

A new hope to live...

Not just tales, these heart touching facts of lives, unfold a saga of emotions where HIV infected people brave against all odds to fight the battle against AIDS

Prevention is better than cure

Timely diagnosis and treatment of Sony, a HIV positive, finally led her to cherish the motherhood, as her baby was tested HIV negative

Ashutosh (name changed) was married to Sony (name changed) who belonged to a very rich family. It was quite a happy life for both of them. Within a year, Sony became pregnant and Ashutosh took her for her antenatal checkup at district female hospital in Ballia. With all regular investigation as directed by doctor, she was also tested for HIV after counselling by the PPTCT

(Prevention of Parent to Child Transmission) centre, located in district female hospital.

After investigation, Sony was found HIV infected and it was a big shock for her as she never expected she will be infected with such a virus. As a routine procedure, counsellor explained her about the difference between HIV and AIDS and told her that she can lead a normal life by improving her lifestyle and taking proper

medication. Ashutosh was also tested for HIV and his results showed 'negative'. On detailed history it came to know that Sony had been given blood transfusion and the blood which was given was not from an authorised blood bank. Ashutosh and Sony were very much worried about how society will react to Sony's HIV status but the counsellor explained them that HIV can happen to anyone. There is no



need to isolate or abandoned the wife, rather she would require support to face this crises. Ashutosh understood the situation and decided to help his wife to become stable. Ashutosh explained the seri-

ousness to his family but the family members blamed Sony initially. Ashutosh convinced them that HIV infection is not spread by leaving together or eating together but mostly by blood or sexual contact. As Sony was infected with infected blood transfusion, she should be treated equal to any other family member. The family was convinced to Ashutosh's explanation and agreed to take care of their daughter-in-law.

As the child can be infected during pregnancy, at the time of childbirth and during breastfeeding, Sony was advised to undergo safe delivery in Government Hospital. She was

linked to Varanasi, Banaras Hindu University, for further investigation at 'Antiretroviral Therapy Centre'. She was also provided with nutritional and psychological support. She underwent delivery in district Female hospital and delivered a baby. The baby was followed up at 6 weeks, 6 months and 18 months. After 18 months, baby's final test for HIV was done and he was found 'not infected'. Ashutosh and Sony were very happy that the child turned out to be negative and now that they can lead a happy life.

Archana Dwivedi, Counsellor PPTCT Centre District Female Hospital, Ballia



Kriti (name changed), a sales executive, was married to Anup (name changed) and was residing in Ghaziabad. Kriti had one daughter, Ankita, and was pregnant for the second time. During her antenatal check up for the pregnancy, she visited district women hospital Ghaziabad and was found HIV infected. On counselling by PPTCT (Prevention of Parent to Child Transmission) Centre Counsellor, Kriti was advised to get her husband tested for HIV. Anup was shocked to know her HIV status and was afraid, if he was also infected. Anup was found HIV negative on test.

Anup disclosed the status of Kriti at home and her mother-in-law was very angry. She became suspicious of Kriti's character and wanted her to abort

the child. PPTCT centre counsellor convinced Anup that not all children born to HIV positive mother are infected and that the transmission can be reduced by timely antiretroviral (ARV) prophylaxis at the time of de-

livery. Anup disclosed the Counsellor that despite of his family willing for abortion, he wanted the baby. Due to difference of opinion, the family boycotted the couple and expelled them out of house. The family also wanted

that Anup should abandon Kriti and should get remarried. Kriti was very upset to see the attitude of her in-laws and she felt socially isolated.

At the time of delivery, Sonia, a friend of Kriti, accompanied her.

Fighting against the odds

An HIV infected mother's will to make sure her daughter leads a healthy life, inspired one and all. Read on to know more...

She supported Kriti in all the crises phase and made Kriti hopeful for a normal baby. There was problem with the normal delivery and hence Anup was advised to take her to a higher centre in LLRM Medical col-

lege, Meerut. Kriti underwent a caesarean section and gave birth to a beautiful daughter. During delivery, doctor had given both mother and baby Nevirapine Prophylaxis to reduce transmission of infection from mother to child. The counsellor at the PPTCT centre in medical college counselled Kriti for nutrition, feeding the infant, immunisation and regular follow up for diagnosis of baby. Kriti's baby was found HIV negative and this created new hopes for her mother. Kriti says, "Mein HIV positive hu par mein apne bacche ko tandurust rakhungi, mujhe apne parivar ke liye jeena hai."

