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Six-yr-old survives stroke after tennis ball hits neck

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Bengaluru: Although strokes are more common among geriatric patients, they can affect children too. A case in point: A six-year-old boy recently suffered from one after a tennis ball hit his neck while playing cricket.

After developing sudden weakness on the right side of his body, the boy underwent a unique procedure called mechanical thrombectomy to remove the brain clot at Narayana Health last year and is back in school now.

"Stroke can affect children too, though it is very rare — one-in-a-million kids. What is challenging is the treatment to remove the clot," says Dr Vikram Hu-

ded, neurosurgeon, Narayana Health.

Narayana Health, in fact, has seen five cases of pediatric stroke in the last two years. Another six-year-old boy, who was treated by the hospital in 2015, had no trauma or fever, but developed weakness in the right side of the body. The boy is said to be one of the youngest survivors of brain stroke in India and his case made it to international medical journals after peer review.

Two of the five children had cardiac problems and suffered a stroke after a clot in their heart moved to the brain. One of them, a 12-year-old boy, was treated five months ago. The clot in his brain was removed through the leg artery.

"The ethics committee will not allow any trial on paediatric cases. Hence, the causes are not known. However, it's known that if a child has a cardiac problem or suffers from blood clotting abnormality, or has any dissection caused by an injury, there are chances that he or she may suffer from a stroke. If sudden weakness develops on one side of the body, it is a stroke unless proven otherwise," says Dr Huded.

All the five cases were of boys, but that could be sheer coincidence, say doctors.

All the children were comatose when brought to the hospital and are back to school now. Parents of the affected children did not want to give more information.

New stamp marks World Stroke Day



On the occasion of World Stroke Day on October 29, BR Life SSNMC-Brains Centre of

Excellence, along with the department of posts, released a postage stamp in Bengaluru.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr NK Venkataramana, chief neurosurgeon of the hospital, said stroke is preventable if the risk factors are identified early. "The first three hours during a stroke, known as the golden hour, are important. Ideally, a patient should be treated within that time to avoid fatal incidents. There is a need to create awareness on the same," he said.