



DAILY NEWS BULLETIN

LEADING HEALTH, POPULATION AND FAMILY WELFARE STORIES OF THE DAY
Thursday 20210923

National Covid recovery rate recorded at 97.77 per cent

National Covid recovery rate recorded at 97.77 per cent, highest since March 2020 (The Tribune: 20210923)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/coronavirus/national-covid-recovery-rate-recorded-at-97-77-per-cent-highest-since-march-2020-315110>

India added 31,923 new coronavirus infections taking the total tally of Covid cases to 3,35,63,421, while the active cases declined to 3,01,640, the lowest in 187 days, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Thursday.

The death toll climbed to 4,46,050 with 282 fresh fatalities, according to the data updated at 8 am.

The active cases comprise 0.9 per cent of the total infections, the lowest since March 2020, while the national Covid recovery rate was recorded at 97.77 per cent, the highest since March 2020, the ministry said.

As many as 15,27,443 tests were conducted on Wednesday taking the total cumulative tests conducted so far to 55,83,67,013.

The daily positivity rate was recorded at 2.09 per cent. It has been less than three per cent for last 24 days. The weekly positivity rate was recorded at 2.11 per cent. It has been below three per cent for the last 90 days, according to the ministry.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 3,28,15,731, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.33 per cent.

The cumulative doses administered in the country so far under the nationwide Covid vaccination drive has exceeded 83.39 crore.

The 282 new fatalities include 142 from Kerala and 48 from Maharashtra.

A total of 4,46,050 deaths have been reported so far in the country including 1,38,664 from Maharashtra, 37,668 from Karnataka, 35,400 from Tamil Nadu, 25,085 from Delhi, 24,039 from Kerala, 22,888 from Uttar Pradesh, and 18,691 from West Bengal. PTI

UK: Covishield okay, not Cowin certificate

UK: Covishield okay, not Cowin certificate (The Tribune: 20210923)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/coronavirus/uk-covishield-okay-not-cowin-certificate-314875>

The UK today added Covishield to its list of approved Covid vaccines for incoming travellers, but is yet to accept certificates issued from India as valid proof. Photo for representation only.

The UK today added Covishield to its list of approved Covid vaccines for incoming travellers, but is yet to accept certificates issued from India as valid proof.

London's visa rules are under constant review and the UK High Commission here said it was in dialogue with the Indian Government to break the impasse after Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla threatened reciprocation if the "discriminatory" regime was not reversed. PM Narendra Modi today called for international travel to be made easier through mutual recognition of Covid vaccine certificates by countries.

Also read: PM Modi bats for mutual recognition of vaccine certificates amid UK row

Basically, the UK has problems with certificates issued by Indian public authorities as well as with the vaccine app Cowin. This means Indians fully vaccinated with Covishield on reaching the UK still have to undergo 10 days of quarantine, besides at least two RTPCR tests.

Opinions page: Shift in the vaccination policy is apparent

"Formulations of the four listed vaccines, such as AstraZeneca Covishield, qualify as approved vaccines from October 4," said the UK's Department of Health in a move that left New Delhi still unsatisfied because India is not on the list of 17 countries whose vaccination certificates would be accepted.

What India found galling was that Pune-manufactured Covishield is based on the same Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine whose British version is accepted.

Moreover, India had supplied five lakh doses of this very Pune-made vaccine to the United Kingdom when it was battling a sudden spike in infections.

Quarantine still must

The UK now has problems with certificates issued by Indian authorities and with vaccine app Cowin

This means Indians fully vaccinated with Covishield on reaching the UK will have to undergo 10-day quarantine, besides two RTPCR tests

26,964 fresh cases

Covid can cause delirium

Covid can cause delirium, says study (The Tribune: 20210923)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/coronavirus/covid-can-cause-delirium-says-study-315051>

A study of 150 patients hospitalised for Covid in the US at the beginning of the pandemic found that 73 per cent had delirium, a serious disturbance in mental state wherein a person is confused, agitated and unable to think clearly. The study, published in the journal BMJ Open, found that patients with delirium tended to be sicker, with more comorbidities like hypertension and diabetes, and appeared to have more severe Covid-related illness. “Covid is also associated with a number of other adverse outcomes that tend to prolong hospitalisation and make recovery difficult,” said study author Phillip Vlisides, from the University of Michigan in the

Vaccine ingredient

Vaccine ingredient supply lines must stay open: Modi (Hindustan Times: 20210923)

<https://epaper.hindustantimes.com/Home/ArticleView>

supply chains for Covid-19 vaccine raw materials must be kept open so that India can increase production and resume vaccine supplies to other countries, Prime Minister Narendra Modi told a virtual Covid summit on Wednesday.

