



# DAILY NEWS BULLETIN

LEADING HEALTH, POPULATION AND FAMILY WELFARE STORIES OF THE DAY  
Friday 20220325

## Mentally ill

### Ensure dignified living for mentally ill: Dr Simmi Waraich (The Tribune: 20220325)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/chandigarh/ensure-dignified-living-for-mentally-ill-380517>

Experts say Admn should plan group home facility for them

Ensure dignified living for mentally ill: Dr Simmi Waraich  
Members of the Citizens for Inclusive Living during a press conference in Chandigarh. Photo: Manoj Mahajan

Persons with mental disabilities can live within society and the UT Administration should ensure dignified living for them through a group home within the city, said psychiatrists and caregivers here today.

Addressing a press conference organised by the Citizens for Inclusive Living, an association of mental health experts, family members and citizens, Dr Simmi Waraich, a psychiatrist, said: “Most of these people have moderate mental disabilities. They can live independently, but need support sometimes. Those in their middle age need a group home because their parents are getting old and their siblings are either not here or they don’t have any sibling. Most of them end up on the streets. Hence, a group home is required to accommodate them.”

The family members also highlighted the Mental Healthcare Act-2017, which has strong provisions on community living for persons with mental disabilities.

“My 42-year-old sister suffers from schizophrenia, while my mother has bipolar disorder. I, along with several other families, have been raising the demand for a group home with the UT Administration for the past three years, but no viable solution has been offered to us yet,” said Megha Sood, a city resident.

“We recently learnt that the UT Administration is proposing to turn a few flats at Maloya into a ‘separate enclosure’. This is a bad idea. Such a facility will worsen the mental health of these people instead of improving it. They need open and green spaces for recuperation and recreational activities,” she said.

The Administration had recently announced that a group home facility will be constructed on 1.25 acres in Sector 34. The association, however, asserts that such a facility may take a long time to construct while the need of persons with mental disabilities is urgent.

“We don’t have any information regarding the proposal because neither the families nor mental health experts were consulted. Till the time such a facility comes up, these people should be accommodated at Indira Holiday Home, Sector 24, which is the only large community place in the city with rooms and open green area. The place can also house senior citizens in one portion, while the green area can be common,” said Neelu Sarin, president of the Citizens for Inclusive Living.

‘No viable solution offered’

My 42-year-old sister suffers from schizophrenia, while my mother has bipolar disorder. I, along with several other families, have been raising the demand for a group home with the UT Administration for the past three years, but no viable solution has been offered to us yet. — Megha Sood, a city resident

## **Covid Variant**

**Covid variant worse than Omicron in next 2 years: UK epidemiologist  
Medical officer said that there was still a "long way to go" because the virus  
will continue to "throw surprises". (The Tribune: 20220325)**

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/covid-variant-worse-than-omicron-in-next-2-years-uk-epidemiologist-380420>

Covid variant worse than Omicron in next 2 years: UK epidemiologist  
Photo for representational purpose only. iStock

There is a "high chance" that a new Covid variant which is worse than Omicron will emerge in the next two years, England's chief medical officer, Chris Whitty has warned.

He said that there was still a "long way to go" because the virus will continue to "throw surprises". He also insisted the virus - which now poses a similar death threat as flu - will be with us "for the rest of our lives", Daily Mail reported.

Whitty noted that the strain could cause "worse problems" than Omicron and the challenges from the current strain are "not by any means trivial", and its emergence could "significantly change our balance of risk".

Dismissing the idea that Covid has become endemic, he said it is incorrect to assume the virus has reached a "stable state" around the globe, despite easing restrictions by many countries.

"And there's a high chance that we will all be discussing, and I will be discussing with my colleagues, a new variant at some point in the next two years that actually significantly changes our balance of risk," he said.

"We could well end up with a new variant that produces worse problems than we've got with Omicron and the Omicron problems are by no means trivial," he added.

UK's SAGE advisors have warned of a "realistic possibility" that a more lethal variant could emerge that kills one in three people, in line with earlier coronaviruses such as MERS.

This is because Omicron evolved from a different part of the virus's lineage, and there is no guarantee the next strain will evolve directly from Omicron.

Meanwhile, the UK is seeing a resurgence in Covid cases and deaths, after a brief lull.

Covid deaths rose by a quarter compared to a week ago, however, with 250 recorded, the report said.

Hospital admissions also increased 17 per cent in a week, after 1,879 admissions were logged on March 18.

Experts have blamed the uptick on BA.2, which is now dominant in the country. But the strain is not thought to be any more severe than the original Omicron variant.

Whitty said the BA.2 Omicron variant is a "large part" of the current high rates that are rising "in virtually all parts of England".

## **Covid-19 variant BA.2,**

### **What is the new Covid-19 variant BA.2, and will it cause another wave of infections? (The Tribune: 20220325)**

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/what-is-the-new-covid-19-variant-ba-2-and-will-it-cause-another-wave-of-infections-380364>

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What is the new Covid-19 variant BA.2, and will it cause another wave of infections?

Photo for representation only.

A new omicron subvariant of the virus that causes Covid-19, BA.2, is quickly becoming the predominant source of infections amid rising cases around the world.

Immunologists Prakash Nagarkatti and Mitzi Nagarkatti of the University of South Carolina explain what makes it different from previous variants, whether there will be another surge in the U.S. and how best to protect yourself.

What is BA.2, and how is it related to omicron?

BA.2 is the latest subvariant of omicron, the dominant strain of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19. While the origin of BA.2 is still unclear, it has quickly become the dominant strain in many countries, including India, Denmark and South Africa. It is continuing to spread in Europe, Asia and many parts of the world.

The omicron variant, officially known as B.1.1.529, of SARS-CoV-2 has three main subvariants in its lineage: BA.1, BA.2 and BA.3. The earliest omicron subvariant to be detected, BA.1, was first reported in November 2021 in South Africa.

While scientists believe that all the subvariants may have emerged around the same time, BA.1 was predominantly responsible for the winter surge of infections in the Northern Hemisphere in 2021.

The first omicron subvariant, BA.1, is unique in the number of alterations it has compared to the original version of the virus – it has over 30 mutations in the spike protein that helps it enter cells.

Spike protein mutations are of high concern to scientists and public health officials because they affect how infectious a particular variant is and whether it is able to escape the protective antibodies that the body produces after vaccination or a prior Covid-19 infection.

BA.2 has eight unique mutations not found in BA.1, and lacks 13 mutations that BA.1 does have. BA.2 does, however, share around 30 mutations with BA.1. Because of its relative genetic similarity, it is considered a subvariant of omicron as opposed to a completely new variant.

Why is it called a 'stealth' variant?

Some scientists have called BA.2 a “stealth” variant because, unlike the BA.1 variant, it lacks a particular genetic signature that distinguishes it from the delta variant.

While standard PCR tests are still able to detect the BA.2 variant, they might not be able to tell it apart from the delta variant.

Is it more infectious and lethal than other variants?

