



NEWS LETTER

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EDITORIAL

THE ESSENCE OF DEATH

We never discuss death or dying. Death is not just a loss. It has value. Heidegger argued that humans are the only creatures who know they will die, and this knowledge is what makes us authentically human. Without death, time would be an endless flatline. No deadlines, no urgency, no reason to pick one path over another.

Death is the boundary that turns a list of activities into a life. A novel needs an ending. A song needs a final note. Death is the filter that reveals what you actually value. Death is a Great Equalizer and Social Bond. In life, we are divided by caste, class, wealth, status. In death, the body decomposes in the same way. This is why funeral rites in almost every culture force people to gather across divisions. A death in the village pauses the feud. A state funeral makes kings and citizens mourn together. Hindu antim sanskar, Islamic janazah, Christian wake - all pull people into a shared space where pretense drops. The value here is social repair. Death reminds a fractured group: we belong to each other.

Ecologically, death recycles nutrients. Socially, it recycles roles. Parents die so children can become parents. Leaders die so new ideas can take root. If no one died, no one would inherit responsibility, and society would stagnate. The value of death is therefore also the value of succession. It's painful, but it's how culture evolves. Death is a teacher. Death teaches the value of presence over productivity. Death teaches the value of authenticity over approval. Death teaches the value of saying what matters now. It exposes the ones we ignored while busy. "Death is nothing to us, for when we exist, death is not present; and when death is present, we do not exist."

Death isn't just philosophical; it's functional. Death removes older genes, allowing genetic variation to propagate. Without death, evolution stalls. So death is not nature's mistake. It's part of the operating system. You don't have to wait for a terminal diagnosis to extract death's value. Modern medicine can hide death in ICUs. True value of death empowers life, not destroys it. Death is real, not to be rushed, not to be denied, but to be used as a compass. Death gives Life its meaning.

Imagine a game with no end. You'd stop playing. Imagine love with no goodbye. You'd stop cherishing hellos. Death is the period at the end of the sentence. Without it, life is a run-on. With it, life is poetry: limited, rhythmic, precious.

The other aspect of death and dying is the contradictions present in modern health-care systems. It explains that while some people receive excessive medical treatment at the end of life, many others still die without proper care or pain relief. This imbalance reflects a major paradox in modern society. Over time, death has shifted from being a family and community experience to becoming heavily controlled by hospitals and medical institutions. Advances in medicine have prolonged life, but they have also prolonged the process of dying. Many patients spend their final days in hospitals or intensive care units receiving aggressive treatments that may not improve their quality of life.

Death has become overly medicalised. There is too much emphasis on clinical intervention and curing illness, even when recovery is unlikely. During situations like the COVID-19 pandemic, many people died isolated from loved ones, surrounded only by medical staff. This has increased society's fear of death and strengthened the belief that death belongs mainly within the control of health-care systems.

Another important issue is the enormous financial cost of end-of-life treatment. In wealthy countries, a large portion of health-care spending goes toward caring for the small percentage of people who die each year. While some treatment is necessary and beneficial, doctors and families often continue treatments longer than appropriate because they hope for unlikely recoveries. Conversations about death are emotionally difficult, so many people avoid discussing them, which can lead to unnecessary suffering and inappropriate treatment. "Value of Death" strongly supports palliative care, which focuses on comfort, dignity, emotional support, and quality of life rather than simply extending life.

Dr. A. K. Dewan, Director - Surgical Oncology

CME WITH ASSOCIATION OF PHYSICIANS OF INDIA (API), HISAR, HARYANA



RGCIRC organized an Oncology CME in association with the Association of Physicians of India (API), Hisar, Haryana, Saturday, 06th June 2026, at Hotel Lazeez, Lajpat Nagar, Hisar, Haryana. Dr. L. M. Darlong, Head - Thoracic Oncosurgery, delivered an insightful lecture on Thoracic Oncology - Physicians Perspective and Dr. Narendra Agrawal, Unit Head & Sr. Consultant, Hemato-Oncology, Leukemia and BMT spoke on How to Suspect Leukemia on CBC.



BREAKING BARRIERS IN WOMEN'S CANCER: FROM PREVENTION TO SURVIVORSHIP

On June 12, 2026, the Department of Preventive Oncology at Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute & Research Centre (RGCIRC) successfully hosted a continuing medical education seminar titled "Breaking Barriers in Women's Cancer: From Prevention to Survivorship" at Indraprastha Hall, Rohini, Delhi. The specialized event drew an active participation of 60 attending doctors focused on strengthening the cancer care continuum.

