

Rare Lung Disease Treatment Succeeds at SGPGI, Lucknow

The Breakthrough

Doctors at the Sanjay Gandhi Postgraduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGI), Lucknow, have successfully treated two women suffering from a rare and life-threatening lung condition called *Pulmonary Alveolar Proteinosis (PAP)*. The institute performed a highly specialized procedure—Whole Lung Lavage (WLL)—washing both lungs in a single sitting, something rarely attempted and successfully executed in India.

About the Disease

- Pulmonary Alveolar Proteinosis (PAP) is a rare disorder where a protein-rich fluid accumulates inside the air sacs (alveoli) of the lungs.
- This impairs oxygen exchange, causing progressive breathlessness, cough, fatigue, and eventual oxygen dependence.
- If untreated, the condition can lead to severe respiratory failure.

The Procedure: Whole Lung Lavage

- The WLL technique involves flushing out the lungs with saline to remove the proteinaceous material clogging the alveoli.
- Usually, one lung is treated at a time while the other maintains oxygen supply.
- In this case, doctors at SGPGI innovatively washed both lungs in a single session, significantly reducing procedure time and improving patient recovery.
- After the procedure, both patients showed dramatic improvement in oxygen saturation and lung function, moving from oxygen dependence to near-normal breathing.

Patient Outcomes

- The two women were previously dependent on supplemental oxygen even at rest.
- Post-procedure, they regained independent breathing capacity, marking a substantial improvement in their quality of life.
- Doctors reported that both patients are now under follow-up and showing sustained recovery.

Global & National Significance

- *Pulmonary Alveolar Proteinosis* affects only 3–4 people per million, making it extremely rare.
- Successful bilateral WLL in a single sitting is considered a milestone in pulmonary medicine.
- This achievement highlights India's growing capability to handle complex rare diseases with advanced interventions.

Why It Matters

- **Innovation in Technique:** Performing bilateral lavage in one sitting reduces hospital stay, anesthesia risks, and costs.
- **Rare Disease Awareness:** The success draws attention to PAP and the need for specialized diagnostic and treatment facilities.
- **Boost for Indian Pulmonology:** Positions SGPGI as a leading centre for advanced respiratory interventions in South Asia.

✅ In summary: SGPGI's success in treating PAP through a rare bilateral lung wash procedure represents a landmark in rare disease care in India, offering new hope to patients with previously limited treatment options.