glaucoma</b>	<b>Madurai</b>	25	1
	<b>Tirunelveli</b>	9	0
	<b>Coimbatore</b>	13	0
	<b>Pondicherry</b>	3	1
<b>Short Term Courses - For Ophthalmologists</b>			
<b>Diagnosis and Management of Glaucoma</b>	<b>Madurai</b>	92	2
	<b>Tirunelveli</b>	120	0
	<b>Coimbatore</b>	87	0
	<b>Pondicherry</b>	1	0
<b>Phacoemulsification</b>	<b>Madurai</b>	122	3
	<b>Tirunelveli</b>	67	1
	<b>Coimbatore</b>	83	1
	<b>Pondicherry</b>	17	0
<b>Small Incision Cataract Surgery</b>	<b>Madurai</b>	151	1
	<b>Tirunelveli</b>	105	0
	<b>Coimbatore</b>	120	1
	<b>Pondicherry</b>	18	0
	<b>Theni</b>	1	0
<b>Lasers in Diabetic Retinopathy</b>	<b>Madurai</b>	240	2
	<b>Coimbatore</b>	227	2
	<b>Pondicherry</b>	2	0
<b>Short Term Training in Vitrectomy (by Virtual)</b>	<b>Madurai</b>	16	1
	<b>Coimbatore</b>	3	0
<b>Fundus Fluorescein Angiography and Ultrasonography</b>	<b>Madurai</b>	36	1
<b>Instrument Maintenance Course</b>			
<b>Instrument Maintenance - For Technicians</b>	<b>Madurai</b>	409	7
<b>Instrument Maintenance Course</b>			
<b>Community Outreach and Social Marketing of Eye Care Services</b>	<b>LAICO</b>	235	7

[Click here to view Training Programme full statistics](#)



## PUBLICATIONS

- **BMC MED GENET. VOL: 11(1) 2010 NOV. 10 p.158**

Suganthalakshmi, Balasubbu; Sundaresan, P; Anand Rajendran, Kim, R; Govindarajan G, Namperumalsamy, P; Hejtmancik JF

*Association Analysis of Nine Candidate Gene Polymorphisms in Indian Patients with Type 2 Diabetic Retinopathy*

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2350/11/158>

- **Microbiology. 2010 NOV. 16**

Cady, K C; White, A S; Hammond, J H; Abendroth, M D; Karthikeyan, R S, Lalitha, Prajna, Zegans, M E; O'Toole, G A

*Prevalence, conservation and functional analysis of Yersinia and Escherichia CRISPR regions in clinical Pseudomonas aeruginosa Isolates*

<http://mic.sgmjournals.org/cgi/content/short/mic.0.045732-0v1?rss=1>

**MONTHLY PATIENT STATISTICS**

<b>November - 2010</b>								
Hospitals	Madurai	Theni	Tirunelveli	Coimbatore	Pondicherry	Dindigul	Thirupur	Total
<b>HOSPITAL OUT-PATIENT VISITS</b>								
Paying (New & Review)	34,300	5,579	19,256	25,678	14,371	3,787	2,658	102,971
Free (Direct walk-in)	9,499	1,509	4,747	8,157	4,443	-	-	28,355
<b>OUTREACH OUT PATIENTS</b>								
Regular Eye Camps	5,360	1,069	3,691	7,127	3,376	-	-	20,623
Diabetic Retinopathy camps	1,396	644	511	28,653	898	-	-	32,102
Refraction Camps	451	-	873	282	422	-	-	2,028
Mobile Refraction Unit	-	482	-	-	-	-	-	482
School Screening	12,990	269	3,570	13,152	6,139	-	-	36,120
Paediatric Camps	-	-	-	120	-	-	-	120
Vision Centres	6803	4,158	3,256	2,484	1,608	-	-	18,309
Community Eye Clinics	3425	1,719	3,686	-	-	-	-	8,830
<b>Total Examinations OP</b>	<b>74,224</b>	<b>15,429</b>	<b>39,590</b>	<b>85,653</b>	<b>31,257</b>	<b>3,787</b>	<b>2,658</b>	<b>249,940</b>
<b>SURGERIES</b>								
Paying	1,797	251	892	1237	506	92	-	4,775
Free (including the subsidized camp surgeries)	1,510	176	560	1,298	396	21	-	3,961
Camp	1,254	168	738	1,789	612	-	-	4,561
<b>Total Surgeries</b>	<b>4,561</b>	<b>595</b>	<b>2,190</b>	<b>4,324</b>	<b>1,514</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13,297</b>

**CASE STUDY****When a situation arises to lose one eye for the other...**

Human has many essential organs as well as a few indispensable ones. An eye, though essential for seeing, is not indispensable for a person's life as, for example, the heart. However, eye has a distinct quality which the heart does not. A man's entire eye ball cannot be replaced by a deceased person's eye ball for vision restoration; only the cornea can be transplanted for that purpose. But a living man's defective heart can be replaced by a deceased person's healthy heart to keep his life going.

When a man's eye condition necessitates removal of that essential organ, the concerned patient gets upset and initially declines consent to enucleation. The medical staff explains to him that in due course the other eye too would be affected if the diseased eye is left as it is. This makes the patient perplex.



A young man aged about 25 faced a similar situation recently when his right eye was found to have a granulomatous tumour and advised enucleation. What to choose? To agree for the operation and live with an ugly face bereft of an eye or refusing to consent and let the left eye too to get affected with tumour?

The name of the patient is Rengaraj (real name shielded) who belongs to Dharmapuri area. He was working in a private company as a casual labourer. His right eye gradually began to swell and finally lost vision. He consulted the doctors in his area who informed him that his eye disease could not be cured by any medicine.

The worried patient by chance came to know Aravind's eye camp being held at Dharmapuri. He attended the camp and got his eye examined. The doctors found a granulomatous tumour inside the right eye and told Rengaraj that the eye ball should be removed to prevent its likely spread to the normal eye. The patient counsellor explained to the patient the severity of his eye problem, mode of treatment and the imperative of removing the diseased eye ball. His immediate reaction was refusal to enucleation because it will result in his face becoming ugly.

The counsellor consoled him and said that a prosthetic eye can be substituted for the enucleated eye and it would restore his original appearance. These compassionate words persuaded the patient to consent for the eye removal operation. Rengaraj was referred to Aravind - Madurai, where enucleation was done. He was discharged with eye drop medicine for 15 days. When he returned to the hospital for a follow up, the surgical wound was found completely healed. Later a prosthetic eye fabricated to the exact size of the socket was fitted to the right eye.

Rengaraj looked at his face in the mirror and felt happy to see it. The swelled eye with a whitish cornea that gave an ugly look had gone! His face had become as beautiful as it was sometimes back.

Though the prosthetic eye could not see, it gave him the normal look. Rengaraj expressed thanks to Aravind Eye Hospital for restoring his original appearance and also saving the left eye.

- M.V. Chitalakshmi

