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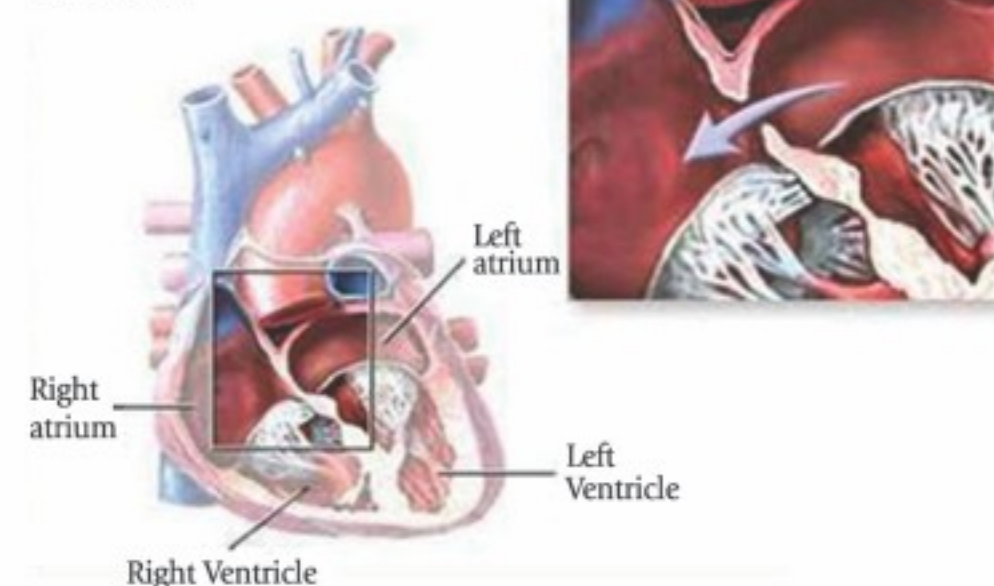
## To Know is to Prevent

### Hole in the heart is treatable, without operation – just with a device!

Do you know that it is available in your city?

Looking at Maria\*, a six years old playful girl, peeping at the doctor from the corner of the room; who would say she was having a hole in her heart even few weeks back? Maria was born with a birth defect called Atrial Septal Defect (ASD), having a hole in the wall (septum) between the two upper chambers of heart (atria). As a result, some oxygenated blood from the left heart chamber flows through the hole in the septum into the right heart chamber, where it mixes with oxygen-poor blood and increases the total amount of blood that flows toward the lungs. So right part of heart becomes enlarged and high pressure develops in lungs (pulmonary hypertension).

An atrial septal defect is a hole between the two atria



The size of an ASD and its location in the heart determines the symptoms a child may experience. Most kids who have ASDs seem healthy and appear to have no symptoms. Children with larger, more severe ASDs, however, might have symptoms like poor appetite, poor growth, fatigue, shortness of breath, lung problems and infections, such as pneumonia. If an ASD is not treated, health complications can develop later, including an abnormal heart rhythm (known as an atrial arrhythmia) and problems with pumping ability of the heart.

Maria's body growth was also less than her age group and she was a chronic cough and cold sufferer frequently on antibiotics. Her parents brought her to a Cardiologist of a renowned International Standard hospital of the country; they were eager to know whether Maria can be treated without a surgery in her heart. After evaluating the kid, the Cardiologist informed them about the modern procedure, which is called percutaneous ASD device closure. In this procedure, a very tiny closure device is introduced through blood vessel of the arm and then it is placed on the hole of the inner heart wall. Maria had this thirty minute



procedure in the hospital's cath lab and was discharged the next day with medication advice. She went back home just like any other normal healthy girl of her age!

Moderate to large size ASD causing right heart dilatation and raised pressure in the lungs should be closed and closure can be performed either by device closure in Cath Lab or through open heart surgery. ASDs are more common in girls than in boys. In addition to faster recovery and less hospital stay, management of ASD by Device Closure in Cath Lab ensures negligible scar on chest compared to that of surgery.

Do you know that such advanced techniques are available in our country? No need to go abroad spending huge money to have such modern treatment when you can have it in your own country amidst your near and dear ones.



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\* Name disguised to protect identity

\*\* This information is for public awareness only; it is NOT a medical advice

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