

The bride had a new jaw, but no one could tell

Dr Vivek Kumar , Dr Vivek Kumar : Fri Aug 03 2007, 23:51 hrs



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It was a shock. She could not believe the report she was holding. It said she had a tumour that required urgent operation. Coming as it did, days before her marriage, it seemed that her dreams were about to crash. The past few years had been turbulent for Ridhima. Daughter of a middle class family, she always had to struggle to prove herself. After finishing her engineering, she had got a good job in a MNC. There she met Subrmaniyam. The way forward had not been easy. One was a south Indian Brahmin, the other a Rajput. The families finally agreed to the marriage after two years of persuasion. The D-Day was 21 Feb 2007.

But fate intervened in mid-January, in the innocuous form of bleeding gums. Ridhima had ignored the pain in her teeth for nearly six months, but a visit to the doctor could no longer be postponed. Investigations revealed it was a tumor of lower jaw. She was visibly upset when she came to us. Her tumour could be removed completely, but it required immediate surgery. The tumour was increasing by the day and a few weeks' delay would considerably

decrease her chances of cure and survival.

We advised her parents to postpone the wedding by a few weeks, but it was very difficult. Invitation cards had been sent and they did not want to tell anyone about her disease.

Our team of plastic surgeons including Dr S S Saha and Dr Vivek Kumar specialises in facial plastic and cosmetic surgery. We discussed the situation and found that we had just enough time for the surgery and post-operative recovery. The family decided to go ahead and leave the rest to God.

It was a great challenge for us, as we had never worked under such time constraint.

On 2nd February 2007, the surgery was done. We removed all the tumor and the affected part of her jaw and made her a new jaw by taking bone from her leg. It was a 10-hour procedure. We did the surgery through incisions inside her mouth, so there would be no scars on her face.

She was kept in ICU for two days and then shifted to ward. It was touching to see how the two families came together and her in-laws, who were so against the marriage, taking care of her like a daughter. Everything went well and she was discharged on 14 February. On 18 February, she came for a check-up. She was doing fine and we gave her the go ahead.

The radiant newly-wed breezed into our office on 15 March. She had just come back from her honeymoon. The ceremony had gone smoothly and nobody suspected that she had undergone such a major surgery three weeks ago, she said gaily. Today, she has joined work and is happy. It was one of the few cases in my career when I had got so involved. Our whole team had prayed for Ridhima's recovery and a successful marriage. I thank the almighty for giving us this opportunity and giving her back a normal life.

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