

Will to Live

Category: Surgery

written by Swathy Elangovan | June 28, 2023

It was a humid day.

I was in the OR seeing patients.

X came inside. I kindly greeted them and asked what their complaint was.

X complained of swelling in the groin. The swelling had been there for almost seven years. Recently it had caused pain and was interfering with the patient's routine. I thoroughly examined X and reported to my attending.

My attending confirmed it was an inguinoscrotal hernia.

X was advised that surgery would be necessary.

We admitted X. All the basic investigations were done. X had chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder but no other comorbidities. We did a presurgery workup and got clearance from other relevant departments—cardiology, anesthesia, etc. But X's bloodgas report was abnormal; we couldn't proceed with the surgery.

In conversation with X, I learned that X was feeling low because we were unable to do the surgery immediately.

X had no family and was under the care of a guardian.

Most of X's life had been lived in solitude. X asked me, with tears flowing down their cheeks, "What am I going to do by living? I am already running the last mile of my life. Can't I get the surgery done immediately?"

Hearing all this, I really wanted to help X.

Following pulmonology opinion, we tried improving X's condition.

After a week of proper treatment and care, we were able to put X on the table.

The operation and the postop period were uneventful.

We performed a laparoscopic extended totally extraperitoneal repair.

Last week, when X came back for review, a broad smile on their face, they thanked me and my seniors for our care and concern.

At that time, I told X that I wanted to write about their entire treatment process and got consent. "Anything for you, ma'am," they said.

Though X has no one to claim as family or a close relative, I could see X's willpower to live.

In life, though most of us are born into a family that pampers us or have friends who would take care of us like their own kith and kin, still there are many people who don't have someone to claim as their own but still live to help others.

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