

Delhi hospital treats woman with rare eye deformity

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Doctors have given here a new lease of life to a woman who had been suffering from a rare eye deformity since birth.

Reeta (name changed) was born with "Marcus Gunn Jaw Winking Syndrome" -- a rare congenital condition where a drooping eyelid briefly opens wider and appears to wink when the jaw is moved.

The condition, known to occur among 1 in 1,000 people, is caused as a result of abnormal connections between the nerves that control the muscles that help in chewing and the muscle that lifts the upper eyelid. This causes the "jawwink".

Doctors at Aakash Healthcare Super Speciality Hospital here surgically treated the condition using an advanced LPS

(Levatorpalpebrae superioris) muscle surgical procedure.

"Reeta was born with the rare eye disorder where her eyelid moves up and down with movement of the jaw, while speaking or while chewing," Vidya Nair Chaudhry, Senior Consultant (Ophthalmology) at the hospital, said in a statement.

"When she was examined, we found that the lid droop was actually very minimal but the eyelid movement with jaw movement was very marked, one of the most severe jaw winking that we had ever seen," she added. The syndrome results in a severe cosmetic deformity for the patient and could often lead to severe psychological distress in the patient leading to suicidal behaviours.

In a case of simple ptosis - drooping or falling of the upper eyelid -- the treatment is a

surgical tightening of the weak LPS muscle. But, in her case, such a procedure would correct the ptosis but would make the jawwink even more prominent.

"The only thing left to do is to completely remove the LPS muscle and replace that with an implant. The removal of the muscle results in a total lid droop, a total ptosis, and then a frontalis sling is placed within the lid," Chaudhry explained.

"This is a silicone sling implant that then connects the eyelid to the frontalis muscle of the forehead above the eyebrow, and this muscle then lifts the eyelid up. That way, both the wink and the ptosis are corrected," she noted. After the surgery, there was no jawwink and the lid position was ideal and the patient is doing fine, Chaudhry said.