Uma Kumari, Counsellor PPTCT Centre District Female Hospital, Ghaziabad

Living on a hope

HIV infected Raju and Suman are doing their best to make sure that their son, a HIV infected, leads a longer life

Raju (name changed) and Suman (name changed) have been happily married since 2012. Both of them are residents of Piprauli Basantpur, Ballia. Raju earned his bread and butter by working as a servant in a businessman's house. After a year of marriage, Suman became pregnant. She was very excited as she was expecting her first child. During her eighth

month of pregnancy, Raju took her to a district female hospital at Ballia for check-up. She was tested for blood, urine, Hepatitis B and also for HIV. The counsellor at the HIV counselling and testing centre, explained the test result to her that she was infected with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and the child also had a risk of being infected. Raju was also

tested for HIV and he turned out to be HIV infected. Raju, during the counselling, revealed that he had sexual contact with a Female Sex Worker (FSW) for two years before marriage. He felt bad that his infection, unknowingly, got transmitted to his wife and now poses a risk for their child also.

Suman was advised to take care of herself by prop-

er nutrition and avoid laborious work. Both of them were referred to Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) centre for registration and Raju started his medication as his immune status was low. When Raju's condition further deteriorated, his boss enquired about Raju's health and came to know about his HIV status. He was immediately



thrown out of his job. To feed his family and himself, Raju started a vegetable shop in the market.

On the other hand, Suman was found anaemic (deficiency of haemoglobin in blood) and on sonography, doctors found some problem. She was advised to consult a higher centre at Varanasi for delivery. Raju took her

to IMS BHU (Institute of Medical Sciences, Varanasi) where a caesarean section was done. She delivered a low weight boy. Baby was tested for HIV and was confirmed as HIV positive at 18 months of age. With HIV infected child, Suman started his treatment at the ART centre. Raju and Suman, now take special care of their child, hoping that with medication and leading a healthy lifestyle, their child can survive for many years.

Archana Dwivedi, Counsellor PPTCT Centre District Female Hospital, Ballia

Anil (name changed) is a businessman and resides in Noida. He has been taking drugs since last four years. He got married to Anjali (name changed) two years ago. Anjali requested many a times to Anil to give up drugs, but he used to beat her up. Anjali became pregnant and she went to government hospital for antenatal check-up. The counsellor at the HIV testing facility explained the significance of test to Anjali. After testing, the result was disclosed to Anjali and she started crying as she was infected with HIV. She denied sexual contact with anyone other than her husband and she never came in contact of blood. She admitted that her husband was taking drugs since many years.

Anil was counselled and tested for HIV. He was found infected with HIV. Anil got terrified and admitted that he shared needles with his friends while taking drugs. He felt depressed and hopeless. Counsellor called both of them



together and told them that being HIV positive is not the end of life. Both of them were referred to Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) Centre for

It's never too late!

Once bitten twice shy. Anil gave up drugs only when he came to know about his HIV status. While the wife bore the brunt, the duo felt relaxed when their child was tested HIV negative

registration and for regular blood check-up for CD4 count. HIV positive patients, if follow proper medication and adopt a healthy lifestyle, can live for many decades. Counsellor also explained them that Anjali should come for regular check-up and should deliver the child in government setting so that she can receive adequate care and prophylaxis can be given to mother and baby. Anil was extremely sad as he has infected his wife and the child was also at a risk. Anil decided to give up drugs. Anil and Anjali decided that they will not disclose their HIV status to any of the family member or

friends for the fear of discrimination.

Anil was suggested to provide adequate nutrition to mother so that she could deliver a healthy baby. Anil took care of her. Anjali underwent delivery in the government hospital and her baby was tested for HIV later. Final testing at 18 months test was negative and both the parents were happy. Anil now visits ART centre every month for collecting his medication and advises his friends to give up drugs. Anjali takes care of her baby.

Ritu Bhargav, Counsellor PPTCT centre SNMC, Agra