At the same time, international travel should become easier through mutual recognition of vaccine certificates so that the world can cope with the pandemic’s economic impacts, Modi said while addressing the summit called by US President Joe Biden.

Earlier on Wednesday, before he left for the US, Modi said the visit was an opportunity to strengthen the bilateral and global strategic partnerships and consolidate ties with key partners, Japan and Australia. He will be in the US during September 22-25, and will have separate

meetings with US President Joe Biden, vice president Kamala Harris, Australia's Scott Morrison and Japan's Yoshihide Suga, and hold talks with leading American businesspeople in Washington. He will travel to New York to address the UN General Assembly session on September 25.

"During my visit, I will review the India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership with President Biden and exchange views on regional and global issues of mutual interest," Modi said.

In his remarks at the opening of the summit convened on the margins of the UN General Assembly, Biden announced the donation of another 500 million doses of the Pfizer vaccine to low and middle income countries, taking total US commitments to more than 1.1 billion shots.

Modi noted the pandemic has resulted in "unprecedented disruption and it is not yet over". Biden's initiative is timely and welcome as much of the world is yet to be vaccinated, he said.

"As newer Indian vaccines get developed, we are also ramping up production capacity of existing vaccines. As our production increases, we will be able to resume vaccine supply to others too. For this, the supply chains of raw materials must be kept open," he said.

India is working with partners in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue to leverage the country's manufacturing strengths to produce vaccines for the Indo-Pacific region. India and the South Africa have proposed a waiver of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) for Covid-19 vaccines, diagnostics and medicines to scale up the fight against the pandemic, Modi said. "We also need to focus on addressing the pandemic's economic effects. To that end, international travel should be made easier, through mutual recognition of vaccine certificates," he said.

Modi recalled India's role in helping other nations tackle the pandemic by producing cost-effective diagnostic kits, drugs, medical devices and PPE kits, and sharing medical supplies with more than 150 countries. "Earlier this year, we shared our vaccine production with 95 other countries and with UN peacekeepers. And like a family, the world also stood with India when we were going through a second wave," he said. India is now running the world's largest immunisation campaign, and had vaccinated 25 million people on a single day. More than 200 million Indians were fully vaccinated, and India is willing to share its digital platform CoWIN and other digital solutions freely as open source software, he said.

Biden too highlighted the US partnership with Quad members India, Japan and Australia to help produce one billion vaccine doses in India to boost global supplies by the end of 2022.

"The US is buying another half billion doses of Pfizer to donate to low and middle income countries around the world," he said. "This is another half billion doses that will all be shipped by this time next year." He added, "Put another way, for every one shot we've administered to date in America, we have now committed to do three shots to the rest of the world."

Biden announced the launching of the European Union-US partnership to expand global vaccinations, and said the US will provide an additional \$370 million to support administering

and delivery of vaccines worldwide. More than \$380 million will be provided to GAVI to facilitate distribution of vaccines in regions with the greatest need, he said.

The summit, Biden said, was focused on “supercharging efforts” in 3 key areas: vaccinating the world by ramping up production, donations and delivery of doses, addressing the oxygen crisis in hospitals around the world and making other treatments more accessible, and building better so that global health infrastructure becomes more resilient.

He said US secretary of state Antony Blinken will convene a meeting of foreign ministers later this year to check collective progress, and proposed a second virtual Covid summit in the first quarter of 2022.

WHO

WHO tightens air quality norms over health hazard? (Hindustan Times: 20210923)

<https://epaper.hindustantimes.com/Home/ArticleView>

Harms from air pollution begin at much lower levels than previously thought, the World Health Organization said on Wednesday as it lowered acceptable thresholds for several pollutants, including ultrafine PM2.5 particles that India has typically struggled to contain.

According to the new thresholds, the average 24-hour exposure to PM2.5 must remain below 15µg/m³, down from 25µg/m³. In case of PM10 particles – typical dust particles – the safe threshold has been lowered from 50 to 45µg/m³. In terms of exposure over a year-long period, the threshold for PM2.5 has been brought down from 10 to 5µg/m³ and for PM10, from 20 to 15µg/m³.