BA.2 is considered to be more transmissible but not more virulent than BA.1. This means that while BA.2 can spread faster than BA.1, it might not make people sicker.

It is worth noting that while BA.1 has dominated case numbers around the world, it causes less severe disease compared to the delta variant. Recent studies from the U.K. and Denmark suggest that BA.2 may pose a similar risk of hospitalization as BA.1.

Does previous infection with BA.1 provide protection against BA.2?

Yes! A recent study suggested that people previously infected with the original BA.1 subvariant have robust protection against BA.2.

Because BA.1 caused widespread infections across the world, it is likely that a significant percentage of the population has protective immunity against BA.2. This is why some scientists predict that BA.2 will be less likely to cause another major wave.

However, while the natural immunity gained after Covid-19 infection may provide strong protection against reinfection from earlier variants, it weakens against omicron.

How effective are vaccines against BA.2?

A recent preliminary study that has not yet been peer reviewed of over 1 million individuals in Qatar suggests that two doses of either the Pfizer–BioNTech or Moderna Covid-19 vaccines protect against symptomatic infection from BA.1 and BA.2 for several months before waning to around 10%. A booster shot, however, was able to elevate protection again close to original levels.

Importantly, both vaccines were 70% to 80% effective at preventing hospitalization or death, and this effectiveness increased to over 90% after a booster dose.

How worried does the US need to be about BA.2?

The rise in BA.2 in certain parts of the world is most likely due to a combination of its higher transmissibility, people's waning immunity and relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions.

CDC data suggests that BA.2 cases are rising steadily, making up 23% of all cases in the U.S. as of early March. Scientists are still debating whether BA.2 will cause another surge in the U.S.

Though there may be an uptick of BA.2 infections in the coming months, protective immunity from vaccination or previous infection provides defense against severe disease. This may make it less likely that BA.2 will cause a significant increase in hospitalization and deaths.

The U.S., however, lags behind other countries when it comes to vaccination, and falls even further behind on boosters.

Whether there will be another devastating surge depends on how many people are vaccinated or have been previously infected with BA.1. It's safer to generate immunity from a vaccine, however, than from getting an infection.

Getting vaccinated and boosted and taking precautions like wearing an N95 mask and social distancing are the best ways to protect yourself from BA.2 and other variants.

## T B Cases

### **Annual investment of USD 3 billion needed to avert 45 lakh new TB cases in South-East Asia: WHO (The Tribune: 20220325)**

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/annual-investment-of-usd-3-billion-needed-to-avert-45-lakh-new-tb-cases-in-south-east-asia-who-380088>

For the first time in over a decade, the number of TB deaths increased globally in 2020

Annual investment of USD 3 billion needed to avert 45 lakh new TB cases in South-East Asia:  
WHO

Photo for representational purpose only.

PTI

New Delhi, March 23

On World Tuberculosis Day, the WHO highlighted the urgent need for national, international and global stakeholders to invest at least USD 3 billion annually in the South-East Asia region to avert nearly 45 lakh new TB cases and prevent more than 15 lakh deaths due to the disease by 2025.

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For the first time in over a decade, the number of TB deaths increased globally in 2020. In the South-East Asia region, it went up by nearly 10 per cent to more than seven lakh, with the COVID-19 pandemic reversing the progress achieved over the years in providing essential tuberculosis (TB) services and putting at risk the efforts to end TB, said Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director, WHO, South-East Asia.

“Our momentum to end TB must not be halted. Finding increased investments and innovative financing mechanisms in ending TB will not only avert new TB cases and deaths but also avoid more than 31 million (3.1 crore) disability-adjusted life years in the region between now and 2025,” Singh said in a statement.

The World Health Organization (WHO) continues to accelerate efforts to end TB in all the countries in the region, in line with its flagship priorities, the global End TB Strategy, the UN Political Declaration on the Fight Against TB and Sustainable Development Goal target 3.3.

Throughout the COVID-19 response, countries have made commendable efforts to maintain essential health services, including for TB. In 2020, India launched a “Jan Andolan” or a people’s movement against the disease.

“Achieving the region’s USD 3 billion annual investment target is especially important given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the 10 per cent increase in TB mortality in the region in 2020, case notification dropped from 3.6 million (36 lakh) to 2.6 million (26 lakh) -- the same level as in 2015.

“After five years of growth, the region suffered an economic contraction of -5.4 per cent, pushing tens of millions of people into extreme poverty and exacerbating the social determinants of health,” Singh said.

In 2019, almost 23 per cent of the new TB cases in the South-East Asia region were attributable to undernutrition, which has since intensified among the poorest and most vulnerable, she added.

In all the countries in the region, the social and economic support for TB patients must be enhanced, they must be better integrated into social protection services and delineated into measures that are TB-specific, TB-inclusive and TB-sensitive, Singh said.

“Amid the COVID-19 response and in the recovery that will follow, it will continue to be a critical concern,” she noted.

Across the region, traditional and innovative financing mechanisms must be explored, Singh said, adding, “Our network of TB-financing agencies must be expanded. Together, we must achieve the highest attainable standards of rights-based, stigma-free, quality-assured, people-centric TB preventive, diagnostic, treatment, rehabilitative and palliative care.” The WHO called for urgent, sustained and adequate investments in ending TB to save lives and secure a more equitable and sustainable future for all.

## **C- Virus (The Asian Age:20220325)**

<http://onlinepaper.asianage.com/article/detailpage.aspx?id=14725996>

■ No community transmission seen yet; entry ban from 3 more nations

# C-virus count 138, with one more death in Maha; shutdowns rising

VINEETA PANDEY  
with agency inputs  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 17

One more death was reported from Maharashtra on Tuesday, taking the total number of deaths to three in India due to the novel coronavirus outbreak, while the number of positive cases jumped from 114 to 138 in the past 24 hours. Out of these, 121 are active cases while 14 persons have been cured.

The 63-year-old man from Maharashtra had a history of travel to Dubai and had not disclosed this to the doctors treating him at a private hospital. Maharashtra health minister Rajesh Tope said the exact cause for his death was still being ascertained as the person was also suffering from various other ailments and later had tested positive for Covid-19.

The total number of cases include 24 foreign citizens. Among the new cases are two people from Noida and two persons who returned from Italy this week and were staying at an ITBP quarantine facility.

Delhi has so far reported eight positive cases while Uttar Pradesh has recorded 15, including one foreigner. Maharashtra has 39 cases, including three foreigners, while Kerala has 26 cases, which includes two foreign nationals. Haryana reported 15, including 14 foreigners, Karnataka 11, Ladakh reported six, Jammu and Kashmir three, Telangana five, including two foreigners, Rajasthan four, including two foreigners. Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Punjab have reported one case each.

