■ **The baby was allegedly transfused infected blood**

Row at Coimbatore GH as 2-yr-old baby tests HIV+

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DC**
COIMBATORE, FEB 19

A two-year-old girl baby has tested HIV positive, allegedly after transfusion of infected blood by a doctor at the Coimbatore Medical College Hospital (CMCH), triggering a controversy.

According to the baby's father Viswanathan, the incident came to light after the baby was admitted to CMCH on February 6 this year.

Seeing cysts all over her body, doctors went for blood investigation and declared that the baby has HIV infection. On July 11, 2018, the baby was admitted to CMCH for severe cold and asphyxiation.

Doctors said that she had a hole in the heart and gave her blood transfusion. After a few minutes, another doctor who entered the ward stopped the procedure claiming that it was an elderly person's blood which will not support the baby. Within a few days the baby was discharged and treated as an outpatient for a week.

Family sources said three months ago the baby developed frequent fever and lost a considerable amount of weight. Cysts all over the body initially led the parents to think it was chicken pox. Despite continuous treatment, when she did not respond, they brought her again to CMCH on February 6. They were shocked to know about the baby's HIV status, added her father. When Viswanathan went to the Race course police station to lodge a complaint against the particular doctor who had administered infected blood, police allegedly refused to accept the complaint and demanded proper witnesses. The desperate father has approached lawyer Sarathi of the Human Rights Commission in the city and plans to file a case in the court.

Rejecting the charge, Dr Ashokan, dean, CMCH, told the press, "the baby was given red blood cells at CMCH. However it was not HIV infected. Doctors gave it only after checking the records of the blood bank. The baby could have undergone treatment at some other hospital too."