

## The Great Neurosurgeon and Spinal Surgery

### Educationist and an Inspirational Guru in Neurosurgery: Prof Anil K Singh

It is a great privilege and honor to write a few words for our dear teacher and friend Prof AK Singh, who continues to inspire generations of neurosurgeons and neuroscientists till date. I credit him for bringing forth our traditional "Guru Shishya Parampara" in modern perspective. Wherein a student is not only taught how to become a good neurosurgeon, but how to be truthful and compassionate not only to your patients but colleagues and supporting staff. How leadership does not only mean leading but carrying everyone along? How not only learning surgical techniques but to continue learning, relearning and innovating? How accepting mistakes upfront and be truthful about ones achievements, research and publications? How appreciating and backing a younger colleague's work brings a sense confidence and motivates him further? Overall not being just a teacher and the taught but developing a long-term relationship with mutual respect and bonding.



Prof Anil K Singh

Prof AK Singh was born in Lucknow in 1950 to Mr Gajendra Singh (IAS) and Smt Sushila Singh. Did his earlier schooling and premed in Delhi. Graduated MBBS from King George's Medical College (KGMC), Lucknow in 1971. After completing MS (General Surgery) in 1975 went on to do MS (Neurosurgery) in 1978 under guidance of Prof VS Dave, Prof Newton and Prof DK Chhabra. After a few years of Chief Residency in Neurosurgery in KGMC, he joined as Lecturer in Department of Neurosurgery at Govind Ballabh Pant Hospital, New Delhi in 1981. In 1983, department was upgraded to a teaching department under Maulana Azad Medical College and Delhi University under the leadership of Prof Brahm Prakash and he became Assistant Prof in the upgraded department with MCh program. Thus, started his carrier as a young teacher. 80's was an era of rapid growth, innovation and expansion of neurosurgery in the world. India has just woken up to take this challenge and bridge the vast gap between newer techniques and technology. Govind Ballabh Pant Hospital provided him with this opportunity as one of the most modern and best equipped government hospital. Microneurosurgery has started taking shape. Prof Singh balanced his position well as self-learning newer techniques and imparting the same to his students and taking keen interest in teaching and overall growth of the department. He progressed professionally over years to become Director, Professor and Head in 2002.

He had keen interest in spine and did inculcate the importance of clinical analysis, reading the plain X-rays and myelogram (MRI was not available then) and respect of tissue while operating. He is one of the pioneers in India to start Transoral odontoidectomy in India in 1982. In mid-80's, he established many spinal techniques like anterior cervical and lumbar microdiscoidectomy and instrumented stabilization procedure and later median cervical corpectomies for degenerative spine. As a multifaceted surgeon and teacher he saw to it that his students are exposed to all techniques of microsurgery be it vascular, carotid endarterectomies, awake craniotomy, trans-sphenoid, epilepsy surgery and also established endovascular procedures.

As an academic leader, he mobilized resources to start five successful annual international event "International Clinics of Neurological Surgery" on various aspects and published two volumes of the same. He brought in all disciplines together and organized the "Inaugural Annual conference of the Skull Base Surgery Society of India" in 1998 setting the ball rolling for the society. Visualizing the importance of Neuro-Oncology as a multispecialty, he took the lead to bring together various specialties from basic science to diagnostics to therapeutics together to form the "Neuro-Oncology Society of India" (Later—ISNO) with active support from Prof Abhijit Guha from Toronto and Rakesh Jalali and held the "Inaugural conference of the society in Delhi in 2009 as Vice President of the Society. He has organized and actively participated in various Academic Societies and Conferences in India. He has been past president of Skull Base Surgery Society of India, Neuro-Oncology Society of India, Neurotrauma Society of India and Delhi Neurological Association.

His expertise in Academics and Technologies has been recognized by various government agencies and organization. He has been member selection board of central and various state Public Service Commission. He has been nominated as, Chairman, Delhi Government, Health Department, Software Development Committee, Member, and past Secretary, Surgical Instruments Division of Bureau of Standards (India), Member of Governing Board, Institute of Human Behavior and Allied Sciences (IHBAS).

He has been recognized for his contributions and achievements by various awards. Delhi State Doctors Award, DMA's Dr BC Roy Award, National Excellence Award, TP Jhunjhunwala Trust, National Excellence Award, TP Jhunjhunwala Trust, National Excellence Award, TP Jhunjhunwala Trust are to name a few.

In 2004, he shifted to private sector as Director of Neurosciences at Fortis Hospital, Noida. He established one of the successful models of team work in private sector and worked till 2012. His love for hills and special love for Uttarakhand, where he has been actively involved in charitable work made him to move as Director—Max Institute of Neurosciences Dehradun (MIND) to Dehradun in 2012.

He found his life partner Dr Sudha Singh during his KGMC days. Dr Sudha is actively involved in various charitable work in medical and social sector. She has been a silent pillar of strength for all Prof AK Singh's endeavors. They are proud parents of Ritvik and Pranav, both very successful engineers from IIT and settled in USA.

Prof AK Singh is an avid reader and has special interest in history, philosophy, technology, religion, ancient Indian texts and many more. He loves to interact and discuss and debate about issues pertaining to social sector, medical education and health. He continues to support and encourage new generation to take lead and be actively involved in bringing in changes.

I have immensely benefited from my association with Prof AK Singh in Neurosciences and life in general.



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