

Fitness factor

PRIYANKA TALREJA IS ONE OF THE YOUNGEST **SINDHI** SPORTS PHYSIOTHERAPISTS IN THE COUNTRY. SHE TELLS **BINDU GOPAL RAO** ALL ABOUT HER JOURNEY TO DATE

The eldest of three siblings, Priyanka Talreja grew up in Mumbai where she did both her schooling and her Bachelor's degree in Physical Therapy. She then gave the medical entrance exam a shot, cleared it, and got into KEM hospital - ranked number one in Mumbai for physical therapy studies. "Even then, I was not sure if this is what I wanted to do. But eventually I really started enjoying anatomy, biomechanics, and all the noninvasive treatment techniques to help alleviate pain in a patient."

What followed was a Masters in Health and Rehabilitation Sciences with a concentration in Musculoskeletal Physical Therapy at the University of Pittsburgh, USA – two years that she recalls as being the best of her life! "It got me to think out of the box and develop lateral thinking which is unfortunately something that is lacking in India."

Once back in the country, Priyanka started her career at Alchemy Life (about three years ago) under her mentor and guru John Gloster. "I still remember the first day at Alchemy when we had our orientation. I was the only female therapist appointed and I must admit it felt quite daunting as all of the rest had 4+ years of experience in this field," she shares.

However, what seemed difficult in the beginning only helped Priyanka build credibility among clients - enough to be able to trust her. "Working for 12-14 hours daily, even on Sundays, was tough as I had no personal time or social life but today I can say it has got me at least somewhat close to my eventual goal. I can proudly say at the age of 28 I have made a small name in my field with clients like Anuradha Mahendra, Radhika Ruia and Neerja Birla."

Priyanka has big dreams. "I want to break the stereotype and be a physiotherapist for one of the best recognized sports leagues in India or abroad – they now mostly hire male physios. I also want to have a state of the art sports injury clinic of my own with the latest research facilities to monitor the progress of an athlete in a more qualitative and quantitative way!"



Photograph by Ritika Devidayal

