

## New techniques can preserve natural joint: Expert views

10 December 2018 | News

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The 5<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Indian Cartilage Society (ICS) concluded today in the Rajasthan capital Jaipur where specialists discussed on measures to ensure the health and longevity of human body's natural joints for a long time with the help of cartilage regeneration and restoration.

In this two-day conclave, around 200 cartilage specialists from India and foreign countries like US, Britain, Poland, Hungary, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan have participated. Internationally acclaimed cartilage scientist Dr Bruce Ryder of US inaugurated the conclave. The main theme of this year's conclave was: "Regeneration is better than replacement."

Inaugurating the conference, Dr. Ryder said new techniques of cartilage regeneration and restoration have now triggered the hope that knee and other joints which become defective and worn out because of osteoarthritis and other causes may not be

required to get replaced. Instead, natural joints should be repaired and rejuvenated through these new medical techniques.

Besides Dr. Ryder, renowned international experts like Dr. Jaikak Valvaski and Prof. Raji have participated in this conference. These experts also deliberated on new techniques like articular cartilage implantation, stem cells therapy and scaffold.

In his presidential address, Dr Raju Vaishya, President of Indian Cartilage Society (ICS), dwelt upon various methods in India for treatment of injuries to cartilage. "The problem of arthritis among the youths has become extremely alarming now because it is leading to their knee replacement," he said.

Dr. Vaishya informed that the medical science is now blessed with new techniques in orthopedics and it is now becoming possible to save the human body's natural joints, which have become defective, by regenerating their tissues instead of replacing them with artificial joints.

Cartilage regeneration techniques developed in recent times help in forming natural cartilage; and because of this the need for replacement of a joint is either completely eliminated or it can be delayed. In particular, such types of techniques will be beneficial for those youths whose knee or other joints have become defective because of injuries to cartilage or due to arthritis, he pointed out.

Dr. Ajay Agarwal, who is based in the US, discussed about measures to preserve hip joints in youths. In this conference, stem cell therapy also came up for deliberations.

Dr. Saurav Mathur, Organising Secretary of the conference, said that cartilage is an extremely important cellular component of the human body. It is a strong tissue but is softer and more elastin as compared to the bones. Cartilage is formed of special cells which are called chondrolysis, and these cells produce in large quantities collagen fiber, proteoglycan, and extracellular matrix compounds made of elastic fibers.

Dr. Deepak Goyal, former President of ICS, informed that the tissues of cartilage have the potential to repair themselves, but this potential is extremely limited because it does not contain blood cells and blood is required for the healing process.

Dr. Nishith Shah, who is also a former President of ICS, said these days several new techniques are being used for regeneration of cartilage, and researchers are trying to develop new methods for production of cartilage which can help people get rid of severe pain from osteoarthritis and enable them to live a longer life with their natural joints.