In comparison, India’s thresholds are manifolds higher. According to the 2009 National Ambient Air Quality Standards still in force, the acceptable PM2.5 exposure limit over 24 hours is 60µg/m³ (four times the new WHO limit) and for exposure over a year-long period, 40µg/m³ (eight times the revised WHO threshold)

In India, officials said they will study the WHO’s new guidance for further steps. “We will respond to the revised WHO air quality guidelines after going through the report,” this person added.

Covishield

Covishield in new UK advisory, but ‘unvaccinated’ rules still for Indians (Hindustan Times: 20210923)

<https://epaper.hindustantimes.com/Home/ArticleView>

The UK government on Wednesday added Covishield as one of the vaccines it will recognise when allowing international travellers to skip quarantine on arrival, but has not yet included India in the list of countries from where people will be eligible for this new rule.

The move comes a day after India warned of reciprocal measures as the controversy around UK's new travel rules, which come into force on October 4, sparked allegations of racism. The British High Commission said it was engaging with India on the issue.

National Health Authority chairman RS Sharma said officials from both sides have had two meetings this month to discuss the technical aspects of each of their certification systems. "It is an ongoing process," said Sharma, who supervises functioning of Co-WIN. People familiar with the development said the discussions focused on certification done through Co-WIN app. UK high commissioner Alex Ellis told a news channel earlier on Wednesday that the issue was not Covishield but the vaccination certificates. P12

Covid deaths

₹50k ex gratia for Covid deaths, declares Centre (Hindustan Times: 20210923)

<https://epaper.hindustantimes.com/Home/ArticleView>

Vaccinated Indians still off UK list

A look at what new steps UK took and why fully vaccinated Indians are still not recognised

COVISHIELD RECOGNISED...

On Wednesday, travel guidance on gov.uk said formulations of listed vaccines, such as Covishield, will be accepted. Earlier, the country only recognised the brand Vaxzevria, even though both are formulations of the Oxford-AstraZeneca dose.

... BUT INDIA IS STILL NOT

The guidance mentions that people vaccinated in only select countries will be covered in the new rule. These are UK, US, European Union countries as well as 17 others such as Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, UAE etc.

CERTIFICATION QUESTION

UK's envoy to India told said that experts in his country were still evaluating the Co-WIN platform.

No concern has been raised to us regarding certification issues... Our system is a very safe system and the vaccination certificates that we issue are very much digitally verifiable
- RS Sharma, NHA chief who looks after Co-WIN



States will pay an ex gratia amount of ₹50,000 to the families of those whose deaths have been certified as Covid-19 fatalities, the Union government has informed the Supreme Court through an affidavit.

The Centre added that the scheme framed by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) lays down that ex gratia compensation is also applicable to those involved in relief operations or those associated with preparedness activities, and that the states will disburse the money from the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF). The assistance will be continued for any Covid-19 deaths that may occur in the future, added the affidavit submitted on Wednesday.

The Union government contributes 75% of SDRF allocation for general category states and Union Territories and 90% for special category states and UTs such as the North-East states, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu & Kashmir.

The compensation scheme has been put in place after Supreme Court's direction on June 30 in a petition filed by advocate Gaurav Kumar Bansal. Underlining that NDMA "failed to perform its statutory duty" by not envisaging a compensation scheme, the court ordered uniform guidelines on ex gratia payments to the families of those who died of Covid-19.

At the same time, the court had clarified that the amount of ex gratia cannot be fixed by the court, and that the Centre and NDMA should determine the quantum after taking into account their policies and other relief and mitigation measures already put in place.

For the pandemic, NDMA had so far said that there was no scheme for payment of ex gratia for Covid-19 deaths due to absence of such provision under the "minimum standards of relief". State governments were also asked by the Centre not to use the disaster relief funds in case they wish to pay compensation to the next of kin of those who died of Covid-19. Some states, such as Bihar, Karnataka and Delhi, have been paying compensation on account of Covid-19 deaths from their chief minister relief funds.

After the Supreme Court sought response on compliance of its June judgment, the Centre filed an affidavit on Wednesday, stating that on September 11, NDMA decided to provide an ex gratia assistance of ₹50,000 per deceased person under Section 12(iii) of the 2005 Act which talks about “minimum standards of relief”. On the same date, NDMA wrote to all the states and UTs apprising them of the new scheme, the Centre said.

