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Mumbai doctors save life of 78-year-old woman with serious heart disease, and other inspiring medical miracles this week

Updated on: 16 June,2025 05:11 PM IST | Mumbai mid-day online correspondent |

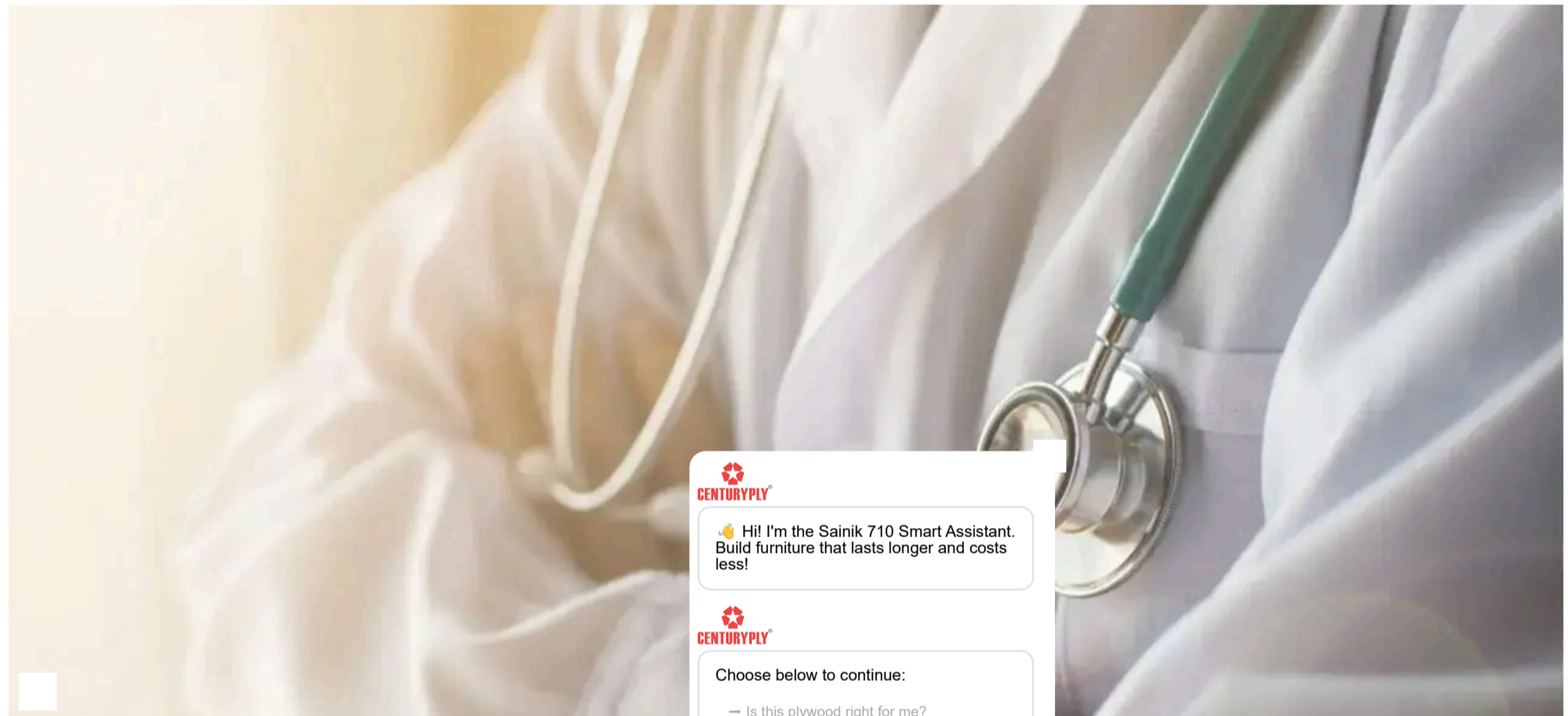
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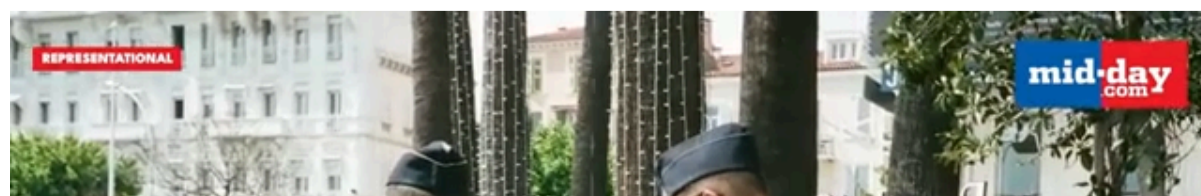
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The last few weeks have been quite disturbing for people as they witness tragic events around the country. It may be worse for those looking forward to some news that gives hope during this time.



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While one is about a 60-something woman getting life-saving surgery, the other involves an older woman getting operated for a serious heart disease.

Elderly woman gets new lease of life after falling from a horse during her Kedarnath pilgrimage

A 62-year-old woman who went for pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Kedarnath met with an accident while on horseback to the temple. The woman fell down sustaining multiple traumatic injuries with T12 compression fracture to the spinal column, left sided multiple ribs, left scapula and hemothorax (chest cavity bleeding). Even though she experienced acute pain, she didn't have the choice of instant air evacuation. Rather, she suffered an arduous, multi-day journey, starting with a long and treacherous road travel to Dehradun and then a transfer to a series of connecting flights through Dehradun and Jaipur to Mumbai before finally being shifted to KIMS Hospitals, Thane three days after the incident.

