

Vitiligo still a stigma among masses

■ Bachelors seek opinion of dermatologists before accepting wedding offers from family having any vitiligo-affected member

WORLD VITILIGO DAY

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TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, JUNE 25

Vitiligo (*phulveri*) continues to block matrimonial ties. Even as there has been a slight increase in awareness level on the disease, families of eligible bachelors are now found seeking consultation from skin specialists before accepting wedding offers from families that have one or more members suffering from vitiligo.

Dermatologists said in every clinic, five to six cases came and many also rang up private doctors to know whether the disease was con-



Richshaws parked outside the PGI on "World Vitiligo Day" in Sector 12, Chandigarh, on Wednesday. TRIBUNE PHOTO: MANOJ MAHAJAN

MYTHS ABOUT THE DISEASE

White-coloured food items like curd, milk can cause it

Consumption of fish and milk back to back can cause it

Food rich in vitamin C can cause it

tagious. Dr SD Mehta, former dermatologist of GMSH-16, said, "Young women suffering from vitiligo often face

rejection for wedding. These days, people come to consult me before they fix up a marriage if one or more family

members of the girl suffer from vitiligo. For instance, two days ago, I found a

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WHAT IS VITILIGO

Vitiligo (*phulvehri*) is a pigmentary disorder of cosmetic concern and social stigma in India. Patients develop single to multiple asymptomatic white spots on various parts of the body. The department runs a pigmentary clinic on every Friday for these patients. Last year, 673 new patients and 2,330 follow-up patients visited the clinic.

Vitiligo still a social stigma

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family telling me that they selected a girl for marrying their son. The girl's mother had vitiligo. They later found that her sister was also affected. The family sought my opinion fearing if later the girl would also develop the disease. But it is not so, these are just myths."

Dr Davinder Parsad, additional professor, department of dermatology, PGIMER, said, "Vitiligo patients are already stressed and the social stigma attached to it aggravates the stress level, increasing the damage. But the good news is that vitiligo is curable. We have cured the disease in

many young patients using surgery and laser techniques. so why take stress?"

Apart from oral medication, the ultraviolet therapy — narrowband (NB-UVB) and UVA are methods for treatment. The phototherapy treatment has been a boon to patients in the northern region. The department also offers various surgical therapeutic options for grafting.

A rickshaw rally was flagged off at PGIMER with a poster show on vitiligo messages. An information booklet on vitiligo was released. A short play on myths of vitiligo and patients sought consultation from experts.