The affidavit, attached with a NDMA notification, said: “The Authority recommends an amount of ₹50,000 per deceased person including those involved in relief operations or associated in preparedness activities, subject to cause of death being certified as Covid-19.”

The matter is listed for hearing before the Supreme Court on Thursday, when a bench of justices MR Shah and AS Bopanna will examine the government’s compliance.

The ex gratia assistance announced by the Centre has not been limited to the Covid-19 deaths that took place in the first and second waves of the pandemic. “The ex gratia assistance to families affected by Covid-19 deaths will continue to be provided for deaths that may occur in future phases of the Covid-19 pandemic as well, or until further notification,” NDMA said in the notification.

To apply for ex gratia compensation, the next of kin of the deceased will be required to submit claims through a form issued by the state authority, along with specified documents including a death certificate that certifies the cause of death to be Covid-19.

The Centre has already issued guidelines with regard to the issue of death certificates where it said that any death within 30 days of a positive Covid test would be considered a Covid death, irrespective of whether this happened at home or a hospital.

Deaths occurring due to poisoning, suicide, homicide, or accident were excluded from the category of Covid deaths, although the top court expressed its reservation on excluding suicide deaths from the scope of Covid death categorisation. The guidelines also stated that the deaths of Covid patients who spent more than 30 days in hospital will also be treated as Covid deaths.

These guidelines were also issued only after the Supreme Court, in its June 30 order, directed the Union government to come out with uniform and simplified norms for granting certificates stating the exact cause of death as “Death due to Covid-19”. Such guidelines, according to the court, were also to consider people who died within two to three months of being diagnosed with Covid-19. The court further directed the Centre to provide a mechanism for the families of those whose death certificates had already been issued to get the same corrected.

India’s official death count stands due to Covid-19 stands at 446,107. To be sure, this number may rise in terms of the compensation due under the expanded parameters.

“NDMA will ensure that the verification, sanction and disbursement process is done through a robust, yet simple and people-friendly procedure,” the notification said, adding that all claims must be settled within 30 days of submission of required documents. The final disbursement will be through Aadhaar-linked Direct Benefit Transfer procedures, it added.

The NDMA said that the ex gratia assistance will follow these guidelines to identify Covid-19 deaths, and any dispute will be addressed by a district-level committee with designated officers.

Before arriving at the figure of ₹50,000, the NDMA said the stakeholders considered a host of reasons -- primary among them being the uncertainty about future Covid deaths, sparing funds for mitigating other natural disasters, and the payouts made to vulnerable sections of population under various welfare schemes of the Centre and states.