Meanwhile, West Bengal reported its first case on Tuesday. An 18-year-old Kolkata resident who returned from London on March 15 has been admitted to

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A group of French nationals, who were unable to return to their country following a complete shutdown, at Chennai International Airport on Tuesday. — PTI

## CORONA UPDATE

▶ Govt issues advisories asking all offices to have thermal scanners, sanitizers and minimising physical contact with people

▶ DGCA asks airlines to disinfect planes every 24 hours, place hand sanitizers in lavatories

▶ 2 Italy-returned ITBP quarantine inmates test positive

▶ To regulate crowds, Railway zones hike price of platform tickets from ₹10 to ₹50

▶ Entry of passengers from Afghanistan, Philippines and Malaysia banned

▶ Health ministry recommends use of anti-HIV drug combinations Lopinavir and Ritonavir on a case-to-case basis

▶ Number of testing labs increased from 52 to 125 as selected pvt labs allowed to conduct tests as per ICMR norms and free of cost

▶ Guidelines issued on dead body disposal

▶ Union minister V. Muraleedharan tests negative, but places self under home quarantine after visiting a medical institute whose hospital later reported a Covid case

## UK Indians rush for flights home before deadline

ADITI KHANNA  
LONDON, MARCH 17

A mad dash for emergency visas and flights was witnessed on Tuesday as Indians in the UK began racing against time before the 1200 GMT deadline for India's travel ban from Britain and Europe kicks in on Wednesday, as part of measures to tackle the coronavirus pandemic.

India on Monday banned the entry of passengers from Europe, Turkey and the UK from March 18 till March 31 to contain the spread of the deadly virus.

The Indian high commission in London was inundated with calls and messages on social media from Indians seeking clarifications on the latest travel advisory and also support for emergency visas.

"If you are travelling before the deadline of 1200hrs GMT on 18th March there should not

▶ Some Indians from Philippines trying to return to India to beat deadline stuck in Kuala Lumpur. AirAsia flights to Delhi, Vizag okayed to rescue stranded.

be any problem," the Indian high commission said in response to a flurry of queries on social media.

"The cut-off date and time is for the port of departure," it clarified.

People caught up in the chaos range from Indian nationals on tourist as well as student visas set to expire within days or weeks, those on student visas just keen to be back home with loved ones and also those desperate to travel due to a family emergency.

"The Chinese students I spoke to said that the Chinese embassy spoke to the UK immigration

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## Centre allows accredited pvt labs to also do Covid-19 tests

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 17

The government on Tuesday decided to increase the number of testing labs from 52 to 125 by allowing accredited private labs also to conduct Covid-related tests. The government has made it clear that the tests should be done only when prescribed by a qualified physician, as per ICMR-NIV norms, and free of cost.

ICMR said that it will share the standard operating procedures for testing and provide positive controls for establishing the test as soon as the concerned private laboratory procures the primers, probes and reagents. Guidelines have also been issued for Dead Body Management towards standard precautions and infection prevention.

■ More on Page 5

## 250 Indians in Iran test +ve for coronavirus

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 17

About 250 Indians in Iran have reported to be tested positive for Covid-19 during a pre-embarkment test conducted by Indian doctors in Qom, the epicentre of outbreak in the country. The number of Covid-19 cases in Iran are fast multiplying with over 850 live cases and 129 fatalities so far.

However, while MEA officials on Tuesday acknowledged that there were positive cases of Indians in Iran they did not give the exact numbers.

■ More on Page 2

**Virus (The Asian Age:20220325)**

<http://onlinepaper.asianage.com/articledetailpage.aspx?id=14726048>

# 250 Indians test +ve for virus in Iran

Cannot confirm whether 250 Indians have tested positive, says MEA officials

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
with agency inputs  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 17

About 250 Indians reported to have tested positive for coronavirus in Iran during a pre-embarkment test conducted by Indian doctors in Qom, the epicentre of outbreak in the country. The number of Covid cases in Iran are fast multiplying with over 850 live cases and 129 fatalities so far.

India had sent a team of doctors from Pune to conduct tests on Indians in Iran. The list of 254 infected, is believed to be the outcome of that exercise.

However, while officials of ministry of external affairs on Tuesday acknowledged that there were positive cases of Indians in Iran they did not give the exact numbers.

At the daily inter-ministerial press briefing on coronavirus on Tuesday evening, MEA additional secretary Dammu Ravi was asked several times about Indians in Iran testing positive.

"Of course in a situation like that, you will find some positive cases among the Indian pilgrims given the extensive spread of virus in Iran," Mr Ravi told reporters.

"Not sure whether the number 254 is correct but there are substantial number of people who have tested positive. The Indians who are in Iran

## AI to suspend flights to Europe, UK from Mar. 19

Mumbai: Air India on Tuesday announced temporary suspension of its entire services to Europe and the UK from March 19. The decision to suspend air services to the UK and the EU member countries was taken in the wake of travel and visa restrictions due to the coronavirus outbreak, Air India said.

The airline flies to London and Birmingham in the UK, and Frankfurt, Milan, Rome, Madrid, Vienna, Stockholm and Copenhagen in Europe.

Services to Milan, Rome and Madrid was temporarily suspended earlier. "All pax travelling to UK & Europe, may kindly note that in view of DGCA instructions regarding travel and visa restrictions related to #COVID2019, all flights to/ from UK & Europe will operate only till March 18, 2020 & will remain suspended from 19th to 31st March, 2020," Air India said in a tweet. — PTI

would have come out negative as they were located in Qom.

As per reports, around 850 pilgrims from Kargil and Leh, who are in Iran for Ziarat, were tested between March 6 and March 10. There were

## Pandemic (The Asian Age:20220325)

<http://onlinepaper.asianage.com/articledetailpage.aspx?id=14726160>



Zarrar Khuhro

### Pandemic has brought out the best and worst of humanity

**M**oments of crisis tend to simultaneously bring out the best, the worst, and the most insane and laudable aspects of humanity to the fore, and the coronavirus pandemic has been no different.

For one thing, it tells us we are more similar than we are different. In the early days of the pandemic, when the Chinese city of Wuhan was in lockdown, we saw videos that were at the same time eerily apocalyptic and also reassuring, of quarantined residents standing on their balconies and singing songs that echoed through the streets of their ghost town. A lone voice would be augmented by many others as a single stanza was amplified by thousands of human voices; a strident call in the dark, an affirmation of shared hopes and fears.

Today, we see the same in the deserted streets of Italy, where locked-in residents gather on their terraces with musical instruments and song, cheering each other even as they prepare for the worst.

Then there are everyday heroes like Asiyah and her husband Jawad, who run a corner store in the Scottish village of Falkirk. Standing outside a department store, Asiyah noticed an old woman in tears because she was unable to get the supplies she needed as the younger and fitter customers were grabbing all the goods. Not content with simply offering sympathy, Asiyah and Jawad put together Covid-19 'kits', comprising hand sanitizers, wipes, masks and other products and delivered them, free of cost, to elderly residents in their neighbourhood.

Then there are Thasdeen and Nadeem, owners of a surgical good store in Kerala who are selling masks at a loss, just so that everyone can get what they need. And while some provide supplies, others fight for the greater good in different ways: given that access to information is key, a group of doctors successfully fought to have over \$2,000 research articles on COVID-19 — previously behind paywalls — made free to access.

