

Stem cell Therapy - Not on the Horizon in India

There was hope when Ministry of Health, Government of India, initiated the establishment of a high power committee last June (2013) for development of guidelines on Cell Therapies in India. The draft document, with a distinct road map, was released for the professionals to ponder and provide feedback. They mandated license for all those centers that intend to establish Stem Cell and Cell Based Products (SCCP) for therapeutic purposes. Failure to comply would entail penalties. This means that the DCGI (Drug Controller General of India) approves the cell therapy as an accepted management/therapeutic modality. Of course, the document describes the mandatory requirements, to be administered by the Government of India for development, manufacturing and quality control of SCCPs for their Non-clinical and Clinical usage.

There is paradoxical statement issued by ICMR, an Institution of Ministry of Health of Government of India. In accordance with this stringent definition, every use of stem cells in patients outside an approved clinical trial shall be considered a malpractice. (From now on any use of stem cell in patients will be considered Research and Not Therapy). It is hoped that this clear definition will serve to curb the malpractice of Stem cell 'THERAPY', being offered as a new tool for curing untreatable diseases' (ICMR/DBT). It has been said that decision to drop Therapy has been taken on the recommendation of a Joint Drafting Committee of the ICMR and the DBT. This means that the Stem Cell Therapy is not a part of accepted management modalities in any disease.

There is an apparent dichotomy in the thought process between DCGI and ICMR. The scientists may continue their research on stem cells uninhibited as a clinical trial with the support of the clinical experts, but the sad part is deprivation of even marginal benefit to the patients suffering from incurable or terminal ailments. The world literature on Stem Cell Research continues to be promising but awaiting approvals.

Dr. K. Ravindranath
CMD - Global Hospitals Group

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Global News Line Team: Dr. K. Ravindranath (CMD - Global Hospitals Group)

Prof. K.S. Ratnakar
Dr. V. Sritharan
Mr. R. V. Krishna

Ms. Sandhya Prasad
Mr. Srinivas Allada
Mr. Sharath Akula

Ms. Sejal Mody
Ms. Anjum Pasha
Mr. Vasanth Philip

Ms. Srilakshmi
Mr. Phalguna
Mr. Sanjay Shukla

Survival in sepsis – Innovative methods

KNOW THE SIGNS

KNOW SEPSIS

Most important medical cause of mortality in the recent times is Sepsis. Sepsis, the body's response to severe infections, kills more people than breast cancer, prostate cancer and HIV/AIDS combined. On average, 30 percent of those diagnosed with sepsis die.

A new study conducted by Jamey Marth, (Director of UC Santa Barbara's Center for Nanomedicine and Professor of the Sanford-Burnham Medical Research Institute) describes a new method to increase survival in sepsis. The results are reported in the most prestigious medical journal, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Earlier, Marth's team found out the biological purpose of the Ashwell-Morell receptor (AMR) in the liver, the new discovery not only describes the AMR's protective mechanism, but also outlines a way to leverage it for therapeutic use. Sepsis often triggers widespread blood coagulation and thrombosis, which can lead to organ failure and death.

The researchers found that the AMR protects the host by the rapid removal of the prothrombotic components normally present in the bloodstream, including platelets and specific coagulation factors that contribute to the formation of blood clots. The study reveals this mechanism of AMR function in mitigating the lethal effects of excessive blood coagulation and thrombosis in sepsis.

The key is neuraminidase, an enzyme that is present in many pathogenic microorganisms, such as Streptococcus pneumoniae, the bacteria used in this study, which remains one of the top five causes of death worldwide. Pathogens use neuraminidase to get into cells, but once the pathogen enters the bloodstream, the enzyme then remodels the surface of platelets and other glycoproteins in circulation. This remodeling signals the AMR to remove those platelets and coagulation factors before they have a chance to contribute to the lethal coagulopathy of sepsis.

"It's a highly conserved protective mechanism never before identified," said Marth, who is also Carbon Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and Mellichamp Professor of Systems Biology at UCSB. "The host has evolved this protective mechanism over millions of years as a way to compensate for the lethal impact of the pathogen on our coagulation system."

The scientists wondered what would happen if they could pre-activate and augment AMR function in the early phases of sepsis. To answer that question, they infected mice with Streptococcus pneumoniae and then gave them a single dose of neuraminidase. "We were able to increase survival two-fold," said Marth. "It's remarkable, and because we see the same mechanism active in human sepsis there is excitement by the potential of this approach to save millions of lives."

In teasing out the details of the AMR's protective mechanism, Marth and his colleagues learned that the receptor has the capability to selectively identify and remove certain blood components that could harm the host if they contributed to blood clotting in sepsis.

