

Melwyn Peris Sentimental Nite - on 28 October, 2018 at Mangalore

06/10/2018 02:27 by admin

About Father Muller Oncology Centre

Fr Muller Oncology Centre was inaugurated on 9th December, 2007 by Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the then President of India. Over the past 11 years, this centre has helped thousands of cancer patients either to recover from this deadly disease or to get relief from the symptoms of cancer and hence extend their life.

Though cancer can affect people from all walks of life, in our country it is more prevalent amongst the people of low socio-economic status. For them, treatment for this deadly condition is many a time out of reach. At Fr Muller Oncology Centre, annually around Rs 35 to Rs 37 crores is spent as free care for cancer affected patients. As this type of charity is not available in many of the centers that handle cancer patients, Father Muller Oncology Centre has become a ray of hope for cancer patients who otherwise cannot afford modern treatment.

Over the past decades, the number of cancer patients is steadily increasing. The population boom and higher life expectancy, availability of health care that can treat most of the ther diseases which were earlier fatal are the main causes of increase in the number of cancer patients. Among the other causes, use of tobacco, extensive use of pesticides, pollution of the air and water contribute to the growth of cancer cells in otherwise healthy individuals. According to WHO's Cancer Report, in India, lung, oral, lip, throat and neck cancers are the most common among men while women suffer more from cervix, breast and ovarian cancer. In the elderly, the most commonly occurring cancers are kidney, intestine and prostate cancer.

Cancer can affect every part of the human body except nails and hair. At present, about one hundred types of cancers are known to occur in humans. The treatment of each type of cancer is different from the other, depending on its origin at a molecular level.

Treatment of cancer

If the cancer is detected in its initial stages and treatment begins early on, the results can be excellent. The same cancer after few months may not be agreeable for the same treatment, but one with a less than optimal outcome. Therefore, early detection of cancer is very important. Once there is a doubt of cancer, normally a biopsy (surgical removal of tissue) is done to know the exact type and nature of the cancer. Hence, biopsy is the first and important step in the treatment of the cancer. Simultaneously, several other tests are done to detect the spread of cancer to other regions of the body. For example, cancer from the stomach or intestine may spread to liver where as the cancer from genito-urinary region may spread to lungs. The cancer from lungs, thyroid and breasts can seed into bones. To detect the spread of cancer, many a times expensive tests like PET scan may be needed. If the cancer has not spread to other organs or immediate nearby tissues, then the treatment is relatively easy and outcome can be positive.

The treatment of cancer depends on the type of cancer, the stage of the cancer (how much it has spread), age, health status of the individual. There is no single treatment for cancer, and patients often receive a combination of therapies. Treatments usually fall into one of the following categories: surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, immunotherapy, hormone therapy, or gene therapy. Most of the patients require combination of therapies.

Surgery is the most common treatment for cancer. The surgeon who has specialized in cancer surgery is known as an oncosurgeon. If a cancer has not metastasized (spread), it is possible to completely cure a patient by surgically removing the cancer from the body. Surgery may also be instrumental in helping to relieve the symptoms such as bowel obstruction.

Radiation treatment, also known as radiotherapy is used to treat cancers either alone or in addition to other treatments. For example, after removal of cancer tissue by surgery, radiotherapy may be used to destroy remaining tumor cells (microscopic) which cannot be removed by human hands. Cancer cells are destroyed by focusing high-energy rays on them. This damages the molecules which make up the cancer cells and causes them to die.

Radiotherapy utilizes high-energy gamma-rays that are emitted from metals such as radium or high-energy x-rays that are created in a special machine. Earlier, radiation treatments caused severe side-effects because the energy beams would damage normal, healthy tissue as well; however technology has improved such that beams can be targeted more accurately reducing the damage to the surrounding structures. In Father Muller Oncology Centre, modern equipment is used to focus radiation only to the cancerous tissue, thus reducing the exposure to the surrounding unaffected tissue. The specialist who plans this treatment is known as a radiation oncologist.

Chemotherapy for cancer is given by the oncophysisian or medical oncologist. The chemotherapy utilizes medicines that interfere with the cell division process - damaging proteins or DNA - so that cancer cells cannot multiply and cannot survive. These treatments target any rapidly dividing cells (not necessarily just cancer cells), but normal cells usually recover with time from any chemical-induced damage while cancer cells cannot regenerate. Chemotherapy is generally used to treat cancer that has spread to other organs as the medicines travel throughout the entire body. Chemotherapy treatment occurs in cycles so the body gets time to heal between doses. The common side effects of chemotherapy such as hair loss, nausea, fatigue, and vomiting are reversible.

In Father Muller Oncology centre, all the three modes of treatment are available by respective departments having a team of specialists in the individual therapy. More than a thousand are treated as in-patients here annually. 1,039 patients were admitted as inpatients in 2016, 909 in 2017 and 740 cancer patients are admitted in this year up to August 2018. Every month about a thousand patients receive chemotherapy on out-patient basis and an equal number of patients are treated by radiotherapy. Some patients are treated by more than one modality of treatment.

Can cancer be cured?

Complete recovery from cancer cannot be guaranteed. It is not a disease in itself, but a broad term to refer to conditions where a tissue within the body grows abnormally without any restraint, hijacking the body's resources. However, certain cancers can be completely cured if detected and treated early. Certain types of cancers of thyroid, breasts, prostate and testicular malignancies can be cured. Many therapists prefer to use the term "remission of cancer" meaning there is a chance the disease can return. In general if a person is cancer free 5 years after a diagnosis, he/she has better odds of recovery.

In many of the patients, therapy for malignancy is aimed at relieving the complications of the disease. For example, treating a malignant growth obstructing the bowel movement may make the patient's remaining life comfortable,

even if he is not completely cured from the disease.

The most important point is cancer cannot be treated by traditional or native medicines. Only the modern treatment modalities can help a cancer patient to achieve an expected goal. Unfortunately, many of cancer patients opt for traditional treatments initially and complicate the disease.

Can Survive Fund

The treatment of cancer is expensive because the treatment is not simple. An Oncosurgeon may have to operate for 5 to 8 hours on a single patient to remove the malignancy where as another common surgery may not last for more than two hours. The equipment, radioactive materials, its holding units and protective setup that is used to give precision radiotherapy is also expensive. The drugs that are used in chemotherapy are very costly as manufacturing them is not similar to any over the counter drugs. Newer drugs which are not indigenously prepared are imported. As a result, treatment of cancer is expensive and not easily affordable.

Email : melwynperis@gmail.com

Mobile : +91 9449021810

In our country, cancer is more prevalent among the people of lower socio-economic status who find it extremely difficult to afford the modern therapy. In Father Muller Oncology Centre despite the amount spent each year on concessional or complete free care, there are number patients who need financial help which is not possible unless people donate liberally.

To help the cancer patients of Father Muller Oncology Centre, â€˜Can Survive Fundâ€™™ has been established. Melwyn Peris, has taken up the noble cause to raise funds for â€˜Can Survive Fundâ€™™. Philanthropists are requested to support this programme so that they help a poor cancer patient to get modern treatment at Fr Muller Oncology Centre.