Then there are the doctors, researchers and medical staff working around the clock, and at great personal risk, to provide care for those stricken with the virus. Unsung heroes and heroines to whom the world owes a debt of thanks.

But there are also those who prey on humanity's fears, and seek to profit from pain like the self-proclaimed 'hustlers', a couple in Vancouver who bought stocks of disinfectant wipes — emptying entire stores — to resell them on Amazon at exorbitant rates, making a profit of over \$70,000 in the process. This has led to outlets like Amazon restricting the sale of many products, and eBay has banned such sales entirely. Facebook too has banned ads that guarantee to prevent or cure the virus.

That's because snake-oil salesmen (and women) have taken the opportunity to hawk 'cures' for the virus that have no basis in reality. People like TV preacher Jim Bakker, who is selling a 'silver solution' that he claims is effective in killing the virus. Same goes for conspiracy theorist and overall nutjob Alex Jones selling his cure-all toothpaste. Both Bakker and Jones have been served legal notices and made to cease and desist from their dangerous, deluded claims.

Add to these examples similar stories from around the globe and we see how, in a boiling pot, the scum tends to rise to the top. Speaking of which, there is the extremist Hindu Mahasabha organisation in India which in its infinite wisdom organised a gaunutra and dung party in which enthusiastic participants downed shots of cow urine to ward off the virus and encouraged people to bathe in cow dung for protection. Well, if nothing else, it will at least help social distancing as very few sane people will want to be around a dude who just bathed in poop.

A particular piece of dishonour goes to those repudiate busy creating and spreading fake news in this crisis, whether out of malice or ignorance. We see WhatsApp forwards and social media posts containing outright dangerous information, calling on people to consume kilos of garlic or even drink bleach to 'cure' the virus. Particularly insidious is a series of graphics attributed to Unicef that mixes truth with lies. Despite numerous attempts to debunk it by leading media organisations and Unicef itself, this is being actively disseminated by people who really should know better.

The damage caused by such falsehoods can claim lives and livelihoods alike, as in the case of a Chinese woman who was hospitalised after consuming nearly two kilos of garlic, or the Indian poultry farmers who are suffering as a result of fake news alleging that a non-vegetarian diet causes coronavirus and that consuming chicken causes infection. Faced with plummeting demand due to these lies, they are incurring losses running into millions of rupees and have had to cull entire flocks, with one poultry farmer even dumping 6,000 baby chicks in an empty lot and burying them alive.

Truly, these are the times that test our souls, and show what we are made of — for better or, usually, for worse.

*By arrangement with Dawn*

## Covid (The Asian Age:20220325)

<http://onlinepaper.asianage.com/articledetailpage.aspx?id=14727636>

# World hunkers down over Covid

Borders shut, schools and businesses closed even as drastic restrictions on movement take effect

**Berlin, March 17:** Tens of millions of people hunkered down in government-ordered isolation on Tuesday as borders slammed shut, schools and businesses closed and increasingly drastic restrictions on movement took effect. Others were scrambling to get home, caught up in widespread travel restrictions that aimed to slow the spread of the new Covid-19.

From Southeast Asia to Europe to the Americas, people found their lives upended by lockdowns and social distancing. Commuters in the Philippines waited in huge traffic jams at checkpoints set up to take their temperatures before entering Manila.

Spain, now the fourth-most infected country, saw infections rise on Tuesday by more than 2,000 in one day to 11,178 and virus-related deaths jump by almost 200 to 491.

Only China, Italy and Iran had more infections. With the number of cases worldwide topping 183,000, a surge of patients in Madrid's hospitals has fuelled worries across Europe of what lies ahead.

Plans went out to send masks and ventilators to places like Italy and Spain that are struggling with soaring caseloads. "There is no easy or quick way out of this extremely difficult situation," Mark Rutte, the Dutch prime minister, said in the first televised speech by a Dutch leader since 1973. Airlines across the world have slashed flights due to a plunge in demand but also because many countries have been barring foreign arrivals.

Turkey planned to evacuate 3,614 citizens stranded in nine European countries after flights were suspended. Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said.

Germany launched a 50 million-euro effort to send home thousands of tourists stranded in popular winter vacation spots across the globe, including up to 5,000 in Morocco alone.

In Lithuania, trucks seeking to enter Poland backed up in a line 60 kilometers long after Poland closed its border to foreigners due to the new Covid-19.

Thailand calling off its water festival in April, Malaysia banned foreign travel and is allowing only essential services to stay open. The first confirmed cases of Covid-19 were reported in Somalia. —AP



A man stands by bikes on the Cathedral square in Strasbourg, eastern France, on Tuesday as the order of staying at home to all French citizens comes into effect, in order to avoid the spreading of the novel Covid-19. — AFP

## US, China trade pandemic barbs

**Beijing, March 17:** A spat between the US and China over Covid-19 escalated on Tuesday as President Donald Trump angered Beijing by referring to the pathogen as the "Chinese Virus." The two countries have sparred over the origin of the virus for days, with a Chinese official promoting conspiracy theories claiming it was brought to China by the US army and American officials using terms seen as stigmatising a nation.

"The United States will be powerfully supporting those industries, like airlines and others, that are particularly affected by the Chinese Virus," Trump tweeted Monday night.

He doubled down on the comment on Tuesday morning while tweeting about how US states were being affected, saying: "Some

## SPAIN CONFIRMS NEARLY 2,000 NEW CASES, AS INFECTIONS TOP 11,000

**Madrid, March 17:** Spain on Tuesday confirmed nearly 2,000 new cases of Covid-19, sending the total spiralling past 11,000, with 491 deaths, the health ministry said.

Spain is the fourth worst-hit country in the world after China, Italy and Iran, with numbers rising rapidly despite an unprecedented national lockdown, with the government

ordering its 46 million population to stay home. Over the past 24 hours, the number of people infected rose by 1,587, hiking the overall total to 11,178, the ministry's emergency coordinator Fernando Simon said.

At the same time, the number of people who had recovered from the virus stood at 1,098, he said. — AFP

are being hit hard by the Chinese Virus, some are being hit practically not at all." Trump's allies had previously referred to the pandemic as the "Chinese covid-19", but Beijing said Tuesday it was "strongly

indignant" over the phrases, which it called "a kind of stigmatisation".

The US should "immediately stop its unjustified accusations against China", foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang

said. A commentary by the official Xinhua news agency said using "racist and xenophobic names to cast blame for the outbreak on other countries can only reveal politicians' irresponsibility and incompetence which will intensify virus fears".

The war of words reignited diplomatic tensions between the two countries, which have tussled over trade and other issues since Trump took office.

Trump's comments were also criticised inside the US, with warnings it could incite a backlash against the Asian-American community. "Our Asian-American communities — people YOU serve — are already suffering. They don't need you fuelling more bigotry," tweeted New York city mayor Bill de Blasio. — AFP

## Iran curtails fire fest; toll near 1k

**Tehran, March 17:** Iran said 135 new Covid-19 deaths took the country's overall toll to nearly 1,000 Tuesday, as it curtailed celebrations for a fire festival in a bid to contain the disease. The Covid-19 outbreak in the Islamic Republic is one of the deadliest outside China, where the illness originated.

