

## they say



I PREFER EATING ONLY AT HOME. I HARDLY GO OUT AND I NEVER EAT ANY STREET FOOD. IF I HAVE TO GO OUT FOR A MEAL, I GO TO A GOOD RESTAURANT, AND EVEN THERE I HAVE ONLY MINERAL WATER.

SK CHHATWAL, wellness consultant



WE HAVE AN RO PURIFIER AT HOME; IT IS NEEDED. IN FACT, EVERYONE IN OUR BUILDING USES RO. ACTUALLY, EVEN AT THE WEDDINGS I PLAN, I ARRANGE THE SMALL 200 ML WATER BOTTLES.

CHITRA SURANA, wedding planner

## victims of untreated water

# 'Restaurant trip left a bitter taste in my mouth'

HT Correspondent

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**NEW DELHI:** Vaishali Mehta, 40, suffered from diarrhoea after she ate out last month.

"My family and I went out for a meal at a restaurant two weeks ago, where I drank water. My stomach started hurting within hours, but I popped an antacid pill and tried to sleep it off. The pain aggravated the next day and I developed acute diarrhoea, accompanied with vomiting, nausea and unbearable stomach cramps," said Mehta, a homemaker who lives at Chittaranjan Park in South Delhi.

"The next morning, I went to a doctor who prescribed antibiotics to control the vomiting, and advised me to drink a lot of fluids and eat only home-cooked food for at least a week," said Mehta.

Her doctor suspects the water she drank was contaminated.

"She had suffered an acute bout of gastroenteritis. It could have been because of the water she drank outside," says Dr Rommel Tickoo, senior consultant, internal medicine, Max Hospital.

"I took very good care from then on, and the vomiting stopped within 24



■ Vaishali Mehta

hours. It took two days for my stomach to become normal. Within five days, my entire system was fine. I only ate curd rice and khichdi for three days. One should be very careful before eating outside. Otherwise one can easily fall sick," said Mehta, who used to assist her husband in making documentaries.

Now, she is very particular about the quality of food and water at home. "We've installed an RO system at home to ensure safe drinking water. I also take care while handling raw food items. I maintain good hygiene," she said.

# Unsafe water landed him in hospital ward

HT Correspondent

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**NEW DELHI:** Om Prakash, 55, was admitted to Moolchand Hospital for a week with dehydration and weakness from acute diarrhoea from May 6 to May 13.

"Along with diarrhoea, I had cramps and vomiting, so my family rushed me to the hospital. I am better now," said Om Prakash, a resident of Andrews Ganj in south Delhi.

"When he had to come to the hospital he was very weak and dehydrated. We had to immediately admit him and administer intravenous fluids and antibiotics. He had to be kept in the hospital for seven days because of the antibiotics. We had to change his medicine. We also had to give medicines to control his vomiting and loose motion," said Dr Srikant Sharma, senior consultant, internal medicine, Moolchand hospital.

Prakash suspects he got a stomach infection during a visit to a friend's place. "I had an RO system in my house so there is no chance of unsafe water there. I also eat light diet at my home. Perhaps I drank water somewhere else which could have been contaminated and triggered the infection," said Prakash.

# HEALTH HAZARDS

Drinking contaminated water can put your health at serious risk. Here's what you can do to stay safe:

## MICROBIAL CONTAMINATION

**PATHOGENS:** Bacteria, fungi, viruses and protozoa  
**EFFECTS:** Diarrhoea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, dysentery, jaundice, cholera, hepatitis A, eye, skin infection

## DISINFECTANT BY-PRODUCTS

**CHLORINE & CHLORINE DIOXIDE,** found in water additives  
**EFFECTS:** Eye/nose irritation; stomach discomfort, anaemia  
**CHLORITE,** byproduct of drinking water disinfection  
**EFFECTS:** Anaemia in kids; affects nervous system

## CHEMICAL CONTAMINANTS

**ARSENIC:** Found in water polluted by e-wastes etc  
**EFFECTS:** Carcinogen, causes skin, lung, bladder, liver cancer  
**FLUORIDE:** Discharge from fertilisers, aluminium factories  
**EFFECTS:** Bone diseases, fracture  
**LEAD:** Added by corrosion of household plumbing systems  
**EFFECTS:** Affects brain, central nervous system, kidney damage, high blood pressure

## HOW TO PURIFY WATER



### FILTRATION

- Use a water filter, preferably with the reverse osmosis (RO) technique that also demineralises and de-ionises water
- RO also helps purify hard water that is laced with salt and minerals



### BOILING

- Most micro-organisms die when water is boiled
- Experts recommend one to three minutes of boiling
- Some chemicals also vaporize on boiling but it doesn't remove minerals or metals
- Allow the water to sit for 10mins-15mins for the dense particles to settle at container's bottom



### TABLETS

- Chlorine tablets are most commonly used for purifying water
- It kills the organisms in water but don't use more than one tablet for a litre water to avoid toxicity. Wait for at least 30 minutes after the tablet dissolves to drink the water