



JANEIRO HOSPITAL

OUR PATIENTS, OUR
PRIORITY.

WORLD SICKLE CELL DAY.

Every year on June 19th, people around the globe come together to observe World Sickle Cell Day. This international awareness day aims to shed light on a genetic blood disorder called sickle cell disease (SCD) and honor the strength and resilience of those affected by it. With this year's theme being *"Bridging the Gaps towards optimum care and control of Sickle Cell Disease,"* we at Janeiro Hospital delve into the significance of this day, understand the impact of SCD on individuals and communities, and explore how we can make a difference in the lives of those living with this condition.

Understanding Sickle Cell Disease.

Sickle cell disease is an inherited blood disorder that affects the shape and function of red blood cells. People with SCD have abnormal hemoglobin, a protein responsible for carrying oxygen throughout the body. As a result, their red blood cells become rigid and shaped like a crescent or a sickle, causing them to get stuck in blood vessels, leading to pain, organ damage, and other complications.

The Impact on Individuals and Communities.

Sickle cell disease affects millions of people worldwide, predominantly in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and certain parts of the Mediterranean region. However, due to migration and global movement, SCD is now a global health concern. According to a report by the WHO in 2019, it is estimated that around 300,000 babies are born with SCD each year.

Living with SCD can be incredibly challenging, both physically and emotionally. Individuals with SCD often experience chronic pain episodes known as "crises," which can require hospitalization and result in a reduced quality of life. Moreover, SCD can lead to a range of complications such as anemia, organ damage, increased susceptibility to infections, and a shorter lifespan.

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The Significance of World Sickle Cell Day.

World Sickle Cell Day serves as a vital platform to raise awareness about this often misunderstood and overlooked condition. It aims to dispel misconceptions surrounding SCD and foster a better understanding of the challenges faced by individuals living with the disease.

On this day, various organizations, healthcare professionals, advocacy groups, and individuals affected by SCD come together to promote education, access to care, and support for those with the disease. The objective is to empower individuals with SCD, provide resources and information, and advocate for policies that improve their quality of life.

Making a Difference.

There are several ways we can contribute to the well-being of individuals with sickle cell disease and their families:

1. **Education and Awareness:** Educate yourself and others about SCD by sharing accurate information and dispelling myths. Promote awareness campaigns through social media, community events, and educational initiatives to help foster understanding and empathy.
2. **Support and Empathy:** Extend your support to individuals with SCD and their families. Offer a listening ear, show empathy, and create a safe space for them to share their experiences. By showing compassion and understanding, we can help alleviate the emotional burdens associated with the disease.
3. **Advocacy and Funding:** Support organizations and initiatives dedicated to raising awareness and improving the lives of individuals with SCD. Advocate for increased research funding, improved access to healthcare services, and policies that prioritize the needs of those with the disease.

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4. **Blood and Stem Cell Donations:** Consider donating blood and registering as a potential stem cell donor. Blood transfusions are often a crucial part of managing complications associated with SCD, while stem cell transplants offer a potential cure for some individuals with the disease.

In conclusion, World Sickle Cell Day serves as a powerful reminder of the strength, resilience, and spirit of individuals living with sickle cell disease. By coming together, raising awareness, and advocating for better care, we can make a significant impact in the lives of those affected by this condition.. Let us stand together to support those affected, celebrate their strength and resilience, and work towards a future where sickle cell disease no longer hinders the pursuit of a fulfilling life.

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