Inauguration of Global Specialty Clinics at Uppal Health Care Center, IDA

Dr. K. Ravindranath - Chairman and Managing Director, Global Hospitals Group inaugurated Global Specialty Clinics at Uppal Healthcare Center, IDA, Uppal in the presence of Mr. M. M. Reddy, Chairman, Uppal Industrial Employees Healthcare Centre.



Dr. Vijay Vemuri, COO - Global Hospitals, L.B. Nagar, Mr. S. V. Sudheer, Secretary IDA Uppal, and Dr. Gopinath, Chief Physician, UHC Centre.

Super specialists in 8 different specialties from Global Hospitals, L.B. Nagar will be available for consultations for all the Industrial Employees, their families and neighborhood giving high quality healthcare facility for the people in the region.

India's First Minimal Access Lung Transplant



The Lung Transplant Surgeons at Global Health City, Chennai, part of Global Hospitals Group, performed India's First successful Minimal Access Transplant for Lung on a 61 year recipient. On 24th November 2013, Mr. Raja Babu Shah underwent the minimal

access transplant procedure, bringing smiles on the face of his wife and their three kids. Mr. Raja Babu Shah, was diagnosed to have Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis several years ago. It is a progressive interstitial lung disease and shows poor response to maximal medical management. On the waiting list for Lung Transplantation under the Cadaver Transplantation Program of Tamil Nadu since July 2013, he was earlier confined to bed and wheelchair for over an year.

Global Hospitals Group organizes the 4th Master Class in Liver Disease

Global Health City, part of the Global Hospitals Group, in line with its endeavour to create a platform to bring together stalwarts in health care to share their knowledge and experiences on key issues, organised the '4th Master Class in Liver Disease Conference' from 31st Jan' to 2nd Feb' 2014. The focal area for the Conference was 'Peri-Operative Care of the Liver Transplant Recipient' this year.



Global Health City, Chennai Hosts Myanmar-India Neurosciences Conclave - 2014



The Institute of Neurosciences and Spinal Disorders of the Global Health City, Chennai hosted a Myanmar-India Neurosciences Conclave (MINC) on 4th and 5th Feb' 2014 to mark the beginning of a new long-term relationship between the Neuroscientists of both the countries.

The objective of MINC 2014 was to facilitate scientific deliberations and discussions on various facets of Clinical Neurology & Neurosurgery, and also Research in Neurosciences. A 5-member delegation from Myanmar, comprising Sr. Neurosurgeons and Anaesthesiologists attended MINC 2014. Neurosciences team from Global Health City performed live surgeries demonstrating latest techniques like 'Awake Craniotomy', and various other brain and spine surgeries. There was case discussions and presentation of protocols used in the Institute of neurosciences at Global Health City.

Global Hospitals, Hyderabad sets New Benchmark in Laparoscopic Liver Resection

Global Hospitals, Hyderabad that pioneered many surgical innovations for over a decade, has now set a new benchmark in liver surgery by performing Laparoscopic Liver Resection (LLR). LLR is a procedure to remove benign (non-cancerous) or malignant (cancerous) liver tumours through keyhole-sized cuts (instead of a large cut), which decreases post operating complications. The surgical innovation was initiated by the surgeons at Global Institute of Liver, Pancreas Diseases and Transplantation.



Explaining the technique, Dr. Tom Cherian, HOD, HPB Surgery & Liver Transplantation, Global Hospitals, Lakdi-ka-pul, Hyderabad said "Recent advances in peri-operative management and liver resection techniques have lowered the mortality to less than 2%-3%. LLR is a significant advancement that lowers the morbidity linked to liver surgery even further. However, early detection with CT or ultrasound scans is the key to effective treatment".

Global Advanced Imaging & Interventional Radiology



GLAIRE is a unique platform initiated by Global Health City to form a close-knit group of Radiology and Nuclear Medicine specialists, and Clinicians to facilitate sharing of knowledge and insights. It has been initiated with a proposition of conducting CMEs every month as a half-a-day sessions. The theme for

the inaugural session of GLAIRE was Non surgical management of HCC conducted on 1st March'14. This included presentation of interesting oncology cases followed by a live video demonstration of TACE (Transarterial Chemoembolisation) and TARE (Transarterial Radioembolisation).

Health Camps / Talks by Global Hospitals, Mumbai



Health Camp Axis Bank on Spirometry

A Health Camp on Spirometry was conducted at Axis Bank, Lower Parel on Jan' 10 2014 by Global Hospitals, Mumbai. Over 250 people have shown their enthusiasm by attending this camp.

Health Camp at Central Bank of India

A Health Camp with breathometry was organized at Central Bank of India, Fort on 19 Oct' 2013. The session was a huge hit with both the employees and the customers of Central Bank of India. Patient education brochures were also distributed amongst the employees and customers.



