

*Women's Era Presents*

# Fearless Women

## Who Beat The Odds



AMISHAVORA



REEHAJHUNJHUNWALA



DR. HINASHAH



DR. MANJULAPOOJASHROFF



DR. CHANDNI KAPADIA



KARUNANUNDY



ISHANEE SHARMA



SUNDARIR PISUPATI



DR. GEETHA MANJUNATH



MANU BHAKER



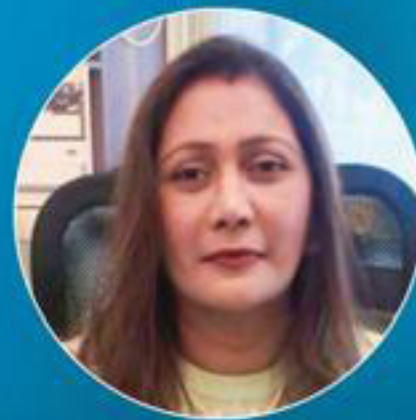
DR. ARADHANA PANDEY



DR. VANDANA DHAKTODE



POONAM SHARMA



DR. SHARMILA AMIN



GITAGOPINATH



DIPIKATREHAN



ITIRAWAT



ANOOJABASHIR



# Dr. Vandana Dhaktode

ACE DOCTOR IN GENERAL SURGERY AND HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT.

## **Why did you decide to become a doctor?**

I always admired the wonderful world of doctors who save human lives and make people healthier. Becoming a doctor gave me the chance and the challenge to help those who need it the most. It's an incredibly fulfilling profession, knowing that every day, I can make a tangible difference.

## **Why did you choose General Surgery over General Medicine?**

During my MBBS and internship, I was particularly drawn to general surgery. The dynamic, challenging and fast-paced nature of the field appealed to me—the ever-changing situations, the life-saving procedures, and the quick decision-making. Many people encouraged me to pursue Gynecology & Obstetrics but I preferred the subject of General Surgery instead.

## **With your extensive experience in General Surgery, what are the most frequent issues you've encountered?**

As a general surgeon, I handle a wide range of cases, from trauma and accidents to complex surgeries. One of the biggest challenges is finding the right balance—knowing when surgery is necessary and when it's not. It's crucial to make informed decisions about a patient's care, whether they're facing cancer, tuberculosis, or another serious condition.

Patient trust is key, especially when it comes to surgeries. They need to fully understand the procedure, its risks, and what to expect. This requires time and care. Beyond the operating room, running a hospital brings administrative challenges—obtaining and renewing licenses and accreditation,

maintaining infrastructure, and managing finances. Healthcare is not as lucrative as people assume, especially with the high costs involved.

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Dr. Vandana Dhaktode  
MBBS, MS (Mumbai); General  
Surgery, OM Hospital, Dombivili



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Luckily, health insurance and government schemes are improving access to care, though many still struggle with medical bills. When I first started, people were surprised to see a female surgeon. Today, patients seek me out, inspired to see a woman succeed in such a challenging field.

## **Why did you decide to set up your own hospital?**

After graduating with a gold medal from KEM Hospital and Seth G S Medical College, I witnessed the gaps in India's healthcare system. Jobs for surgeons were scarce, and well-equipped facilities were hard to find. Many of my colleagues went abroad, but I stayed. My husband, Dr. Sharad Dhaktode, MS General Surgery, encouraged me to take a loan and to establish a hospital in the suburbs of Mumbai. Over the time, we expanded it into a multi-specialty center. I'm especially proud of our all-female staff, who provide essential care to patients in the suburbs and offer free surgeries to those in need.

## **If you hadn't become a doctor, what would you have done?**

I can't imagine being anything other than a surgeon. It feels like destiny. I'm proud to have made healthcare accessible and affordable in Mumbai's suburbs, all the while working alongside an incredible team of female para-medical staff.