The latest deaths, announced by health ministry spokesman Kianoush Jahannou in a televised news conference, take the total death toll in Iran to 988. Since it announced its first two deaths in the holy Shiite city of Qom last month, Iran has taken a series of steps to contain the virus. However, it has yet to impose any lockdowns and the outbreak has spread to all 31 of the country's provinces.

In its latest attempt to contain the virus, police banned celebrations marking over fires and lighting fireworks, with many suffering burns resulting in hospitalisation. "Those who go out can be infected with the Covid-19 and make things harder for themselves and their families," state news agency

## FIRST DEATH IN PAKISTAN, CASES SURGE TO 183

**Lahore, March 17:** Pakistan reported its first casualty due to the novel Covid-19 on Tuesday, health ministry officials said as the number of positive cases of the Covid-19 infections rose to 183 in the country. The first fatality was reported from Lahore. The patient was admitted to the Mayo Hospital in Lahore. He came here from Muesat on March 15. He was tested positive and died on Tuesday. Sindh has 135 positive cases, followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with 15, Balochistan 10, Gilgit-Baltistan 5, Islamabad 2 and Punjab 6, officials said.

"One COVID-19 patient who was brought from Hafizabad, some 150 kms from Lahore, died here on Tuesday," Punjab Health Minister Yasmin Rashid said on Tuesday. — PTI

IRNA quoted Tehran police official Keyvan Zahri as saying,

Authorities in other provinces such as Isfahan, Golestan and Khuzestan had also cautioned people against observing the festival, IRNA reported.

The latest health ministry figures showed the Covid-19 disease was spreading fastest in Tehran province. — AFP

## Millions can perish, warns Iran state TV

**Tehran, March 17:** Iran's state television has issued its most drastic warning so far about the new Covid-19, saying the outbreak could kill "millions" in the Islamic Republic if the public keeps travelling and ignoring health guidance. The warning came in a bulletin broadcast on Tuesday afternoon.

Roughly nine out of 10 of the over 18,000 cases of the new virus confirmed across the Middle East came from Iran, where authorities denied for days the risk the outbreak posed. Officials have now implemented new checks for people trying to leave major cities ahead of Nowruz, the Persian New Year, on Friday, but have hesitated to quarantine the areas.

That's even as the death toll in Iran saw another 15% increase Tuesday. Health Ministry spokesman Kianoush Jahannou said the virus had killed 135 more people to raise the total to 988 amid over 16,000 cases. Hard-line Shiite faithful in Iran pushed their way into the courtyards of two major shrines just closed over fears of the new Covid-19, Iranian state media reported Tuesday, as the Islamic Republic pressed on with its struggle to control the Mideast's worst outbreak.

Jordan meanwhile prepared for a shutdown of its own over the virus, banning gatherings drawing

more than 10 people. Late on Monday night, angry crowds stormed into the courtyards of Mashhad's Imam Reza shrine and Qom's Fatima Masumeh shrine. Crowds typically pray there 24 hours a day, seven days a week, touching and kissing the shrine. That's worried health officials, who for weeks ordered Iran's Shiite clergy to close them.

Earlier on Monday, the state TV had announced the shrines' closure, sparking the demonstrations. "We are here to say that Tehran is damn wrong to do that!" one Shiite cleric shouted at the shrine in Mashhad, according to on-line video. Others joined him in chanting: "The health minister is damn wrong to do that, the president is damn wrong to do that!"

Police later dispersed the crowds, state media reported. Religious authorities and a prominent Qom seminary called the demonstration an "insult" to the shrine in a statement, urging the faithful to rely on "wisdom and patience" amid the closure. Iran's shrines draw Shiites from all over the Mideast for pilgrimages, likely contributing to the spread of the virus across the region.

President Hassan Rouhani on Tuesday said despite the closures, "our soul is closer to the saints more than at any time". — AP

## Pollution drops as virus shuts cities

**Berlin, March 17:** The European Union's space agency's earth-observation satellites have detected a significant reduction in the pollutant nitrogen dioxide, a byproduct of the use of diesel motors and other human activities, in northern Italy as the advance of the Covid-19 has led to drastic measures curtailing ordinary life.

The agency's Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service reported Tuesday that with the "abrupt changes in activity levels" in northern Italy, it has tracked a "reduction trend" of nitrogen dioxide, or NO<sub>2</sub>, for the last four to five weeks.

So far, Italy has been the hardest hit country in Europe by the new Covid-19, and the government has

implemented a wide lockdown, encouraging its 62 million people to stay home unless it's absolutely necessary to go out.

Similar drops in pollutants were detected in China after the government there implemented widespread shutdowns to try and slow the spread of Covid-19.

Most emissions are generated by human activities such as traffic, energy production, residential heating and industry.

"It is quite remarkable that a signal of decreasing activity levels could be detected," said Vincent-Henri Peuch, the director of the Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service. "This shows the extent of the measures taken by Italy." — AP

## Need for 'boldest actions' from Europe, says WHO

**Copenhagen, March 17:** The World Health Organisation's (WHO) regional office for Europe on Tuesday said there is a need for bold measures in all European countries, calling the continent the "epicentre" of the new Covid-19 pandemic. "Every country, with no exceptions, needs to take their boldest actions to stop or slow down the virus threat," Hans Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe, told a press conference.

"Thinking that 'this does not concern me', is not an option," Kluge said. Kluge also said that the "good news" was that the region was "alert and on guard," noting that "preparedness, readiness and response measures" had been launched in all member states. Since the virus first emerged in late December, 7,408 people have died around the world, according to an AFP tally based on official sources. According to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, more than 180,000

cases had been confirmed worldwide on Tuesday. The regional WHO director said that countries need to assess their own situation in order to decide which measures should be emphasised, as the outbreak is progressing at different speeds in different countries.

WHO Europe includes 53 countries as diverse as Russia and Andorra, Germany and Tajikistan. On Tuesday the outer borders of the 27-nation European Union and its Schengen passport free zone closed for 30 days. Faced with the "defining global health crisis of our time", the WHO on Monday called for testing of every suspected case of the new Covid-19. — AFP

## Ovarian cancer

### Signs of ovarian cancer you must never ignore (The Indian Express:20220325)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/ovarian-cancer-awareness-month-signs-ovarian-cancer-health-risk-7824850/>

Unfortunately, there are no symptoms in the early stages. When the cancer is contained to the ovaries, it is the easiest to treat, says a doctor

ovarian cancer, what to know about ovarian cancer, ovarian cancer signs and symptoms, ovarian cancer treatment, how to prevent ovarian cancer, indian express newsIt is important to identify high-risk groups which can be subjected to screening for ovarian cancer. (Photo: Getty/Thinkstock)

Health issues always present themselves with tell-tale signs and warnings. In the case of ovarian cancer, for instance, there are some “subtle signs and symptoms“, says Dr Niti Raizada, director, medical oncology and hemato oncology, Fortis Hospital, Richmond Road, Bangalore.

