



KERALA

# Doctors told to cooperate with haemophilia chapters



SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

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## Call for better attention to persons with genetic diseases

Health professionals should cooperate with haemophilia chapters in managing bleeding disorders, Neeraj Sidharthan of the Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences has said.

Dr. Sidharthan was addressing a gathering of doctors and nurses at a 'continuous medical education programme' organised by the Haemophilia Society, Kunnamkulam chapter, at the Institute of Palliative Care, Thrissur, recently.

"It is unfortunate that persons with genetic diseases do not receive the attention they deserve as compared to people with infectious and lifestyle diseases," he added.

Dr. Sidharthan is the clinical associate professor at the department of bone and marrow transplantation and medical oncology at the Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences.

The management of bleeding disorders involved counselling, diagnosis, and treatment. The government of Kerala was extending help by providing Anti-haemophilic Factor (AHF) under the Karunya Benevolent Fund. The AHF made by recombinant DNA technology went a long way in preventing transfusion transmitted infections, Dr. Sidharthan noted.

"Genetic counselling helped the individual and family understand their risks and options and empower them to make informed decisions. It is an area where haemophilia chapters play a proactive role. They also extend a helping hand in detection of women who carry the defective gene for haemophilia. Perhaps one of the most sensitive areas is prenatal diagnosis, the genetic testing of unborn foetus, because of fears of misuse or because some couples may choose to terminate a pregnancy depending on the outcome of the test."

Birth of children with rare bleeding disorders other than haemophilia was preventable to some extent by discouraging consanguineous marriages, experts said.

District Project Manager, National Health Mission, Thrissur, Major Dr. Satheesan inaugurated the meeting. Superintendent of General Hospital, Thrissur, Sreedevi presided over the function.