

Stem cell therapy gets Rajasthan boy back on feet

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Medical miracle: Rohit Gehlot walking with support at a Vashi hospital on Tuesday.

Navi Mumbai: Three years ago, an accident damaged the spinal cord of Rohit Gehlot from Rajasthan. When the six-year-old was questioning his parents on why he was not able to move from his bed and why he could not feel anything below his waist, they had no answers.

A relative of the Gehlot family, who lives in Navi Mumbai, met Dr. Pradeep Mahajan and discussed the case. When the doctor agreed to give it a try, Rohit was admitted to Sanjyoti Hospital in Vashi on March 29. Now, one-and-a-half months after the therapy started, Rohit is able to walk with support. Most importantly, he can feel his legs, and control his bowel and bladder movement.

“In the accident, D 10 and D 11 of the spinal cord were damaged. He had lost his sensory perception in hips and legs, and also lost control of his bowel and bladder movement. So far, Rohit has been given three courses of therapy in a gap of 15 days, along with neurorehabilitation. The therapy given to Rohit had no surgery involved and had injections and stimulations of stem cell and nerve cell in the damaged area. The stem cell was taken from his bone marrow. If a person is healthy, his bone marrow is the best bank to get stem cells from.” Dr. Mahajan, a regenerative medicine researcher, Adigos stem cells, said.

Dr. Mahajan said he has also got back some sensory perception in his inner thigh area. “He underwent cell-based therapy to repair the damage to the nerves and muscles in the spine. Rohit was advised basic stretching exercises for his back, hips and legs. Following this, he was trained to stand with the help of calipers and walker. The patient is now able to sit up on his own without back support. He takes steps with the help of walker while using calipers.”

According to Dr. Mahajan, with regular physiotherapy and practice, Rohit will be able to walk without support in a few months. Two more courses of therapy in a gap of six months has been advised to Rohit, who was discharged from the hospital on Tuesday.

Rohit, who is now eight years old, has decided to keep trying walking till he becomes what he was. “Once I am completely fine, I want to resume my studies and go back to school. I feel good and happy,” he said.