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e-paper

Pure O2 treatment for paraplegic patients

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New Delhi: Acute head injury often results in disability and the damage caused, in most cases, is irreversible. Doctors at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital are using hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) — in which paraplegic patients are made to breathe 100% oxygen under high atmospheric pressure — to restore limb movement. Doctors say the therapy can help salvage the injured limb if given as part of emergency care.

“We have treated close to 100 neurosurgery patients, who suffered post-accident disability, with HBOT and have seen encouraging results. Most of our patients can now walk,” said Dr Tarun Sahni, senior consultant, internal medicine and in-charge of HBOT clinic at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital.

Doctors say this therapy helps restore blood supply to the damaged portion of the brain and the corresponding limb to a great extent.

In HBOT, patients breathe 100% oxygen at

Healing Power Of HBOT

Doctors are using hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) to treat wounds that take time to heal. Patients are given 100% oxygen at greater-than-normal atmospheric pressure

What is HBOT?

A patient is kept in an airtight chamber so that he can breathe in 100% pure oxygen. HBOT has proven effective in a number of different medical and surgical conditions, either as a primary or supplementary treatment

How it works?

Under normal atmospheric pressure, haemoglobin carries oxygen to different parts of the body. But at greater-than-normal atmospheric pressure, oxygen gets dissolved in blood plasma. Haemoglobin is not able to carry oxygen to an injury site, but plasma can



Inside image of the chamber



Who will benefit? HBOT can help cure a variety of conditions. It is most importantly used to cure: Head injury patients, diabetic foot, air embolism (a condition in which air enters the bloodstream), smoke inhalation, gangrene, and non-healing wounds

above normal atmospheric pressure. They are made to sit in a chamber in which the oxygen level and pressure is monitored. As a result, the

oxygen gets dissolved in blood plasma.

“The haemoglobin carries oxygen to various body parts. But as there is poor

blood supply at the injury site, oxygen supply is insufficient for the wound to heal. When the blood plasma carries oxygen, the wound gets

100% oxygen supply and heals faster,” said Dr Sahni. Apollo Hospital in collaboration with Monash University in Australia will soon start a study to assess the effect of HBOT in lower limb trauma. “We will give HBOT to all the patients who come to our emergency with lower limb injury. Various studies have shown that HBOT can help minimize damage if given soon after accident,” said Dr Sahni.

Apart from head injuries, HBOT is widely being used for treating diabetic foot and other non-healing wounds. “Diabetic foot is fast becoming a common problem and often results in amputation. HBOT is an effective treatment for diabetic foot. We give oxygen supply at two-and-a-half times more atmospheric pressure and most patients respond well within 10 sittings. The number of sittings depends on the extent of the disease,” he said.

“Any wound which doesn’t heal within six weeks must be considered for HBOT,” added Dr Sahni.

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COST OF TREATMENT
Rs 3000-Rs 4000
per sitting

DURATION OF TREATMENT
5-40 sittings