

SOCIAL OBLIGATIONS / RESPONSIBILITIES PADMA SHREE Dr. ASHOK GUPTA

FIRST SUCCESSFUL PROXIMAL ARM REPLANTATION IN INDIA, 1983 28 YEARS FOLLOW UP WITH FULL FUNCTION



Master AA, a young boy aged around 3 years, had an accident on 13.7.83 at around 02.30 PM at Pune (about 100 miles away from Bombay), wherein he had a total amputation through elbow of his left arm. He was rushed to the well-known orthopaedic surgeon in the city, who in turn mentioned that such an operation is not possible anywhere in India. However, the said orthopaedic surgeon did mention that during one of the medical conference, he had listened to one of the young Plastic Surgeon presenting a paper on Microsurgery. May be they shall try to take the child to Mumbai. Through patient's relative, they could locate the Hospital at Mumbai as well the Plastic Surgeon. On way, they were instructed to preserve the amputated part suitably and to keep the patient well hydrated. Microsurgical exploration and preparation of the amputated part and the stump was performed under general anaesthesia and all the steps for replantation were undertaken:

- A) Bony fixation using Intra-medullary nail.
- B) Anastomosis of Brachial Artery.
- C) Anastomosis of veins. (Two Veins of adequate size.)
- D) Co-optation of ulnar and median nerves.
- E) Repair of Flexor / Extensor compartment.
- F) Loose closure of skin or skin graft if under tension.
- G) Fasciotomy of skin and deep fascia in the amputated part to avoid development of compartment compression syndrome following muscle oedema and venous engorgement.

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It was around 7.00 AM the next day that replantation of the limb could be accomplished. The color of the forearm, wrist, palm and fingers gradually started turning pink and there was a brisk capillary bleeding from all fingers on needle prick. The Patient did not develop any systemic complications nor had any major wound sepsis.



There is a very important social aspect of this success story. It happened that a senior anaesthesiologist of the Hospital was stuck up at the Pune Highway and there was no help coming his way despite many attempts. Suddenly, a car, which had initially passed beyond, reversed and a gentleman got down from the car. On checking the anaesthesiologist's car, he advised his friend to take care of the car and offered a lift to the anaesthesiologist. He insisted upon that he will escort the anaesthesiologist up to his residence. While appreciating the gesture of honourable father, anaesthesiologist did mention that you are very kind and god fearing man to help a stranger, father replied; "Quote" My son was admitted under Dr. Ashok Gupta at the Bombay Hospital for the treatment of amputation of the Arm, which was successful despite many odds. Also Dr. Gupta as well the Hospital was kind to extend heavy discounts in the bill. My son was in the hospital for 4 weeks and I could recognise the "Car Park sticker" on the Bombay Hospital Staff. I saw the same car park sticker on your car and hence immediately reversed and extended whatever little I could offer and is no match to what has been given to me by Dr. Gupta and the Hospital. "Unquote".

He has been followed up for 36 years and has become a man of 41 years and is using the limb in all his daily activities. It was a rare and difficult surgical feat to replant a proximal major amputation of the arm in a child of three years successfully.