

20-yr-old gets her missing breast via rare surgery

POLAND'S SYNDROME

A rare birth defect caused by underdevelopment or an absence of chest muscles on one side of the body. It occurs due to hampering of blood supply at the embryonic stage to the collar bone during development of the foetus. Both males and females suffer from Poland's Syndrome.

THE PROCEDURE

Step 1: A small incision was made on the right side of Shikha Singh's chest

Step 2: Tissue expanders were placed. Tissues were allowed to expand up to a certain limit

Step 3: After three months, silicone gel-based implant matching the left breast was inserted

Step 4: A nipple was created on the surrounding skin tissue



Maitri Porecha @maitriporecha

While all her friends discussed puberty-related issues in school, Shikha Singh (name changed), now aged 20 years, would feel left out. She spent her teenage years wondering why her right breast was missing. She was suffering from a rare condition — Poland's Syndrome. The syndrome is a disorder characterised by a missing breast — either left or right, but not both. It occurs both in males and females.

Speaking to dna, Shikha narrated how the disorder shattered her confidence. "I refused to socialise and had to constrain myself within the four walls of my home. My self-esteem had plunged and I hated my body. Even my posture was unnatural as I always tried to hide my deficiency," she said.

Shikha's family approached a city-based cosmetic surgeon for advice. "The case was very complicated. Even the nipple was absent, but there was a tuft of hair instead. Shikha also showed weakness in the left side of her face. A weakness in the facial nerve had resulted in an inability to move the face naturally," elaborated Dr Mohan Thomas, senior cosmetic surgeon, Breach Candy Hospital.

Teenagers between 16 and 18 years experience an end in metamorphosis in their bodily structure. According to the National Human Genome Research Institute, Poland's Syndrome is said to affect males three times more than females, and affects the right side of the body twice often than the left.

For over three months, Shikha underwent a breast reconstruction surgery to overcome the disorder. Dr Thomas said: "A small incision was made on the right side of the chest and tissue expanders were placed. We let the tissues expand up to a certain limit, and then after three months, inserted silicone gel-based implant matching the left breast. In order to give a better look to the newly constructed breast, a nipple had to be created on the surrounding skin tissue."

Shikha refused to go to college until her deformity was corrected. Now, she is elated at appearing 'normal' and intends to join a nursing college.

"I hated my body so much that I wouldn't dare look in the mirror, but I love it now. My condition stopped me from feeling attractive for many years, but now after undergoing a series of surgeries, I feel energetic and active," gushed the 20-year-old.