

Icon of the Issue

Prof. Narendra J. Pandya



Prof. Narendra J. Pandya
FRCS. (General Surgery)

Howard certified (American) Plastic Surgeon

Prof. Narendra Pandya was a pioneering Aesthetic Surgeon of repute, surgeon par excellence and a teacher, whose career span extended over a half century was globally renowned.

Dr. Narendra Pandya spent his childhood in East Africa, after which he was offered a scholarship from both the British Government and the Indian Government for further education. He chose India. He graduated with his MBBS from G. S. Medical College/KEM Hospital in 1959 and during this time was inspired by Dr. Charles Pinto, a Plastic Surgeon whom he always credited for being his first mentor.

Dr. Pandya subsequently went on to the United Kingdom where he resided from 1959 to 1967 obtaining his Fellowship of Royal College of Surgeons from Edinburgh Scotland.

TRAINING IN THE USA

Having decided to pursue Plastic Surgery as a speciality and inspired by his mentors, Dr. Pandya underwent Plastic Surgery Residency at Northwestern University in Chicago under Dr. Harold Griffith, followed by a Fellowship in Burns at Cook County Hospital (1967–1970).

FACULTY APPOINTMENTS IN THE USA

Dr. Pandya was the First Indian to be appointed Associate Director of Sumner Koch Burn Unit, Cook County Hospital, Chicago, the largest burn unit in the USA, before

returning to India. He was also the Associate Professor of Reconstructive Surgery at the prestigious Northwestern University in 1970. Other faculty appointments at that time included a Consultant Surgeon to the Department of Plastic Surgery Cook County Hospital in Chicago, Medical Associate in Plastic Surgery in the Department of Plastic Surgery at the University of Illinois in Chicago and a Research Associate in the Department of Plastic Surgery at the University of Chicago.

RETURN TO INDIA AND HOSPITAL ATTACHMENTS

Despite the extensive training (at that time, probably more than any other Indian Plastic Surgeon), faculty appointments and higher paying job offer in the USA, Dr. Pandya chose to return to India in 1970 with his wife and two daughters. This was initially a struggle, especially since cosmetic surgeon was practically unheard of and he did face a lot of skepticism. However, with persistence came the hospital appointments and a burgeoning practice.

He initially started research and work in Leprosy. He received grants from the Educational Foundation of the American Society of Plastic Surgery. He studied leprosy under famous Late Padma Shri Dr. N. H. Antia. He excelled in his work and dedicated, and in recognition, he was awarded 40-year Long Service Award and Citation on 17th July 2013.

He was appointed to the Jaslok Hospital and Research Centre by the Late Padma Vibhushan Dr. Shantilal J. Mehta

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in 1973 when Late Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, inaugurated the hospital. He pioneered and started the Department of Reconstructive Surgery at this prestigious hospital.

In addition to Jaslok Hospital, he was on staff as Senior Consultant Plastic Surgeon at the Breach Candy Hospital, Lilavati Hospital, Wockhardt Hospital, Dr. LH Hiranandani Hospital, Saifee Hospital, Bhatia General Hospital and Global Hospital. In addition, he started the Department of Cosmetic Surgery at Lilavati Hospital and was its Director. He started the hospital at the Golden Palms Spa in Bangalore and was an advisor to the Escorts Hospital, New Delhi and Apollo Victor Hospital, Goa.

Dr. Pandya joined the B. Y. L. Nair Hospital and Topiwala National Medical College, Mumbai in 1973 and retired as Professor and Head of the Department after nearly 35 years. He was a teacher and an examiner for Mumbai University in MBBS and MS examinations for many years, besides many other universities in India and abroad.

ACCOLADES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Dr. Narendra Pandya was the only Plastic Surgeon to receive the Honorary Rank of Surgeon Commodore in the Indian Navy by the President of India. He was appointed to this prestigious position on 12th April 2002. He was an honorary consultant to the Armed Forces from 1995. He proudly wore Commodore's uniform, a lone Plastic Surgeon to receive the honour of this rank in the country.

He was the first Indian Plastic Surgeon to pass the American Board of Plastic surgery, 1970 and also was the first plastic surgeon to return to India from the USA.

He served as honorary surgeon to Shri Giani Zail Singh and the Late Shri R Venkatramana, Presidents of India. He also served seven Governors of Maharashtra and two Governors of Gujarat.

He was awarded the Dr. B. C. Roy National Award in Medicine, for 'Eminent Medical Teacher' in 1999. This award was presented by Hon'ble Late Shri K. R. Narayanan, the President of India, at the Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi on 16th July 2000.

Other awards included 'Pioneer in Cosmetic Surgery in India' and 'Lifetime Achievement award in Aesthetic Surgery' by the Indian Society of Plastic Surgery, in 2010,

'Service Teaching medal in Plastic Surgery' from BYL NAIR hospital, in 2005, 'Life Time Achievement Award in Cosmetic Surgery' By Indian Association of Cosmetic Surgeons, 1995. Gillies Memorial Oration, 'Aesthetic Surgery In India – A Painful Dilemma' (1994), Col. Pandalai Oration, 'Past, Present and Future Of Aesthetic Surgery In India'. Association of Surgeons of India (1999).

His national and international scholarships are too numerous to mention as are his awards. He delivered over 250 national and international orations, visiting professor lectures and talks at meetings all over the world. He was a member of multiple professional (burn, aesthetic, reconstructive, craniofacial and leprosy) societies.

He wrote over fifty publications in national and international medical journals in addition to multiple mainstream consumer magazine and newspaper articles/interviews.

Social contributions include Legislation for Dowry Deaths, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research as an Advisor in Burns. In 1971, he introduced silver sulphadiazine in India for burn treatment. He helped with taking care of burn victims following Babri Mosque Demolition, riots following Mandal Commission uprisings, IPKF War Victims and Kargil War Victims. He was awarded the prestigious American Burn Association Award in Serology for his work in burn toxin. He was involved in the first burn unit in Mumbai Municipality in Kasturba Hospital, besides Tata Main Hospital, Jamshedpur, Vadilal Sarabhai Hospital, Ahmedabad, Christian Medical College, Vellore, Bangalore Medical College, Bangalore and MP Shah Medical College, Jamnagar. He started the First Naval Burn Centre at INHS Asvini.

LEPROSY

Dr. Pandya's clinical and research contribution to leprosy was singular and well recognized.

CLEFT WORK

At the invitation of Government of Maldives, the Government of India deputed him to Maldives to take care of patients requiring surgery for cleft lip and palate. In total ten visits, he operated on all patients at Rajiv Gandhi Hospital, Male.

AESTHETIC SURGERY

Last but not least, Dr. Pandya popularised Cosmetic Surgery way back in 1972. Recognised as a pioneer in India, he was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Indian Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery. He initiated the field of Non-invasive Cosmetic Surgery and wrote a popular book, with his daughter, Botox, A Ready Reckoner. He also pioneered Hair Transplant and Sex Reassignment Surgeries in India. He has been a household name for multiple models, Bollywood stars and several celebrities. Besides, in 2011, India Today Group, by a popular vote, elected him one of the 100 Best Doctors in India.

On a personal note he loved finer things in life including traveling with his family, art and food!

Dr. Pandya, in his teaching career of nearly 50 years, has trained a large number of reconstructive and aesthetic surgeons in India and abroad and has been a teacher, mentor and inspiration to students, residents, fellows and colleagues and has changed lives of innumerable Patients. He remains forever an Icon of Plastic Surgery in the country.

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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