

## Public awareness program & interactive games marks National Epilepsy Day

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**Shri. Dinesh Gundu Rao** (Honourable Minister for Food and Civil Supplies) **and Cine Actor Avinash** *encouraged children in the event supported by Parijma neurodiagnostic & rehabilitation centre and Ashwasan Public Charitable Trust*

**Bangalore, Novembe, 2013:** Children with epilepsy usually have multidisability like academic difficulties, behavioural problems etc. and hence require a multidisciplinary team approach consisting of pediatric neurologist, physiotherapist, child psychologist, occupational therapist and speech therapist.

**Parijma neurodiagnostic and rehabilitation centre** which is a unique and multi-disciplinary centre for neurological disabilities has been organizing various events on the occasion of National Epilepsy day for the last 13 years. The main aim of this programme is dual – **firstly**, a platform to showcase the motor and mental skills of these children by organizing competitive & fun-filled games and **secondly**, to have an interactive session for parents and general public on various issues concerning epilepsy by a panel of experts.

In Bangalore, the event to bring children affected with Epilepsy was today supported by **Shri. Dinesh Gundu Rao** (Honourable Minister for Food and Civil Supplies) **and Cine Actor Avinash** who through their presence sent out a strong message of support for children living with epilepsy.

There was a host of fun-filled and interactive games for the children designed to showcase their motor and mental skills and it was heartening to see the enthusiasm teeming in them as they actively participated in all the events and made the day a truly memorable one.

“The presence of a these people in our midst is the biggest source of inspiration that if you have will and a little support, all obstacles can be mounted. “Epilepsy is a major public health concern and worldwide problem with diverse etiology and outcome affecting about 50 million people worldwide. It is a varied disorder with variable causes. Common causes include perinatal injuries, metabolic causes and infections. Febrile seizures (FS), head injury, positive family history of epilepsy and developmental delay have been found to be the risk factors for epilepsy.” **says Dr. Suresh Rao Aroor , Director ,Parijma**

Epileptic seizure is defined as a transient occurrence of signs and symptoms due to abnormal excessive or synchronous neuronal activity in the brain. This neuronal activity can arise from any part of the brain & the type of seizure also differs depending on the location of the activity. One of the manifestation is sudden onset loss of consciousness followed by violent jerky movements of limbs for a few minutes or longer. It is also important that a good number of patients also present with recurrent transient symptoms like sudden blankness, repetitive motor movements, recurrent blinking of eyelids etc. Appropriate anti-epileptic drug is started depending on the type of seizure.

“Appropriate classification and treatment of epilepsy requires, that the patient is fully investigated with EEG (and in select cases video EEG), neuroimaging (preferably MRI), genetic & blood investigations, neuropsychological evaluation etc. Poor availability and high costs prove to be limiting factors, especially in rural areas.

Pharmacological therapy is the mainstay of epilepsy treatment. There is a vast choice of anti-epileptic medications available currently. Long term seizure control is the primary goal in the treatment of epilepsy and once the patient is seizure free for at least 2 years, antiepileptic drugs can be slowly discontinued based on the type of epilepsy and investigative findings” added **Dr. Suresh Aroor**.

Non-pharmacological treatment options include epilepsy surgery, ketogenic diet and vagal nerve stimulation. These are currently offered at a few tertiary care centers.

The neurology panel for the public awareness program on epilepsy consisted of Dr. Suresh Rao Aroor, Dr J.B Agadi, Dr. Sudhindra Aroor and Dr. K. Kishore. The panel discussed the various issues related to epilepsy starting from misconceptions, actual facts, to clinical presentations and treatment options in a very lucid and concise manner. The public enthusiastically participated in the discussion throughout the program.

The National Epilepsy day celebration at Parijma has been sponsored by: **Parijma & Ashwasan public charitable trust**. Ashwasan is a public non profit charitable wing of Parijma neurodiagnostic centre which is distributing **free antiepileptic drugs** to needy patients for the last 3 years among other activities.