

COMFORTING, TREATING, HEALING

In the search for an effective treatment protocol, Sambhavna has developed a unique combination of yoga, Ayurveda, Panchakarma, and modern Allopathic medicine. Participants in yoga therapy are instructed in different postures, breathing exercises and cleansing actions based on their symptoms. Ayurveda is an indigenous system of medicine using herbal



Survivors perform asanas in our Yoga studio to reduce the effects of disaster-related illnesses

remedies to help the body heal itself. Many Bhopal hospitals are prescribing irrational and ineffective drugs as treatment. Both yoga and Ayurveda reduce intake of these synthetic drugs, which are often found to be doing more harm than good. Our Ayurvedic team includes two Ayurveda physicians and two therapists specializing in Panchakarma, a detoxification procedure. Therapeutic care is provided using herbal medicines, medical oil massage, steam bath, medicinal oil stream and medicinal enema. Two general physicians, a gynecologist, and consultants in psychiatry, ophthalmology and pathology comprise our Allopathic unit. Their work is supported by our in-house pathology laboratory. Great care is taken by Sambhavna's entire medical team to ensure that our patients suffer no additional harm from our treatments. We are also working with other organizations to develop an appropriate health care system for gas and water-affected people, and we collaborate with doctors and researchers around the world to keep up with new treatment and education programs.

REGISTRATION AND MONITORING

Victims receiving care at Sambhavna must certify their residence in a neighborhood affected by the gas leak or water contamination. The process of validating many claims is painstaking, but also essential to guarantee the focus of our mission. Every person accepted at Sambhavna receives a booklet that will contain their medical history (see right). These records are kept on file at the clinic and maintained in the clinic's computer database. Each entry is monitored to track the effectiveness of treatment and the frequency of complaints.



RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION

Our research team has tackled this task of documenting the full range of survivors' health problems, from increasing incidents of cancer and TB, to second-generation genetic abnormalities. This data is vital, as all official research on the medical ramifications of exposure to Union Carbide's poisons was terminated in 1994. Most of those studies, conducted by the Indian Council of Medical Research, have never been published. We also analyze the overall effectiveness of current therapies and innovate new treatment methods. Several of our studies have been published nationally and internationally: *Methyl Isocyanate Exposure and Growth Patterns of Adolescents in Bhopal* appeared in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* (October, 2003), and our report detailing the positive impact of yoga exercise on lung capacity was presented at the XVI World Congress of Asthma in Argentina. Our medical and scientific research is available in the Sambhavna library, along with other studies, legal transcripts, government publications, and corporate documents. Books on a variety of health subjects, campaign posters and pamphlets, and newspaper clippings from 1984 to the present day can also be found in our archives. Used frequently by researchers, journalists, activists, survivors and staff, it is the most comprehensive collection of original source material about the Bhopal disaster.



Ritesh, one of our community health workers, checks the lung capacity of this boy as part of our continuing study on the growth patterns of children in gas and water-affected communities

EMPOWERING THE COMMUNITY

Sambhavna's involvement with the community extends well beyond our clinic. Our five community health workers go into the gas and water-affected areas every day to identify people in need of treatment, follow up on those who receive care at the clinic and collect information on local health issues. This work is complemented by programs to educate people about common health concerns, and train selected individuals to become community health leaders. These leaders have helped the community health staff meet two of our biggest challenges: successfully controlling TB and providing community-based screening for cervical cancer.

GROWING AND MAKING MEDICINES

Sambhavna puts significant emphasis on the quality of medicines prescribed. Sambhavna's one-acre garden, adjacent to the clinic, harvests more than one hundred species of

medicinal plants. Our medicine makers blend these plants with locally purchased herbs to produce almost fifty different kinds of Ayurvedic powders, oils, decoctions and pills in our medicine making unit. Not only is the garden our primary source for medicines, it also serves as the model for smaller herb gardens cultivated by survivors in surrounding neighborhoods. These survivors are trained by our garden staff, with help from the community health workers. Most of our other modern medications come from LOCOST, a non-profit trust dedicated to producing high-quality medicine at low cost for charitable clinics.



Our gardeners, Mukesh, Manmohan and Ratna (from left), prepare the ground for new medicinal plants

NO MORE BHOPALS

Our global outreach mission is twofold: first, stop the continuing medical disaster in Bhopal, and second, ensure that such preventable tragedies never happen again anywhere in the world. To do this, Sambhavna organizes and participates in local, national and international conferences on medical and environmental health issues relevant to the Bhopal disaster. Sambhavna has joined with a host of other survivor campaigns to set up exhibitions, vigils, film screenings and other programs that raise awareness about industrial disasters and corporate negligence.



Their signs say it all: "Because of the gas, our lives will be cut short"

ESCAPING THE CIRCLE OF POISON

We believe that slow and silent Bhopals are happening all over the world. In 2003, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released its biannual report on the testing of 9,282 American citizens for pesticides and chemical residues. Blood and urine samples revealed 13 pesticides in the average American body. In many cases, people who are sick because of industrial poisons are forced to take medicines manufactured by chemical corporations that also pollute the environment. In providing herbal and drug-free therapies to people in Bhopal, Sambhavna is committed to finding a way for people across the world to escape this circle of poison.