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Hospital, surgeon give baby a free road to survival

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
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TEN days after a new born baby was brought to Paras Hospital in Gurgaon suffering from a congenital condition, his parents walked out of the hospital on Monday beaming and reassured their son would survive.

A group of people had come to the hospital on January 11 with with a 5-day-old baby, whose brain dangled outside the skull, a congential condition called meningocele. Immediate surgery is required in such cases to save the life of the patient.

The group was accompanied by Dr Vishwas Thakur, Chief Medical Officer at Hero Honda, where the baby's father worked as a casual labourer. On the request of Thakur, the hospital decided to waive the surgery charges. Neurosurgeon Dr V S Mehta also decided not to charge his fees for the operation.

The baby was operated upon by Dr Mehta and his team and a follow-up surgery carried out.

The cost of the two required surgeries would normally be around Rs 1.3 lakh, but the patient was charged only Rs 30,000 as the cost of the 10-day stay and the medicines at the hospital.

Dr Mehta said, "Meningocele is normally detected through ultrasound examination of the foetus during pregnancy and therefore such cases are becoming rare. But ultrasound of all pregnant women is not possible. In this case the patient had gone to several hospitals but everywhere they were turned away. When the patient came to me, it was a professional challenge as well as my social responsibility. I will help such patients in the future also."