Health Camp at UCO Bank, Worli



A Health Camp was organized at UCO Bank, Worli on 16 Oct' 2013. The session was a huge hit with both the employees and the customers of UCO Bank. Patient education brochures were also distributed amongst the employees and customers. About 95 people between the age group of 40 – 58 years were screened.

Health Talk at Reserve Bank of India, Mumbai

A Health Talk was conducted on "Know about Digestive System" by Dr. Amit Maydeo, Director & Consultant Gastroenterologist, Global Hospitals, Mumbai on Feb' 05, 2014. Mr. K Ramaswamy, Regional Director, RBI attended the event. The talk followed by a Q & A session that was highly appreciated by all the employees.



Health Talk at Walt Disney, Andheri



A Health Talk was conducted by Dr. Hozefa Bhinderwala, Global Hospitals, Mumbai on Nov 27, 2013. Over 50 people attended the event. The talk followed an interesting Q & A session for half an hour. Dr. Hozefa answered all the questions enthusiastically.

India's First Innovative Pediatric Liver Transplant Procedure



Global Hospitals, Hyderabad, received the case of a 10 year old boy with liver failure. With stunted growth, weighing just 21 kgs, suffering with jaundice, the boy on initial diagnosis was found to be Hepatitis A positive. His condition rapidly deteriorated due to worsening liver failure

and the Liver Specialists at Global Hospitals suggested an urgent liver transplant to increase his chances of survival.

Upon a detailed work-up done on the 28 year old 'willing to donate' mother, she was normal on all important parameters required out of a donor, but she had an unusual liver anatomy where a "normal right hepatic vein" was absent. The outflow of blood in the hepatic veins of her liver was unusual and a standard donor operation would have put her life at risk.

The Surgeons came up with an innovative means of both extracting the liver from the donor and also implanting into the recipient with minimum risk. Unlike a standard transplant, the right sided liver vein in the boy was used to reconstruct the lower portion of the middle liver vein in the Mother's liver graft. Such an innovative use of the right sided liver vein has never been attempted before, thereby uniquely qualifying the mother of boy as a suitable donor.

The Surgeons then performed the surgery and retrieved a liver graft weighing 288 gms from the mother and performed the transplant procedure. Both the procedures were successful, the donor and recipient did well and were discharged.

Unusual Body Facts

Humans shed about 600,000 particles of skin every hour. You may not think much about losing skin if yours isn't dry or flaky or peeling from a sunburn, but your skin is constantly renewing itself and shedding dead cells.

KNOW THYSELF

Few days back, a visitor along with his wife and little daughter came to meet me. During conversation, I came to know he is an MBA working as Marketing Chief of big educational institutions I was really wondering what is marketing for education. It is an inconceivable thought for the uninformed minds like me. I was curious to know what precisely his functions are.

It was amazing revelation to me that education could go deep into the roots of our culture to the extent of enticing students from rural or urban areas to join their institutions much before they are ready to study. This is a malignant issue, if not addressed now, it would result in a new breed of intellectual giants and moral pigmies. Why and how this malady entered into the land of culture and traditions is any body's guess.

Earlier we were choosing the schools or colleges on our own, often assisted by parents, see the standards, team of dedicated teachers and the value based learning modules, cultural and extracurricular activities, etc. The teachers were altruistic with a parental feeling towards their wards. Even today people like us look at our teachers as towers of knowledge and wisdom.

Now-a-days students do not remember the names of their teachers. When the focus is on scores and grades, the education is degraded to information transfer. For this a Google, Amazon books would deliver better information. There is an added harm that is pressure on the tender minds to achieve scores prescribed leading to early depression.

This is absolutely unwarranted and possibly reprehensible. I understand marketing people fish for the students, of course performing well in their respective schools, offer incentives, do door to door campaign in all the rural and urban schools to achieve the TARGETS.

What a pity? I am also informed of a nauseating news that Managements, Masters who get large number of students would be suitably rewarded. Is it analogous to commissions and kick-backs?, Paradox is that these Educational Business Houses are either established or promoted maybe by individuals with vested interests who consider the field as a Gold Mine. Today, from Schools to Professional colleges are plagued by these immoral, unethical practices. Who would put a fullstop for this? Should all of us silently watch the decline helplessly? Awake and Arise, my dear fellowmen.

- From the Waves of Ocean

For any queries contact Global News Line Editorial Desk: newsline@globalhospitalsindia.com

www.globalhospitalsindia.com

Global Hospitals Group



Global Hospitals,
Lakdi-ka-pul, Hyderabad



Global Hospitals,
L.B. Nagar, Hyderabad



Global Health City,
Chennai



BGS Global Hospitals,
Bengaluru



Global Hospitals, Mumbai