



Sambhavna Trust Clinic  
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*Sambhavna is a Sanskrit / Hindi word which means "possibility". Read as "sama" and "bhavna" it means: "similar feelings" or "compassion". Sambhavna provides free healthcare for the Bhopal residents affected by the 1984 gas leak and ongoing groundwater contamination. It provides them care and hope as they continue to call for healthcare support and economic rehabilitation from the Indian government and accountability from Dow Chemical.*

## Background

It has been twenty - five years since the gas leak at a Union-Carbide pesticide factory in Bhopal, India that has led to more than 23,000 deaths. In the dead of night, thousands of people awoke to the suffocating gas that silently crept through the town as it seeped out of the poorly managed factory. They ran; as fast and as far as they could. Many could not outrun death; an estimated 8,000 people died within the first three days, and at least 100,000 were permanently injured.

Some who survived say they are the unlucky ones. The chemicals left behind in the abandoned and rusting factory have been bleeding into the soil and groundwater for the past twenty - five years. The tragedy of “that night” still continues as the survivors and their next generation drink the remnants of the poisonous factory every day. An estimated 100,000 survivors of the chemical disaster are still chronically ill, and approximately 23,000 have been killed to date due to exposure-related illnesses. The failure of the official system of health care contributes heavily to the medical disaster in Bhopal. All research and monitoring of the long-term health effects of Union Carbide's gases on the population have been abandoned since 1994. So far no treatment protocols for symptom complexes associated with toxic exposure have been established in the majority of the hospitals built to help the survivors, and symptomatic treatment remains the mainstay of medical response. The indiscriminate prescription of steroids, antibiotics and psychotropic drugs is compounding the damage caused by the gas exposure. Despite the expenditure of tens of

## WAYS TO HELP

### Volunteer

- ◇ Volunteers at the clinic comprise of an irreplaceable group of members who develop meaningful projects for a stay of anywhere from two weeks to a year.
- ◇ Volunteer fundraising allows us to continue to reach out to survivors and provide them the free care they need. For more information, call Colin Toogood c/o the Bhopal Medical Appeal.
- ◇ Telephone: +44 20 7065 0909, USA: 415-981-6205 x 355.

### Donate

- ◇ Individual donations sustain the clinic. We do not accept funds from corporations or corporate charities. Even a small amount can transform a child's life and give them a chance for a future.
  - ◇ The clinic is also seeking the donation of the following medical equipment for the clinic:
    - Ultrasound machine
    - Spirometers
    - Elisa Readers
    - Trinocular Microscope
    - Autorefractometer
    - Ophthalmoscope
    - Mercury-less BP instruments
    - Projection equipment for health education
- Please visit [www.bhopal.org](http://www.bhopal.org) to donate today

“I writhe in agony like a fish out of water from the pain all over my body. I get my periods once in four months. I am told I must not mention my problems.”



“If we got proper funds we would be able to do so much more, to reach out to them and touch them – there are lots of dreams.”

-Aziza



## ***SAMBHAVNA'S BELIEFS***

- The disaster in Bhopal is not an isolated event. Workers and communities are routinely poisoned all over the world.
- Reduction and eventual elimination of hazardous chemicals from the planet and our daily lives is the only solution to the growing number of slow and silent Bhopals in our midst.
- Until this happens, the safety of our health and lives depends on watchful monitoring, strict enforcement of regulations and exemplary punishment to offending agencies. In this respect, ensuring justice in Bhopal can be seen as a public health initiative with potential for significant and widespread change.
- Limits of modern medicine in taking care of modern industrial diseases are becoming increasingly apparent. Evolution of an appropriate system of health care, monitoring and research for survivors of Bhopal is of consequence to all of us worldwide.
- It is possible to combine traditional and western systems of health care when evolving appropriate care intended to provide sustained relief to chronically ill people affected by chemicals such as the Bhopal survivors.
- It is possible to evolve systems of health surveillance and environmental monitoring through active participation of the community of survivors.
- It is possible to generate opportunities for hope through creative and collective intervention in a situation of despair.

# MEDICAL CARE

## ◇ *Allopathic (Traditional Western) Care*

- General Medicine
- Gynecological care
- Mental Health care

## ◇ *Ayurvedic Care*

- Indigenous system of medicine based on herbs.
- Panchakarma: method of detoxifying the body through procedures such as oil massages and medicated saunas

## ◇ *Yoga*

- Therapy consists of instruction in different combinations of Asana [physical postures], Pranayama [breathing exercises], and Shodhana kriya [cleansing actions].

## ◇ *Pathology Lab*

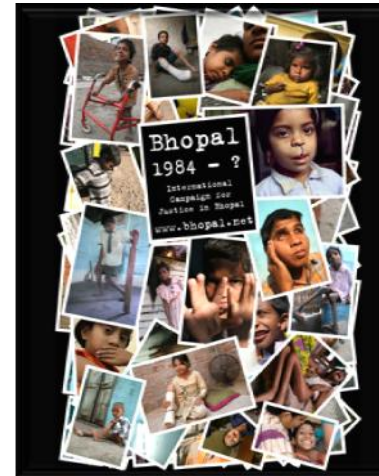
- Routine, microscopic and bio-chemical tests for blood, urine, sputum, etc.

## ◇ *Preparation and Distributions of medicines*

- Sixty-four Ayurvedic medicines are manufactured inhouse using locally collected or purchased herbs. Herbal medicines prepared at the clinic include: Churna [single herb and herbal mixture powders], Kwatha [decoctions], Taila [oils], Vati [tablets] and Lepa [poultice].
- All medicines are provided free of cost.

millions of dollars by the government and the Bhopal Memorial Hospital Trust [BMHT] towards medical relief, the health status of the survivors and their children continues to deteriorate.

In the prevailing situation of despair, the Sambhavna Trust believes in creating possibilities by generating compassion. The work carried out by the Sambhavna Trust over the last ten years has shown that it is possible to evolve simple, safe, effective, ethical and participatory ways of treatment monitoring and research for the survivors of the Bhopal disaster.



Birth defects are far too common among children of the gas leak survivors

At Sambhavna, survivors are offered free medical care through allopathy, ayurveda [an indigenous system of medicine based on herbs] and Yoga. The 45 staff members of the Sambhavna clinic [among whom 23 are survivors themselves] include five physicians, two yoga and two Panchakarma therapists, and seven community health workers who carry out health surveys, health education and community organization for better health.