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International award for city doctor

Special Correspondent

COIMBATORE: Consultant Inter-ventional Radiologist at Kovai Medical Center and Hospital Mathew Cherian was recently conferred with the 'Cum Laude Award' at the European Congress on Radiology held in Austria's capital Vienna for his presentation on the treatment of intra-cranial aneurysm.

Aneurysm is an abnormal bulging of the blood vessel in the brain. If not detected early and treated, this can burst and prove fatal for the patient.

The award was for the minimally invasive technique Dr. Cherian had developed. A press release from the hospital said that this technique obviated the need to open the skull. Instead, the affected portion in the brain was accessed through a blood vessel in the thigh using computerised imaging for guidance. The bulged portion was then packed with soft wires to cure the patient of the problem.

Dr. Cherian said a severe headache must be viewed seriously as it could be a symptom of aneurysm. If the bulge ruptured, it could prove fatal. He said 20 per cent of the patients (with rupture) never reached the hospital alive. And, 40 per cent would have secondary bleeding from the same area, resulting in death in a few days. Till the mid-nineties, only open surgery was possible and this carried a high risk of death or paralysis. The new technique that involved coiling (by using the wires) provided a breakthrough in treatment. Kovai Medical Center and Hospital was among the first few centres in the country to use this technique. Till date, among all these centres, a nine-year-old girl was the youngest patient and the oldest was 89 years old.