

Medical Care for the Expedition

SUBRATA DAS

AMC

Medical Attendance

A total of 530 cases have been managed since 8 Dec' 93 till 28 Mar' 95, onboard *MVStepan Krasheninnikov*, at *Maitri*, and onboard *MVPolar Bird*. Most of the cases barring a few major ones have been minor. All the cases have responded well to treatment. The number of cases involving injuries, including cold injuries, sprains, and strains have been high, in comparison to the last team. No effort has been spared to provide the best medical care promptly, and within the available resources.

Details of Cases

S.No.	Diagnosis	No. of cases
I.	MEDICAL CASES	
1.	Headache	29
2.	Migraine	03
3.	Insomnia (sleep cycle disturbance)	22
4.	Fever NYD	05
5.	Peripheral Neuritis	03
6.	Upper Respiratory Tract Infection	16
7.	Pneumonitis	01
8.	Hypertension	04 (R 1)
9.	Ischaemic Heart Disease	01 (R 1)
10.	Sea Sickness	12
11.	Smoke Inhalation Syndrome	07
12.	Dyspepsia	10

Contd.

S.No.	Diagnosis	No. of cases
13.	Gastritis	21 (R5)
14.	Glossitis	05
15.	Diarrhoea	13
16.	Intestinal Amoebiasis	06
17.	Amoebic Colitis	08
18.	Helminthiasis	03
19.	Constipation	08
20.	Urinary Tract Infection	04
21.	Viral Hepatitis	01
22.	Pulmonary Tuberculosis	01
II	SKIN DISEASES	
23.	Sunburn	14 (R 1)
24.	Actinic Cheilitis	01
25.	Apthous Ulcer	09
26.	Allergic / Irritant Dermatitis	09
27.	Neurodermatitis	01
28.	Acneform Eruptions	04
29.	Fissured Skin	02
30.	Ptyriasis Versicolor	02
31.	Herpes Simplex	02
32.	Furunculosis	07
33.	Fungal Skin Infections	08
34.	Lichen Nitidus	01
35.	Corns	03
36.	Dandruff	14
37.	Xerosis	10
III.	SURGICAL CASES	
38.	Cerebral Concussion	02 (R 1)
39.	Blunt Trauma Chest	01
40.	Acute Parotitis	01

Contd.

S.No.	Diagnosis	No. of cases
41.	Burns Superficial	02
42.	Bleeding PR	03
43.	Haemorrhoids	02
44.	Fissure-in-ano	03
45.	Chilblains	07
46.	Frost Nip	02
47.	Frost Bite III Degree	01
48.	Abrasions	13
49.	Lacerated Wounds	37
50.	Granuloma Pyogenicum (Optd)	01
51.	Neurofibroma (Optd)	01
52.	Vasectomy operation	01
IV.	MUSCULO-SKELETAL CASES	
53.	Contusions	33
54.	Crush Injury, Hands and Fingers	10
55.	Sprain	21
56.	Myalgia / Arthralgia	29
57.	Myalgia Chest	03
58.	Fracture	01
59.	Acute Lumbago	05
60.	Low Backache	07
61.	Sciatica	03 (R 1)
62.	Wry Neck	17
63.	Osteo Arthritis	01
64.	Traumatic Effusion Knee	02
65.	Traumatic Effusion Elbow	01
66.	Osteomyelitis Toes (Optd)	01
V.	EYE CASES	
67.	Conjunctivitis	09
68.	Allergic / Irritant Conjunctivitis	02

Contd.

S.No.	Diagnosis	No. of cases
69.	Corneal Ulcer (Heat Injury)	01
70.	Photoretinitis	01
71.	Photophthalmitis	01
VI.	ENT CASES	
72.	Epistaxis	03
73.	Wax in ears	09
74.	Foreign body in ears	02
75.	Eustachian tube blockage	02
76.	Maxillary Sinusitis	01
77.	Acute Tonsillitis	02
VII.	DENTAL CASES	
78.	Gingivitis / Alveolitis	07
79.	Caries Tooth	05
80.	Periapical Abscess	01
81.	Extraction of Tooth	01
TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES		530

Note : (1) 'R' stands for Russian Patients.

Status of Medical Stores

A thorough check of all stores were carried out, unserviceable items separated and those not on charge, taken on charge. Most of the electrical / mechanical apparatus were serviced and some unserviceable ones reconditioned. Expired drugs / chemicals backloaded.

Health Check-up

Quarterly medical check-ups were carried out for Army personnel. A constant watch was kept on the health status of all members, and necessary advice / treatment given, as and when required.

Reorganisation of Clinic / OT

The clinic and OT were revamped with available resources. Non-essential items were removed to the loft for storage in view of the scarcity of the space.

Radiography

A total of 15 X-rays were taken despite the limitations due to cramped confines of the clinic, non availability of proper X-ray cassettes, expired X-ray films, and vertical cassette holder.

Cooperation with Novolazaravskaya Station

Dr. Boris Derjadin of Novolazaravskaya Station has been of immense help and assistance for management of Dental Cases, Mutual consultations for management of patients were done, as and when required.

Cooperation with AIIMS

The responsibility of Medical Care and the research on Human Physiology was borne jointly by Dr. Arun Joshi of AIIMS, and self. I am grateful to him for conducting biochemical tests, specially LFT for a case of Viral Hepatitis and a case of Pulmonary Tuberculosis. His assistance for conducting surgery was excellent.

Cooperation with XIV ISEA

All members of the XIV Expedition stationed at Maitri were provided Medical Care till the Surgeon and Anesthetist of the new team were inducted. I am grateful to Sqn Ldr S Anant for giving General Anesthesia onboard MV *Polar Bird*, for a case of *Osteomyelitis toes*, probably a first time occurrence in the history of Indian Antarctic Expeditions. I am also grateful to Maj A Sharma, AMC for providing mutual and maximum cooperation in management of casualties.

Proposal for Hospital Complex at Maitri

Considering the drawbacks faced during the wintering period of which the space constraint was acutely felt, a detailed proposal with justifications for building a Hospital Block has been separately submitted to the DOD Observer onboard MV *Polar Bird*, Dr. A Mitra, whose concern for improvement of facilities was appreciated.

Acknowledgements

I will fail in my duties if I close without acknowledging the immense help and support given by the Leader Mr G Sudhakar Rao, and all other members including the new summer team for carrying out my job satisfactorily.