

Minimal incision procedure at Ranchi hospital cures rare congenital disease

‘Miracle’ ends 7-year-old boy’s bowel blues

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Little Teklal will no longer be ashamed to go to school.

The seven-year-old from Vishnugarh, Hazaribagh — suffering from Hirschsprung’s disease, a congenital condition that occurs in one among 5,000 live births, mostly boys — has had a life transforming surgery in Ranchi that will allow him to pass stool like any normal child instead of carrying a disposable bag attached to his abdomen.

Father Yogendra Mahto, an electrician by profession, had had to sell off agricultural land and mortgage their house to rustle up Rs 3 lakh

for Teklal’s treatment, including multiple surgeries, in the past. But, the boy never received permanent relief until April 29, when doctors at Bhagwan Mahavir Medica Superspecialty Hospital in the capital performed a two-hour procedure to end Teklal’s bowel blues.

Dr Major Ramesh Das, who led the surgical team, explained that in a Hirschsprung’s case, a part or the whole of the large intestine has no nerve cells or ganglions. Absence of nerve cells in the colon does not allow it to relax and pass stool normally.

“The child underwent three surgeries earlier, the first when he was only 48 hours



Teklal with Dr Major Ramesh Das (extreme left) and his parents Yogendra Mahto and Gunjri Devi at Medica in Ranchi on Thursday. Picture by Hardeep Singh

old. Two consecutive operations, including colostomy, were done when he was one and a half. He has since been carrying a disposable stool bag. We performed the Soave

procedure,” the doctor said.

He quickly explained: “It is basically a pull-through procedure to connect the functional part of the bowel with the anus without affecting the outer wall of the colon. It requires minimal incision and less post-operative healing time. Now, Teklal is passing stool like any normal person.”

The cost of the procedure was Rs 70,000, but Mahto isn’t complaining. He is only too happy to see his only son — Teklal has three sisters — learn toilet etiquette for the first time.

“My boy will no longer be dependent on anyone. He will no longer move around with a

stool bag attached to his stomach. And, people will no longer poke fun at him. This is a miracle of science. We are overwhelmed,” the father said.

Mother Gunjri Devi hopes to send Teklal to school. “Aage school bhejna dikkat tha (We could not send him to school earlier because of his condition,” she said, adding that her son would study now.

Asked how he felt, Teklal said he was hungry, which doctors said was normal.

As he tugged at his mother’s sari and told her that he no longer wanted to eat *khichdi*, Dr Das smiled at him and said: “From next week, you can eat whatever you wish to.”