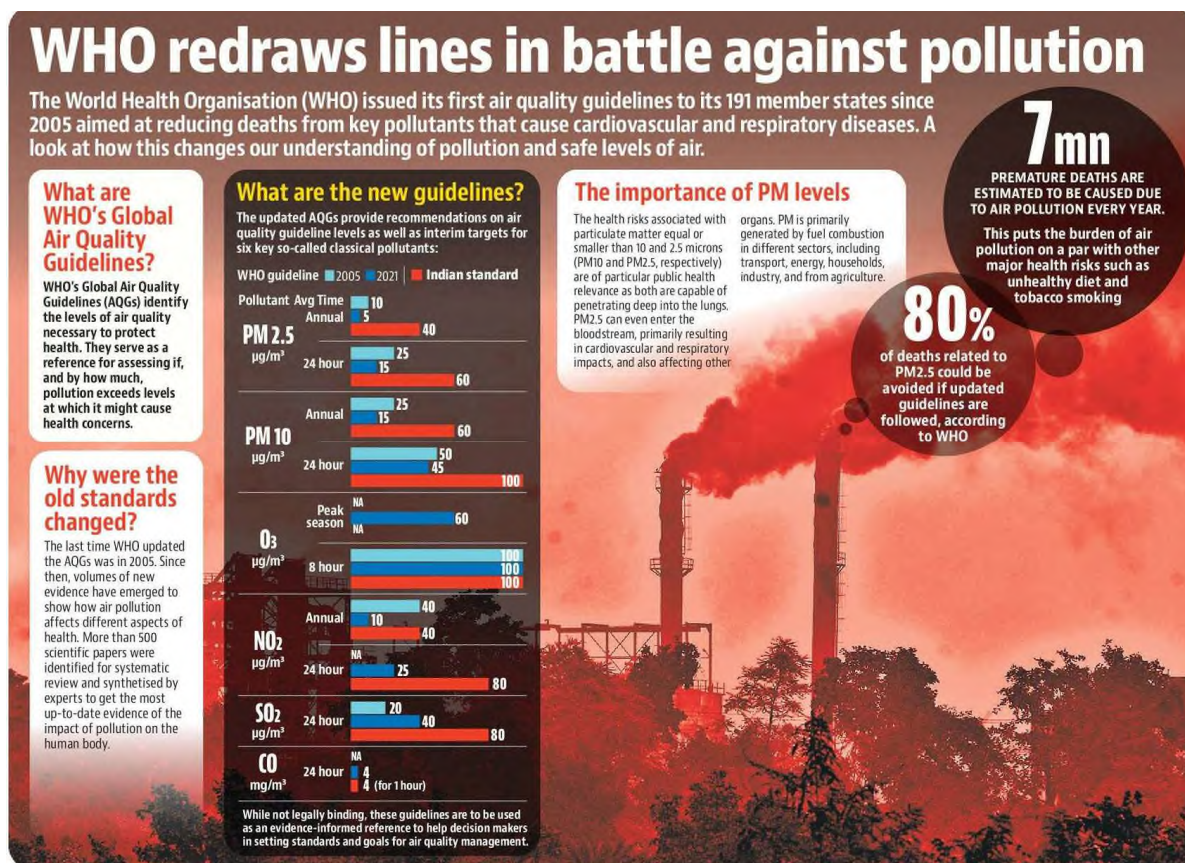
“There is uncertainty about new variants of the virus and likely future waves. It is not possible to ascertain the total final financial burden emanating from ex gratia assistance. Financial prudence demands that we plan in a manner that assistance can be provided to larger number of people should the number of deaths rise,” the Centre stated.

It also considered the financial and material assistance provided under SDRF, the money spent by central government for the nationwide vaccination drive, and relief under central welfare schemes such as PM-CARES for Covid orphans and PM Garib Kalyan Yojana package.

“While Covid is an unprecedented disaster, other natural disasters that occur more frequently have not abated. It is important that sufficient funds are available under SDRF to provide a timely and effective response to other disasters as well,” the notification said.

WHO (Hindustan Times: 20210923)

<https://epaper.hindustantimes.com/Home/ArticleView>



Caste Census (The Asian Age: 20210923)

<http://onlinepaper.asianage.com/articledetailpage.aspx?id=15851977>

■ RJD prez favours 'breaking' 50% reservation cap if required

Caste census a must, says Lalu

Patna, Sept. 22: Rashtriya Janata Dal president Lalu Prasad on Wednesday reiterated the demand for caste census and favoured "breaking" the 50 per cent ceiling on reservations if the population of SCs, STs and OBCs was found to be more than half of the total.

Mr Prasad, who has been convalescing in Delhi after his release from jail earlier this year, made the remarks while addressing a training camp of his party workers organised here to which he got connected online.

"I was the first one to raise the demand for caste census. I had made the

Quotas have been decided taking into account a census conducted before Independence. We must have a fresh estimate of the population of different social segments.

— **Lalu Prasad Yadav**,
Rashtriya Janata Dal chief



demand on the floor of the Parliament," said the multiple-term former MP and the railway minister in the UPA-1 government.

The former Bihar chief minister, who has ended up spending a long time behind bars following his conviction in fodder scam cases, said, "My demand is for the welfare of all, SCs

and STs included. Quotas have been decided taking into account a census conducted before Independence. We must have a fresh estimate of the population of different social segments."

"The existing quotas have been insufficient. And even these are rarely filled, resulting in huge

backlogs. Let there be a fresh caste census and all get quotas in proportion to their population. If it needs breaking of the 50 per cent barrier, so be it," said Mr Prasad, who owes his rise in politics to the Mandal churn of the 1990s.

Mr Prasad's younger son and heir apparent Tejashwi Yadav, who is the Leader of the Opposition in state assembly, had recently met Prime Minister Narendra Modi to broach the issue of caste census as part of a delegation headed by chief minister Nitish Kumar, an arch rival of the RJD supremo. — PTI

Prostate Cancer (The Asian Age: 20210923)

<http://onlinepaper.asianage.com/articledetailpage.aspx?id=15851383>



What men should know about prostate cancer

ELENA ZELLE AND TIM OBOJSKI



It's not particularly pleasant, but a digital rectal exam can save a man's life. Its purpose is to screen for cancer of the prostate gland, the second most frequent malignancy (after lung cancer) in men worldwide in 2020, and the leading one in more than half of the world's countries, according to the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC).

