

Lilavati Hospital's fetal surgery center to tackle spina bifida cases

As Maharashtra fights a rising spina bifida crisis, Lilavati Hospital's upcoming Fetal Surgery Center aims to combat it through timely medical interventions.

by Staff Writer | January 15, 2024

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Lilavati Hospitals plans to establish a Fetal Surgery Center in Mumbai. The hospital aims to perform complex in-utero surgeries to treat **Spina bifida patients** at the new center. Spina bifida cases pose a public health challenge in Maharashtra and India, with four to five cases reported per 1,000 live births.

Dr Santosh Karmarkar, Pediatric Surgeon at Lilavati Hospital, highlights the lack of awareness and financial constraints affecting approximately 70 percent of patients, denying them required treatment. Dr Karmarkar also advises adhering to a suitable diet to keep Spina bifida risks at bay. "**Folic acid-rich foods** can prevent neural tube defects," suggests Dr Karmarkar, emphasizing proactive measures before conception. He cites two success stories, Rishi Ganesh Gupta and Piyush Sahilkar, highlight the positive impact of timely interventions.

To combat the looming crisis of rising spina bifida cases, Lilavati Hospital also has organized a free counseling program on Sunday, January 30, 2024 in collaboration with the Spina Bifida Foundation. Patients from weaker economic sections may avail of waiving of surgery charges through SEWA and the Spina Bifida Foundation's support.

Lt Gen (Dr) V Ravishankar, Consultant Cardiovascular Surgeon and COO at Lilavati Hospital, highlights the hospital's role as a referral center for high-risk surgeries. He stresses the need for awareness campaigns to address spina bifida's overlooked status in rural areas.

About the counseling program:

- **Date:** 30/01/2024
- **Venue:** 5th Floor, Lilavati Hospital and Research Centre, Bandra Reclamation, Bandra, Mumbai. 400050
- **For free registration:** Call on 7905920464 OR visit <https://lilavatihospital.com/spina-bifida/>