She explains that ovarian cancer begins in the female organs which produce eggs known as the ovaries. This form of cancer is the third common among women in India, with 46,000 new cases each year. “Family history of cancer forms an important part of evaluation,” she says.

ALSO READ |Hailey Bieber treated for a blood clot in the brain; everything to know about its signs and symptoms

According to the doctor, presentation of ovarian cancer includes:

- Often asymptomatic
- Abdominal bloating
- Change in bowel habits, indigestion, or nausea
- Fluid in abdomen known as ascites
- Weight loss and generalised fatigue
- Pelvic discomfort
- Backache
- Increased frequency of urination
- Irregular menstruation, difficulty eating, and urinary issues are just a few signs of the later stages of ovarian cancer, when it has spread to the pelvis and the abdomen.

ALSO READ |Breast cancer survivor Shormistha Mukherjee on embracing the disease instead of fighting it

“Unfortunately, there are no symptoms in the early stages. When the cancer is contained to the ovaries, it is the easiest to treat. Any woman who has ovaries is at risk of ovarian cancer, although there are some factors that increase this risk,” Dr Raizada explains.

How to reduce the risk of ovarian cancer

The doctor suggests the following tips:

### 1. Diet and exercise

Weekly exercise regime and a healthy diet are important. Plenty of fruits, vegetables and food rich in vitamin D are some of the dietary measures. Working out 30-40 minutes every day can reduce the risk by up to 20 per cent. Have an active lifestyle.

### 2. Oral contraceptives

Oral contraceptive intake among women is studied to have up to a 50 per cent lower risk of developing ovarian cancer, but one requires medical consultation prior. Length of intake also has some association.

ovarian cancer, what to know about ovarian cancer, ovarian cancer signs and symptoms, ovarian cancer treatment, how to prevent ovarian cancer, indian express news Ovarian cancer begins in the female organs which produce eggs known as the ovaries. (Photo: Getty/Thinkstock)

### 3. Avoiding carcinogens

Carcinogens are substances that are capable of causing cancer. Substances such as talcum powder (baby powder, vaginal deodorants and makeup) are known to have some uncertain association.

### 4. Pregnancy and breastfeeding

Women who have birthed at least one child, especially before the age of 30, have a lower risk of developing ovarian cancer and even breast cancer. Breastfeeding is also known to lower the risk.

ALSO READ | 'I am the healthiest person I know, and I got cancer': Seema Patil, Zerodha founder's wife, shares her breast cancer journey

### 5. Healthy lifestyle

Avoiding the use and exposure of tobacco products can not only lower your risk of ovarian cancer, but many other types of cancers as well. Along with it, limiting your alcohol consumption is best.

### 6. Genetic Link

Some ovarian cancers are linked to genetic changes and run-in families with several cases of breast and ovarian cancer. One such important mutation is called BRCA1 (breast cancer gene 1) and BRCA2 (breast cancer gene 2). Identifying such families and their genetic risks will help implement risk-reduction strategies.

It is important to identify high-risk groups which can be subjected to screening for ovarian cancer. These screening methods include a trans-vaginal ultrasound and serum Ca125 (blood test). Screening tools are generally non-invasive.

## World Tuberculosis Day 2022

**World Tuberculosis Day 2022: Common myths and facts about the disease "There is treatment for tuberculosis. If diagnosed and initiated on time and if the patient is compliant to treatment, they do well with anti-TB medication," said Dr Jayalakshmi TK (The Indian Express:20220325)**

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/world-tuberculosis-day-2022-common-myths-and-facts-about-the-disease-7834583/>

world tuberculosis day 2022 Educate yourself on the myths and facts about Tuberculosis. (Photo: Representational)

World Tuberculosis (TB) Day is observed to raise awareness about tuberculosis, which is an infectious disease. According to WHO, the estimated incidence figure of people in India struggling with TB stood at 2.64 million cases, as in 2019. This is a rate of 193 per 100,000 population. Yet, the disease comes laced with many myths that often obstruct necessary and effective treatment.

Myth: Everyone with TB is infectious

One of the first myths that Dr Jayalakshmi TK, consultant, pulmonologist, Apollo Hospitals Navi Mumbai pointed out is that everyone with TB is infectious. She clarified and said, "Tuberculosis can affect all organs of the body except hair, teeth and nails. But, only pulmonary tuberculosis is infectious and can spread through droplets. Patients who are initiated on treatment for pulmonary tuberculosis become non-infectious in three weeks after starting the treatment for drug sensitive tuberculosis."

ALSO READ |TB not a life-long infection in most people: Study

Myth: TB is genetic

Further, Dr Avi Kumar, senior consultant, pulmonology, Fortis Escorts Heart Institute, Okhla New Delhi, brought attention to the myth that TB is genetic whereas the truth, he said, is that "it's an infectious disease caused by mycobacterium tuberculosis and mainly spreads through droplets, through air." Adding to this, Dr TK said, "Since tuberculosis spreads through droplets, families who are in close contact get exposed, and the chances of developing tuberculosis increases. There are certain places where the number of tuberculosis patients are more, in such areas the exposure to patients is substantial, thereby, increasing the chances of people developing tuberculosis."

Tuberculosis, coughing TB is an infectious disease caused by mycobacterium tuberculosis and mainly spreads through droplets, through air. (File photo)

Myth: TB is fatal and non-curable

People also often believe that TB is a non-curable, fatal disease. But Dr TK states that the opposite is true, saying: "There is treatment for tuberculosis, if diagnosed and initiated on time

and if the patient is compliant to treatment, they do well with anti-TB medication. Treatment for drug sensitive tuberculosis is 6 to 9 months comprising of Rifampicin, Isoniazid, Ethambutol and Pyrazinamide. About 5% of patients can develop drug resistant tuberculosis. Now there are shorter duration regimen available which comprise of Bedaquiline or Delamanid.”

ALSO READ |Long Covid: The science shows how little we know

Dr Kumar also added that TB can be cured “if the patient religiously take the regimen prescribed by the doctors and maintains the right dosage, timing and the form. Chances of relapse are also less if proper regimen is followed. However, TB relapses in a patient can sometimes be fatal if they are immunocompromised.”

Myth: TB spreads from touch

Both the experts also brought light to the myth that TB can spread by touching the patient. DR TK said that while it is rare for cutaneous tuberculosis or skin TB to spread through touch in untreated patients, “it’s not likely to be spread through personal items, such as clothing, bedding, drinking glass, eating utensils, handshake, toilet, or other items that a person with TB has touched.”