WHO'S ESPECIALLY AT RISK?

"Prostate cancer is a disease of older men," says Dr Anno Graser, a Munich-based radiologist and prostate specialist. A 35-year-old man has a 0.1 per cent risk of developing prostate cancer within the next 10 years, he notes, while a 75-year-old's risk is 5 per cent. There were more than 1.41 million cases of prostate cancer worldwide in 2020, or 7.3 per cent of total cancer cases, estimates the IARC, part of the World Health Organization (WHO).

WHAT ARE THE WARNING SIGNS?

Usually there aren't any. "The body doesn't recognise that abnormal cells are multiplying uncontrollably, so there are typically no symptoms in the early stages," explains Dr Olaf Reichelt, chief physician in the Department of Urology and Paediatric Urology at the Helios Clinic in Aue, Germany. This is why screening is so important, he says.

At an advanced stage, bone pain in the lower back, hips and ribs, or difficulty urinating, can occur. By this time, however, the cancer is likely to have metastasized, or spread, to nearby areas such as the spine or lymph nodes in the groin.

HOW CAN IT BE DETECTED EARLY?

Prostate cancer is among the most common types of cancer in men. The good news is that it can be cured if detected early. That is why screening is so important

pation done by digital rectal examination. Many early cancers are still too small to be felt though. Another method is a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test. PSA is protein produced by cells of the prostate gland, and prostate cancer often elevates PSA levels in the blood. However, some non-cancerous conditions can also cause the PSA level to rise. The risk of overlooking prostate cancer can be lowered by getting both a digital rectal exam and a PSA test, advises the German Cancer Research Centre's (DKFZ) Cancer Information Service. But it adds: "This also increases the chances of false-positive results for cancer."

A further screening method is multiparametric magnetic resonance imaging (mpMRI), regarded as the most sensitive and specific imaging

technique for the detection and evaluation of prostate cancer.

HOW DANGEROUS IS PROSTATE CANCER COMPARED WITH OTHER CANCERS?

Prostate cancer is among the somewhat less aggressive cancers and curable if it hasn't reached an advanced stage. It's accountable for 3.8 per cent of all mortality caused by cancer in men — more than 375,000 deaths annually — and is estimated to be the fifth leading cause of cancer death in men globally, according to the IARC. Prostate cancer is curable about 90 per cent of the time, Graser says. The earlier it's detected, the better the patient's prognosis.

WHAT ARE THE TREATMENT OPTIONS?

The type of treatment depends on several factors, including the patient's age, PSA level, biopsy result and any accompanying illnesses, points out Reichelt. If the patient is between 50 and 75 years of age and his cancer isn't at an advanced stage, the treatment is usually surgical removal of the prostate or radiation. While advanced prostate cancer is rarely curable, Reichelt says, in many cases it can be kept under control for several years with hormone, chemo- and immunotherapy. "Many men don't die of, but rather with, cancer carcinoma," he remarks. Doctors may recommend, for example, that an 80-year-old patient with a tumour that's not very aggressive not be treat-



PROSTATE CANCER IS AMONG THE SOMEWHAT LESS AGGRESSIVE CANCERS AND CURABLE IF IT HASN'T

Gum Diseases (The Asian Age: 20210923)

<http://onlinepaper.asianage.com/articledetailpage.aspx?id=15851382>

HEALTH ALERT

Your gums bleed?

Gum disease starts silently, then it gets serious



Regular professional dental cleanings are a good way to prevent the painful gum problems that can come after periodontitis, which often starts silently.

