

## Godrej HIT establishes India's first platelet donor helpline

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Dengue cases are only going up in India. From less than 60,000 cases in 2009, dengue cases in India increased to 2,89,575 in 2018, almost 500 % spike, as per the data from Health Management Information System 2018. Dengue patients face a decline in blood platelets count leading to internal bleeding and eventually death in extreme cases. Thus, this drop in platelet count requires quick platelet transfusion to save lives. However, platelets are not readily available as they cannot be stored for more than 5 days. On this National Dengue Day, India's first platelet donorhelpline '**7878782020**' by Godrej HIT is committed to assist citizens in Mumbai, Delhi NCR, Kolkata, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Chennai, avail platelets through a ready pool of platelets donors.

In 2017, Godrej HIT established an online community of platelets donors with an intent to build a base of donors big enough to save lives. This online donor community with a dedicated 24X7 helpline '**7878782020**' has now grown to 1.25 lac registered donors. The helpline has successfully saved the lives of 5 critical dengue patients till now.

Dengue patients or their relatives seeking platelet can call on HIT Platelet helpline '**7878782020**'. On receiving requests, 1.25 lac registered donors are updated through calls and SMS. The platelet donor visits the patient directly at any hospital where he/she is admitted or the platelets are sent to the patient. They can also avail platelets transfusion at their nearest Apollo Hospital, the medical partner for the helpline, even if they are not admitted there.

Commenting on India's First Platelet Donor Helpline, Mr Sunil Kataria, CEO – India & SAARC, Godrej Consumer Products Limited, said, "Platelet donor helpline is India's unique platform bringing donors and dengue patients together to help each other crowdsource platelets. It helps patients get platelets which cannot be stored. We are happy to see that over the last one year more than 1 lac people have registered to be platelet donors resulting in 5 lives being saved. Though this is a good start, we consider it as our responsibility to create mass awareness around how platelets are crucial during dengue and encourage more platelet donations."

Speaking on the initiative, Ms Sangita Reddy, Joint Managing Director, Apollo Hospitals Group, said, “Vector-borne diseases like dengue are emerging as a threat to public health in India. To address this issue, we at Apollo Hospitals, have tied-up with Godrej HIT to build a platelet donor community. Through this initiative, we are trying to bridge the disparity in awareness and provide ready resources to manage diseases like dengue.”

A survey conducted by Godrej HIT found 94% citizens are unaware about the critical level of platelets count below which platelet transfusion is required in dengue cases. Unlike blood, platelets can't be stored for more than 5 days. The report also informed that 80% of the citizens are unaware of this fact. Due to the short shelf life of platelets, there is also a high demand for platelet donors. Platelets are extracted from a donor through a process called apheresis which allows extraction of large amounts of platelets from a single donor. The procedure is safe and one can return to normal activities soon. In fact, the body replaces the platelet count back to normal within 24 hours.

As part of the platelet donor community, Godrej HIT wanted to educate masses on platelet donation and threats posed by the loss of platelets in dengue cases. Over the last one year, an awareness program reached out to over 5 million citizens across India.