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On reaching the hospital, she was evaluated by Dr. Amogh Zavar, Consultant Spine Surgeon and was found to be short of breath with oxygen saturation in the 80s. In addition to having intense back pain, bi-lateral leg weakness, and urinary incontinence, she had symptoms of progressive spinal cord compression. Scans showed the fracture at T12 had already started to compress the spinal cord and cause neurologic deterioration. Transfers and multiple handlings compounded the issue further.

Dr. Zavar said, "In such cases, it is crucial to ensure safe transfer to a definitive care to avoid further damage and permanent neurological complications. Early intervention is important as surgery for spinal injuries performed within 48-72 hours has been shown to reduce the risk of irreversible damage. Contemporary minimally invasive surgical techniques minimize collateral muscle damage and blood loss, improve post operative pain management and recovery time. A multidisciplinary team-based approach to patient care, as followed at KIMS Hospitals, Thane, plays a vital role in the successful execution of complex surgeries. Equally crucial is comprehensive rehabilitation, which ensures optimal recovery and outcomes in these highly challenging clinical situations."

The team decided to operate on her with a Minimally Invasive Spinal Fixation and Indirect Decompression. The technique included Bio-Compatible screw insertion between T10 and L2 spinal levels and Vertebroplasty at T12 with bone cement as stabilization. A technique known as Rod Contouring along with indirect reduction was done to decompress the spinal cord without opening her spine and risking trauma. In elderly patients and with comorbidities, its effectiveness is especially high, as it allows for less blood loss and faster recovery time with minimal skin incisions.

The patient had an excellent recovery following the surgery. She was mobilized within 24 hours, while her lower extremity strength improved over time, as did her bladder control. She spent a day in the ICU and three days in the ward before being discharged in a stable condition. Now she is able to walk without pain, independently.

Describing her journey, the patient said, "While on a pilgrimage to Kedarnath, I met with an accident after falling from a horse. It took several days to reach the hospital. I got admitted to KIMS Hospitals Thane. I had multiple fractures, especially on the left side—affecting my shoulder, rib cage, and leg. Dr. Amogh performed the spine surgery, and thanks to his expertise, my recovery began quickly. Within a few days, I was able to stand and walk across the entire floor. The doctors, medical staff, and the overall hospital facilities have been exceptional. I'm truly grateful to the entire team for their care and support."



Mumbai doctors save life of 78-year-old woman with serious heart disease

Lilavati Hospital have successfully saved the life of a 78-year-old woman suffering from a serious heart condition known as Mitral

The surgery was conducted by a team of specialists led by Dr. Ravinder Singh Rao, Interventional Structural Cardiologist, Dr. Kaushal Pandey, Cardiac Surgeon, and Dr. Uday Gandhi, Cardiac Anaesthetist.

Sujata Sakpal (Name changed), had been suffering from severe breathlessness for months. She couldn't sleep lying down and experienced discomfort while eating, walking, or even bathing. Despite undergoing treatment from several doctors, there was no improvement. Realizing the seriousness of her condition, the family admitted her to Lilavati Hospital. Medical tests revealed that her mitral valve was damaged and heavily calcified. Considering her age, the condition of her lungs, and the extensive calcification in her heart, a traditional surgery was deemed extremely risky. Many other hospitals had declined to perform the procedure.

However, doctors at Lilavati Hospital took up the challenge and opted for the advanced TMVR procedure.

Dr. Ravinder Singh Rao, Interventional Structural Cardiologist, at the hospital said, "Given her age and frail condition, traditional surgery was not an option. So, we chose the Transcatheter Transatrial Mitral Valve Replacement technique. We used an Edwards Sapien 3 valve for the replacement. A small incision was made in the heart to remove the damaged valve and implant the new one. The entire procedure was completed in a very short time. The patient was kept in the ICU for just one day and discharged within four days as her condition improved. Three months later, she is now able to walk again, sleeps well, and lives independently without any breathing issues."

"This procedure offers a ray of hope to patients for whom traditional treatment is not possible," Concluded Dr. Rao.

Dr. Niraj Uttamani, COO of Lilavati Hospital Mumbai Said, "This surgery is not just a medical achievement but a landmark for India and the entire Asian continent. It reflects Lilavati's commitment to medical excellence and brings new hope to patients suffering from critical illnesses."

Sharing her feelings, Sujata said, "I had breathing problems for many years. I couldn't sleep or even eat properly. Other doctors had refused surgery, and I was scared. But the doctors at Lilavati Hospital treated me in time and gave me a second chance at life. I'm deeply grateful to them."

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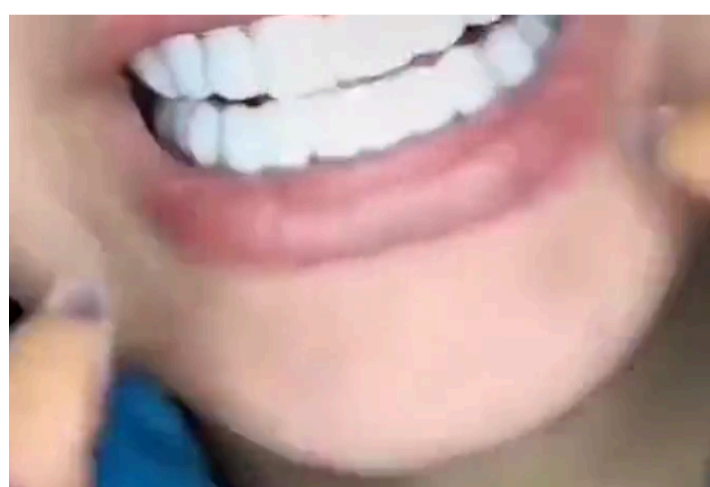


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