PHOTO CREDIT: FRANK RUMPENHORST/DPA

✓ If your gums occasionally bleed while you're brushing your teeth, you may be tempted to ignore it — but don't, as it could be a sign of periodontitis, better known as gum disease. It usually starts slowly without pain, and the symptoms can be mild for many years. The first signs are often slight bleeding of the gums, some redness and swelling. But these might be some key signs of what is a chronic inflammatory disease of the periodontium, the tissue that supports the teeth, dentists say. It's caused by bacteria in plaque which sticks to your teeth and along the gums, hardening into tartar over time and attracting more bacteria. If you don't get rid of the plaque, your gums may swell

THE DISEASE CAN ALSO in a sign of an

Women Health

5 essential diagnostic tests for women over 30 (The Indian Express: 20210923)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/5-tests-women-30-health-symptoms-preventive-checkups-7493763/>

"Annual health checkups should be given utmost priority to weed out problems before they create havoc. It's time to take control of your health and your life," said Dr Aurangabadkar

women's health Preventive checkups are necessary. (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)

The human body goes through a lot of changes from birth until old age. As we age, our metabolism and other processes get slower which can lead to various health conditions like diabetes and hypertension. This makes it extremely important to get health checkups done, and make the transition easier and healthier for the body. The thirties are a crucial time for women trying to strike work-life balance. Juggling work stress and other countless responsibilities can have a negative impact on the health. The best way to prevent lifestyle diseases and nip them in the bud is to go for yearly checkups, said Dr Geeta Aurangabadkar, clinical director, Proactive For Her.

Read on to know the five important tests every woman should get done when they turn 30.

Complete blood count

A complete blood count (CBC) is a blood test used to evaluate the overall health and detect a wide range of disorders, including anaemia, infection and in rare cases, even blood cancer. A complete blood count test measures several components of your blood, including red blood cells (R.B.C s), white blood cells (W.B.C s), haemoglobin, Hematocrit (Hct) and platelets.

"It is estimated that 52 per cent of non-pregnant women of reproductive age are anaemic. At the brink of your 30's, this test is commonly used as a screening test to detect anaemia. This may lead to further clues about common nutrient deficiencies that may cause anaemia, such as iron or B12. CBC is also done to monitor your overall health and treatment (if you are undergoing any)," she expressed.

Blood sample collection

Lipid profile

The lipid profile measures the amount of specific fat molecules called lipids in the blood. A panel test, it measures multiple substances, including several types of cholesterol. This test helps to check for the risk of heart diseases and the health of blood vessels. Knowledge of this could help someone modify their eating habits, diet, stress, exercise and lifestyle in a positive direction, said Dr Aurangabadkar. “You will be surprised to learn that thyroid disorders and PCOS are commonly associated with unfavorable lipid profile,” she shared.

Thyroid function test

Almost 1 in 10 women in India have underactive thyroid issues. As the symptoms are usually slow initially and often go unnoticed for a long time, it’s important to screen yourself for thyroid problems. “Most commonly reported symptoms are irregular periods, unexplained weight gain, hair loss or infertility,” she said.

A simple blood check is all that is required to test for an underactive thyroid gland (hypothyroidism) and an overactive thyroid gland (hyperthyroidism).

Blood sugar

Diabetes is seen in more than one in 10 women aged 35-49 years, she noted. As per Dr Aurangabadkar, symptoms of diabetes can be there in the background without one’s knowledge for a long time. Diabetes can cause your blood sugar (blood glucose) to rise to abnormally high levels because of your body’s inability to either produce or use insulin properly. Insulin is essential for the body to utilise blood sugar for energy, she mentioned.

Blood Sugar Tests can be performed at home

Pap smear

Notably, India accounts for nearly one-fourth of the world’s cervical cancer deaths, said Dr Aurangabadkar. “A Pap smear is a simple screening procedure for cervical cancer and picks up problems at an early stage. It is also used to detect changes in cervical cells that may turn cancerous later on and need to be monitored further,” she explained.

The procedure involves examination by your gynaecologist or a trained nurse who takes a sample by gentle scraping of cells from your cervix which later are examined under the microscope for abnormal cells or any infection. Women aged 30 and older can consider testing every 5 years which would combine a Pap smear with an HPV test (Human papillomavirus).

“Your sexual health is as important as your physical health. Go for an STI panel test if you are sexually active,” she said.

“Staying healthy requires effort, commitment and vigilance. A healthy diet and exercise is only half the job. Annual health checkups should be given utmost priority to weed out problems before they create havoc. It’s time to take control of your health and your life,” said Dr Aurangabadkar.