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## **Irregular periods**

**Irregular periods: Gynaecologist explains all about the causes, and the cures  
If you can’t predict your periods and also have a heavy flow when you have it, you likely have irregular periods, said Dr Nimmi Mahajan (The Indian Express:20220325)**

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/a-gynaecologist-explains-all-you-need-to-know-about-irregular-periods-the-causes-and-the-cures-7798691/>

irregular periods, menstrual cycle Here's everything you need to know about identifying irregular periods, the causes behind them, and some natural cures. (Photo: Pexels)

Menstrual bleeding varies in duration and severity from woman to woman. A menstrual cycle is defined as the time between the first day of one period and the first day of the next. The average menstrual cycle lasts 28 days, but also varies from person to person and month to month. If your periods occur every 21 to 35 days, they are considered regular. Blood flow lasts four to five days on average, with a blood loss of approximately 2-3 tablespoons per day, and an average of 80 ml during periods.

Your periods may be irregular when you are in the first two years of menarche, the first menstrual bleeding. This is completely normal, but in case it is the same after that period, you may need to rule out certain causes of irregular periods, Dr Nimmi Mahajan, lead gynaecologist, Proactive for Her, told indianexpress.com.

ALSO READ |How the pandemic has affected periods

She noted that if the length of your menstrual cycle varies, you have irregular periods. “Your periods can be early or late or even skip some months. Many women develop a regular cycle after puberty; it can occur anytime between the 21- 35th day of your menstrual cycle. If you can't predict your periods and also have a heavy flow when you have it, you likely have irregular periods.”

She also points the following as symptoms of irregular periods:

Periods that skip days or months

Spotting between periods

No periods

Heavy cramping during periods

menstrual cramps, irregular periods Painful menstrual cramps are a symptom of irregular periods. (Photo: Pexels)

What causes heavy or irregular menstrual periods?

Dr Mahajan said that heavy or irregular periods may be a result of:

**Hormonal imbalance:** The hormones oestrogen and progesterone control the formation of the uterine lining. An increase in these hormones can result in heavy bleeding. Hormone imbalances are most common in girls who started menstruating within the last year and a half. They are also common in women approaching menopause.

**Some medical/gynaecological conditions:** Thyroid problems, PID (Pelvic inflammatory disease), endometriosis, and an inherited blood disorder can all cause irregular periods. Endometriosis is a condition in which the tissue that lines the inside of the uterus grows elsewhere in the body. This can result in severe bleeding as well as pain. An inherited blood disorder is one that affects clotting.

ALSO READ |Nutritionist suggests simple tips to reduce period bloating

**Benign growths or cancers:** Heavy bleeding can be caused by cervical, ovarian, or uterine cancer, but these conditions are uncommon. Uterine benign, or noncancerous, tumours can cause heavy bleeding or long periods. When the growth is made up of endometrial tissue, it is referred to as a polyp and those made of muscle tissues are called fibroids.

**Lack of ovulation:** Anovulation results in insufficient levels of progesterone hormone, which leads to heavy periods.

Adenomyosis: The glands of the uterine lining embed in uterine muscle resulting in heavy bleeding which is known as adenomyosis.

Medication: Menstrual bleeding can be affected by anti-inflammatory medications, anticoagulants, or hormone medications. Heavy bleeding can be a side effect of intrauterine devices (IUDs), which are used to prevent pregnancy.

If your doctor suspects irregular periods, they may ask you to take an ultrasound of the uterus, pap smear or blood tests to arrive at the cause of this irregularity.

ALSO READ |Nutrition alert: Foods to eat before, during, and after your periods  
When should you seek medical care?

Dr Mahajan advised seeing a doctor if you have periods for more than 7 days, require more than one tampon/pad/cup in an hour, have severe pain/ fever or if you have abnormal discharge or odour in the vagina. “Additionally, you can seek medical help if you have sudden weight loss or gain, have extra hair growth on the body, get new acne, excessive and resistant kind, and if you see any nipple discharge,” she adds.

What are the available treatment options?

The treatment will be determined by your overall health, the cause of menstrual irregularities, and your reproductive history. Any underlying medical conditions, such as thyroid dysfunction, must also be addressed. You can also include some lifestyle changes to aid in fixing the length of your cycle, suggested Dr Mahajan.

Yoga

Yoga has been considered to be an effective treatment for a variety of menstrual problems. It has also been shown to reduce menstrual pain and emotional symptoms related to menstruation, such as premenstrual syndrome (PMS), as well as improve the quality of life in women with primary dysmenorrhea (menstrual cramps).

ALSO READ |These yoga asanas will help regulate irregular periods  
yoga, menstrual health (Photo: Pexels)  
Maintain a healthy weight

Extreme weight loss can cause irregular menstruation. Additionally, menstruating people who have gained weight are likely to have irregular periods, heavier bleeding, and pain because fat cells affect hormones and insulin. Consult your doctor if you want to lose weight. They can help decide a target weight and develop a plan to reach it.

Find time to exercise

Exercise has numerous health benefits that can help with your menstrual cycle. It can help you achieve or maintain a healthy weight and is frequently prescribed as part of a treatment plan for polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) which can also cause menstrual irregularities.

ALSO READ |Exercise during periods: Know the dos and don'ts  
Eat a balanced diet

Include fresh fruits, seasonal vegetables and fibre rich foods in your diet. Get the help of a nutritionist to help you draft a diet suitable for your body needs.

## Vitamin B and Vitamin D

Low levels of vitamin D may be observed in women with irregular periods and taking vitamin D supplements may help regulate menstruation. You may take vitamin D fortified cereal and spend some time in the morning sun. Vitamin B may lower the intensity of your premenstrual symptoms. Eggs, milk and legumes are good sources of Vitamin B.

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## Food and Nutrition

### **Protein: Know the best sources, benefits, and how much is too much (The Indian Express:20220325)**

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/protein-diet-benefits-types-how-much-healthy-foods-myths-bodybuilding-muscle-7818337/>

The protein requirements differ for children, adults, and senior citizens. While senior citizens will require more amounts so that they can maintain muscle mass and strength, along with bone health, a child in the age group of 4-9, he/she will be recommended 19 grams of protein each day, said Dr Jinal Patel, dietitian

proteinAs an essential macronutrient, one needs an adequate amount of protein in their diet to stay healthy (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)

Many of us, while planning our meals, consider aspects like calories, fats, or even salt consumption — but how many of us really think of protein intake, too? New ongoing researches and experts point out that it is extremely essential to incorporate protein in daily diet. In fact, a recent study published in Hypertension, a peer-reviewed journal of the American Heart Association (AHA), said that eating a balanced diet including protein from a greater variety of sources may help adults lower the risk of developing high blood pressure.

Also Read |How about trying red jowar curd uthappams with zucchini and bell peppers today? So, given the emphasis on protein in one's daily diet, how much should actually be consumed? But before we dive into the how, let's understand what exactly protein is.

What is protein?

Protein plays a key role in creating and maintaining cells of the bones, muscles, cartilage, and skin. “Protein is made up of essential amino acids that the body cannot manufacture on its own; therefore, one must obtain them through their diet. These amino acids are necessary for the growth and repair of tissue. Without them, the body would begin to break down its own muscles to obtain them. This is why getting your daily fix of protein through the foods you eat is crucial,” said Tanvi S Chiplunkar, senior dietician, Bhatia Hospital Mumbai.

