

# 3-month-old gets new life after heart surgery

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**New Delhi:** She is just over three months old, weighs 1.9 kg and chances are that you'll almost miss her with all the bandages covering her and the tubes going through her body. That's baby Aiman who had an open heart surgery a week ago.

Aiman was almost on her deathbed with three defects in her heart. Two weeks ago her parents brought her to Max Hospital at Saket from Srinagar where a team of five doctors successfully operated upon her to correct all the three defects.

"Aiman had blue discolouration growth failure which means that she had a transposition or a wrong connection of the major arteries (pulmonary artery and aorta). Secondly, she had a ventricular septal defect or a hole in her heart. As if this was not enough, she also had a Coarctation of aorta which means that her aorta was constricted at one point, which was disrupting the flow of blood to rest of the body," said Dr Anil Bhan, director cardiac surgery, Max Healthcare.

The pulmonary artery in Aiman was in place of aorta and vice versa. This disrupted the blood circulation in a way that oxygenated and pure blood could never reach her body as it just kept getting circulated between her lungs and the heart. The impure blood, on the other hand, never managed to reach the lungs for purification as it kept getting circulated between her heart and rest of the body.

"Instead of one orbit as we all have, Aiman had two separate orbits in which the blood was circulating. The fact that pure blood wasn't able to reach her body could have taken her life in matter of days had it not been for the hole in her heart. The hole allowed pure blood to flow from the left ventricle to the right ventricle which meant that

Aiman's body was receiving a mix of pure and impure

blood. This was the only reason Aiman was able to survive for three months. This defect is as prevalent as 7 in 10,000 babies and the incidence of all three defects being found in one baby is 0.196 in 10,000 babies," said Dr Smita Mishra, paediatric cardiologist, Max Healthcare.

Besides, Aiman also had Coarctation of aorta which means that at one point her aorta became so narrow that it disrupted the flow of blood. Whereas the normal diameter of aorta is 8 mm, the diameter of Aiman's aorta at this point was 2 mm which could have even closed with time. This made the flow of blood extremely slow and hampered with growth of the child. The three defects were corrected through two surgeries. The first one lasting close to three hours corrected the Coarctation of aorta. The next day an open heart surgery was done for the arterial switch operation and closure of the ventricular septal defect.

"Finding all three defects in one baby is rare but we have previously operated upon children having such defects. The challenge in this case was the weight of the baby. With just



**HEALING TOUCH:** Three-month-old Aiman after the open heart surgery