

No more facing the pain

Not being able to find a solution in Nigeria or London, a Trigeminal Neuralgia patient gets operated upon in Pune; is happy to have her 'painless' life back

ABOUT TRIGEMINAL NEURALGIA



Location of the brain where the surgery is performed



Before the surgery: trigeminal nerve (yellow part) which is suppressed by the artery (red part)



After the surgery: Teflon pad (white piece) inserted between the trigeminal nerve and artery

GRAPHIC COURTESY: DR JAYDEV PANCHWAGH

WHAT IS IT

A sudden, shooting, electric current like pain that originates in the cheek, jaw or forehead region is known as trigeminal neuralgia. It can extend to the eyelids, tip of the nose or gums

WHAT TRIGGERS IT

Touching certain parts of the face is a common trigger. Other triggers include chewing food, brushing teeth, speaking, etc. Even wind hitting the face can trigger the attack. The attacks can be so severe that some patients contemplate suicide. Treatment at initial stages includes nerve-numbing drugs like carbamazepine and gabapentine. Furthermore, they are just symptomatic therapy and do not address the basic cause of the disease

WHAT CAUSES IT

The trigeminal nerve carries sensation from different parts of the face to the brain through its three divisions. The area where the trigeminal nerve enters the brain is called the Root Entry Zone (REZ). Quite often, there are one or more blood vessels which lie close to the REZ. These transmit their pulsation to the nerve and the REZ. The transmitted pulsation causes disease in the area of the nerve in contact and this is the real cause of this disease

DIPTI BARVE

I live in Nigeria with my family. For the last many years, I experienced a severe pain on the right side of my face. I was put on medicines like tegretol and gabapentin, which would temporarily numb my nerves and reduce the pain, but these medicines did not cure the pain completely. Also, these medicines not only numb your nerves but also the entire nervous system, including the brain. With the increasing doses, I started feeling sleepy and would lose my balance while walking, every now and then. I had been to various doctors in India and Nigeria. I had also visited London for consultation. One day, I happened to come across the website of Pune's Deenanath Mangeshkar Hospital and learnt about the treatment for this problem. I decided to come to Pune at once. The surgical option was not discussed with me earlier with such clarity and confidence. My pain was so troublesome that I immediately got admitted to Deenanath Mangeshkar Hospital for surgery and was operated upon by Dr Jaydev Panchawagh. The pain disappeared the next day and for the first time in years I am living a painless life. I don't have to take anymore of those nerve and brain numbing medications. This surgery has been nothing short of a miracle for me and I have regained my life," said Ashwini Ghogardare, a Trigeminal Neuralgia disorder patient who was operated upon recently.

ly. "Having performed more than 100 such surgeries, interacting with patients and their relatives and receiving their feedback, I feel this surgery, as a treatment modality, should be offered to patients at early stages, before the disease alters personalities and begins to cause psychological problems. This surgery is performed with the help of a neurosurgical microscope and a small pad of Teflon is interposed between the blood vessel and the nerve. Patients are discharged from the hospital in three days. It is one of the few operations in neurosurgery where the results are dramatic and immediate," said Dr Jaydev Panchwagh, who performed the surgery on Ashwini.



Ashwini Ghogardare