Ayurvedic practices

PCOS Awareness Month: Ayurvedic practices and herbs to keep it under control(The Indian Express: 20210923)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/pcos-awareness-month-ayurvedic-practices-herbs-health-manage-the-condition-7527487/>

While PCOS cannot be completely cured, it can be controlled with healthy, balanced diet and lifestyle choices

PCOS Awareness Month, PCOS Awareness Month 2021, PCOS, how to manage PCOS, living with PCOS, PCOS and Ayurveda, PCOS and yoga, PCOS and healthy eating, indian express news Ayurvedic practices and herbs that can help keep your PCOS under control while also improving your overall health and well-being. (Representational image/Getty)

Around the world, many women and young girls suffer from PCOS, which is short for ‘polycystic ovary syndrome’, a condition that can be caused by genetic, environmental and lifestyle factors, resulting in hormonal imbalance, irregular menstrual cycles, weight gain, acne, hair fall, etc.

It has to be kept in mind that while PCOS cannot be completely cured, it can be controlled with healthy, balanced diet and lifestyle choices, such as exercising every day. Nikhil Maheshwari, the director of MPIL Wellness says that Ayurveda and yoga have been known to be extremely effective in combating PCOS by helping women restore balance and lead healthy lives.

As such, he lists some Ayurvedic practices and herbs that can help keep your PCOS under control while also improving your overall health and well-being.

ALSO READ |Ayurvedic expert busts four myths about consuming leafy salads

Basti (herbal enema)

Often administered in 2 phases, an oil, and a decoction phase, basti is an enema-based Ayurvedic approach that helps release vitiated vata which normalises bowel movements and provides a general feeling of a clean and healthy gut.

Virechan (herbal cleansing)

Our bodies need to be rid of toxins and virechan is used for that — expelling toxins such as vitiated pitta out of our body. Virechan is done by administering Ayurvedic drugs that induce bowel movements to clear our gut and keep it healthy.

PCOS Awareness Month, PCOS Awareness Month 2021, PCOS, how to manage PCOS, living with PCOS, PCOS and Ayurveda, PCOS and yoga, PCOS and healthy eating, indian express news Ayurveda and yoga have been known to be extremely effective in combating PCOS. (Photo: Getty/Thinkstock)

Vaman (herbal vomiting)

A practice that is also used to cleanse the body, vaman is primarily aimed at getting rid of vitiated kapha by inducing vomiting. A painless procedure, vaman not only detoxifies the body but also balances the hormones, keeping PCOS in check.

Yogic exercises

Following an Ayurvedic lifestyle also involves a combination of yogic exercises that are curated to help you tackle specific issues like PCOS. Certain yoga asanas such as pranayama, the butterfly pose, Bharadvajasana, Padma Sadhana, Surya Namaskar, Sarvangasana, etc., help in balancing the hormones, keeping PCOS under control, says Maheshwari.

Healthy diet

Avoid consuming deep-fried foods, red meat, or anything that contains excess fat as it increases the body's insulin levels. On the other hand, consuming foods that are rich in fibre can help manage PCOS.

ALSO READ | Tips on how to boost fertility for those living with PCOS

Maheshwari advises you try the following herbs:

* **Kachnar:** An excellent astringent, kachnar reduces inflammation by shrinking the tissue cells of the cyst. Besides, it also regulates blood circulation throughout the menstrual period, while aiding weight loss.

* Ashoka: A uterine stimulant that helps increase uterine contractions and keep the reproductive organs healthy by stimulating the ovarian tissue, the ashoka herb has been known to combat menstrual irregularities. It is an excellent remedy for PCOS.

* Nirgundi: This herb helps in relieving cyclic mastalgia — soreness in the breast region which intensifies just ahead of menstruation and contains analgesic and anti-inflammatory properties. Nirgundi also helps control PMS (premenstrual syndrome) and improves fertility.

Pfizer COVID-19 boosters for senior citizens, high-risk

U.S. FDA backs Pfizer COVID-19 boosters for senior citizens, high-risk (The Hindu; 20210923)

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/us-fda-backs-pfizer-covid-19-boosters-for-senior-citizens-high-risk/article36624285.ece>

WHO and other global health advocates are opposed to wealthy nations dispensing a third round of shots when poor countries don't have enough vaccine for their first doses

The U.S. moved a step closer Wednesday to offering booster doses of Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine to senior citizens and others at high risk from the virus as

Myths and misconceptions

Myths and misconceptions (The Hindu; 20210923)

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/Myths-and-misconceptions/article16877037.ece>

Pregnancy is a time of joy and happiness. The couple should be able to look forward to the arrival of the baby, with anticipation and exhilaration. It is a