

The Indian **EXPRESS**

Tuesday, July 10, 2007

Gangaram doc's 'unconventional' breast surgeries find place in US journal

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NEW DELHI, JULY 9

HIS "unconventional way" of conducting breast surgeries triggered several debates in medical circle. Some called him a magician, others a liar. The President of World Congress of Surgeons went so far as to call him a "nut case" from India.

However, the unusual laparoscopic surgery technique of Dr B B Agarwal, consultant Laparoscopic and general surgeon at Sir Gangaram Hospital, recently found a mention in Surgical Endoscopy, a reputed journal of Society of American Gastrointestinal Endoscopic Surgeons.

At the Las Vegas meet of Society of American Gastrointestinal Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES-2007), Dr Agarwal's laparoscopic, bloodless breast surgeries, without using "energy source", leaving no scar on the breasts, was selected for publication in its journal. Dr Agarwal is the only Indian doctor to have found a place in the list of achievers.

Conventionally, the surgery is performed using "energy sources" for removal of lumps in the breasts. According to Dr Agarwal, this, at times, can be fatal as it results in burn injuries in surrounding areas. The new technique, however, doesn't involve such problems.

Dr Agarwal's unusual laparoscopic surgery technique has been acknowledged by the World Congress of Endoscopic Surgeons (Berlin 2006), Asia-Pacific Congress (Seoul 2006) and American Endoscopic surgeon (Las Vegas) this year. He is now awaiting European Association of Endoscopic Surgeons' Congress, to be held this month in Greece.



"As per western records, about three in 1000 patients die from usage of energy sources. It can be easily said that two in 100 develop internal burns due to the energy sources and die due to complications. I have done about 24 such cases my way and all my patients are doing fine," said Dr Agarwal.

To avoid scars on the breast, the doctor reaches the breast through either the armpit or from the naval. The route is taken through the bloodless layer of the body, which prevents blood loss.

"A scar on breasts is never appreciated by women. It not only looks ugly, but may also lead to problems like pain during lactation. If energy source is being used for the surgery, it may harm the adjoining areas too. To eradicate all such problems, the new innovation proves beneficial," he said.

"I overcame the need to use energy sources by my fundamental research in human anatomy, which I presented at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) along with other medical institutes. I am happy that my hard work is bearing fruitful results. My work has been acknowledged by the World Congress of Endoscopic Surgeons (Berlin 2006), Asia-Pacific Congress (Seoul 2006) & American Endoscopic surgeon (Las Vegas) this year."

Dr Agarwal is awaiting European Association of Endoscopic Surgeons Congress, to be held this month in Greece, where he will present his work. Based on his innovations, the experts in Greece have decided to make changes in their books of anatomy, which till now did not explain the plains without blood in the body.