Following an opening welcome note by Medical Director Dr. Sudhir Rawal, the scientific sessions featured Dr. D.S. Gangwar on the integrated role of gynecologists in oncology care. Dr. Renuka Gupta detailed cervical cancer



prevention, while Dr. Garima Daga shared vital insights into breast cancer early detection and survivorship. Dr. Vandana Jain addressed clinical roles in endometrial and ovarian cancers. Dr. Vishvak Chanthar then spoke on how early detection enables breast conservation through oncoplastic surgery, followed by Dr. Indu Aggarwal who highlighted the expanding scope of services within the Department of Preventive Oncology.



The seminar concluded with a formal Vote of Thanks, successfully fostering crucial clinical collaboration and updating community practitioners on modern diagnostic and surgical protocols.



CME WITH MATHURA OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY SOCIETY (MOGS)



RGCIRC (Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute & Research Centre) in association with Mathura Obstetrics and Gynaecology Society (MOGS), organized an Oncology CME on 11th June 2026 at Hotel Brijwasi Lands Inn, Mathura (UP).

The session included insightful lectures by Dr. Renuka Gupta (Sr. Consultant & Unit Head-Gynae Oncology, RGCIRC, Rohini) on "Surgical Management of Ovarian Cancer" and Dr. Kapil Goyal (Consultant Medical Oncology, RGCIRC, Niti Bagh) on "Catching Cancer in Clinics".



CME WITH INDIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (IMA) PANIPAT



RGCIRC (Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute & Research Centre), in association with the Indian Medical Association (IMA), Panipat, successfully organized an Oncology CME on 17th June 2026 at Hotel Hive, Panipat, Haryana.

The session featured insightful lectures by Dr. Vineet Talwar (Director - Medical Oncology, RGCIRC) on "CAR-T Cell Therapy" and Dr. Munish Gairola (Director - Radiation Oncology, RGCIRC) on "Recent Advances in Radiation Oncology."



WHEN HOPE WAS STRONGER THAN CANCER - PAYAL SOLANKI

I am pursuing a BA LL.B at Maharaja Agrasen Institute of Management Studies, Rohini, Delhi. At the age of 13 - an age meant to play, learn, and grow I was diagnosed with osteosarcoma (bone cancer). I was a very active student and a strong athlete in my class. One day, I experienced sudden and uncontrollable pain in my leg that brought me to my knees.

Following this, I underwent multiple tests and scans, but every report initially concluded that I had a reduction in calcium. Finally, after my third biopsy, it became clear that I was diagnosed at RGCIRC with Stage 1 osteosarcoma an aggressive form of bone cancer. As my chemotherapy began, I lost my hair and a significant amount of weight. There was a lot to endure.

After my cancer surgery, there was a difference of four inches in my leg length, and my backbone shifted from the centre to the left side, a condition known medically as scoliosis. I was bedridden for three months. I still remember the intense surgical pain, chemotherapy side effects, anxiety, blood clots, dressing procedures, and negative thoughts that I had to fight every day.

After surgery, I had to use customised shoes to manage the leg length difference and wear scoliosis braces to prevent spine injury and hunchback. Finally, after surgery and 15 chemotherapy cycles, my treatment was completed in 2018.

"My faith in me never let me down. I accepted that everything happens for a reason, and I never gave up. I started watching cancer survivors' stories, which helped me stay positive."

After my cancer treatment, I was interviewed about my cancer journey and connected with many survivors. In 2022, I became First Miss India Cancer, a beauty pageant for cancer survivors and patients held in India for the first time. I have received several honours, including India's Real Life Heroes Award from the Governor of Sikkim and the Help Artist India Influencer Women's Award, 2024.

I also run my own NGO, which works for cancer awareness. I have been appreciated by Cabinet Minister Dr. Virendra Kumar and the former Chief Minister of Delhi, Mr. Arvind Kejriwal and also interviewed on DD National.

As a law student, my dream is to become a judge and serve my country. Throughout my treatment, my family has been my strongest support system they never let me down. I believe that cancer is never bigger than hope and positivity. Life has its ups and downs, and that is what makes it meaningful, because even a straight line on an ECG means life has ended.



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 Dr. Gauri Kapoor
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 Dr. Anurag Mehta
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