In simple words, protein is a “necessary component of any diet because it fuels your cells so you have the energy to stay active”.

protein Are you having enough protein? (Photo: Getty Images/Thinkstock)

Functionally, inside the cells of a human body, all the receptors, enzymes, and metabolic activities are essentially proteins. Similarly, antibodies that help prevent various diseases by fighting against foreign organisms are also proteins, explained Dr Upal Sengupta, senior consultant nephrologist, Fortis Hospital and Kidney Institute, Kolkata.

Does lack of protein cause a deficiency?

“Yes, absolutely. The deficiency can make you prone to infection and illness, lead to swelling in the legs, slow wound healing, and reduced muscle mass. So, in case, you have been diagnosed with protein deficiency, then follow the instructions given by the consulting expert,” said Dr Jinal Patel, dietitian, Apollo Spectra Hospital, Mumbai.

Benefits of protein

One of the foremost benefits is that it helps muscle mass for those looking for a bulky build. According to Chiplunkar, “As an essential macronutrient, one needs an adequate amount of protein in your body to stay healthy. If one is not getting enough protein in their diet, it can result in the body utilising muscle for energy.”

Also Read |How much protein is too much?

We now know that it is imperative to eat protein as recommended by the doctor, so let’s look at its other benefits:

It helps with

\*Blood clotting

\*Immune system function

\*Maintaining muscle mass

\*Keeping blood sugars stable. “Adequate protein intake also helps with hormonal creation. Insulin (a small protein) is a hormone that is helpful in managing blood sugar levels. It tends to involve the interaction of organs like the pancreas and the liver,” said Dr Patel.

\*Maintaining hunger.

\*Growth, repair and maintenance of cells – amino acids are the building blocks of protein – they play a major role in hair growth.

\*Muscle growth, development and repair, cartilage and skin.

\*Digestion, through facilitation of the creation of enzymes and hormones and hormonal regulation. “Digestion is carried out by the digestive enzymes that are “proteinaceous in nature”, added Dr Patel.

## Sources of protein

AHA's 2021 dietary guidance to improve cardiovascular health recommended eating healthy sources of protein, mostly from plants, and may include seafood and low-fat or fat-free dairy products, and, if desired, lean cuts and unprocessed forms of meat or poultry.

One can opt for eggs, almonds, oats, milk, broccoli, spinach, quinoa, fish, lentils, asparagus, soy, yoghurt, nuts, dairy, seeds, carrots, seafood, avocado, chickpeas, and tofu.

The protein requirements differ for children, adults, and senior citizens (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)

How much to have?

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) recommends that an average adult should consume about one gram of protein per kg of body weight every day. According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH)'s Dietary Reference Intakes report for macronutrients, a sedentary adult should consume 0.8 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight. This means that an average sedentary man should eat about 56 grams of protein per day, and the average woman should eat about 46 grams, as per NIH. As per AHA two servings, or 5.5 ounces, of protein daily is recommended.

The protein requirements differ for children, adults, and senior citizens. While senior citizens will require more amounts of proteins so that they can maintain muscle mass and strength, along with bone health, a child in the age group of 4-9, he/she will be recommended 19 grams of protein each day (however, the expert will decide again after monitoring the overall health), said Dr Patel.

Those in the age group of 9-13 can have 34 grams on a daily basis. If the child is in the 14-18 age group, then a boy will need 52 grams and a girl may require 46 grams. "When it comes to adults, men will need 56 grams of protein and women around 46 grams. Older adults need to have around 2.0 g/kg/day. But, it is better to speak to an expert who will guide senior citizens as per the requirement," mentioned Dr Patel.

How to incorporate protein in one's diet?

Start with minor changes, such as replacing that piece of toast with an egg or adding a meat portion to your favourite starch dish, said Chiplunkar. "If you're transitioning from a vegetarian or vegan diet and want to add the meat back in, incorporate red meats slowly. Vegetarian sources of protein like milk, curd, buttermilk, cheese, soybean can be incorporated in the diet," she said.

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## **India to be TB-free by 2025**

### **India to be TB-free by 2025, says Minister (The Hindu:20220325)**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/19-increase-from-previous-year-in-tb-patients-notification-in-2021-report/article65255289.ece>

A 19% increase was witnessed in 2021 from the previous year in TB patients' notification. The number of incident TB patients (new and relapse) notified during 2021 was 19,33,381 against the 16,28,161 in 2020, noted India TB Report 2022 released on Thursday.

On the World Tuberculosis Day on Thursday, Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya reaffirmed the government's commitment to making India

## **Covid guidelines**

### **Health Ministry issues updated guidelines for imposing COVID-19 curbs (The Hindu:20220325)**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/health-ministry-issues-updated-guidelines-for-imposing-covid-19-curbs/article65253166.ece>

There is need to continue evidence-based decision on restrictions and relaxation, says Health Secretary

With the country all set to relax the COVID-19 restrictions, the Union Health Ministry on Wednesday wrote to the stakeholders, specifying how decisions should be made to identify areas where curbs need to be imposed/continued. Stating that there was need to continue evidence-based decision on restrictions and relaxation, Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan, in a letter, said a test positivity rate of 10% or more in the last week or bed occupancy of more than 40% on either oxygen supported or ICU-beds were grounds for imposing restrictions.

The Ministry observed that as the case trajectory may vary from State to State, and there would be variation within a State, there was need to take decisions

**Vaccine (Dainik Bhasker:20220325)**

<https://epaper.bhaskar.com/detail/1233446/85503735362/mpcg/25032022/120/image/>

## सीडीएससीओ की अगली बैठक में हो सकता है निर्णय 5 से 12 साल के बच्चों के लिए दो और वैक्सीन को जल्द मिल सकती है मंजूरी

नई दिल्ली | बायोलॉजिकल ई. और सीरम इंस्टीट्यूट ने 5 से 12 साल के बच्चों को वैक्सीन देने की मंजूरी मांगी है। दोनों ने दूसरे-तीसरे चरण का ट्रायल पूरा कर लिया है। सेंट्रल ड्रग्स कंट्रोल ऑर्गेनाइजेशन की सब्जेक्ट एक्सपर्ट कमेटी की अगले सप्ताह बैठक में इस पर फैसला हो सकता है। अभी 12 से अधिक उम्र के बच्चों को भारत बायोटेक व कैडिला की वैक्सीन दी जा रही है।

**कोवोवैक्स- सीरम:** 7 से 12 साल के बच्चों को देने की मंजूरी मांगी। दावा- दोनों डोज लेने पर 95% तक प्रभावी है। दूसरी डोज 22वें दिन लगेगी।

**कोर्बोवैक्स- बायोलॉजिकल ई:** 5 से 12 साल के बच्चों पर आपात इस्तेमाल की मंजूरी मांगी। इसे भी 12 वर्ष से अधिक के बच्चों पर इस्तेमाल की इजाजत मिल चुकी है। दूसरी डोज 28वें दिन लगेगी। कंपनी का दावा- 90% तक प्रभावी है।