



# DAILY NEWS BULLETIN

LEADING HEALTH, POPULATION AND FAMILY WELFARE STORIES OF THE DAY  
Monday 20220328

## Global Centre for Traditional Medicine

### India honoured to be Global Centre for Traditional Medicine: PM Modi (The Tribune: 20220328)

Ayush Ministry and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have signed host country agreement for establishing WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in India at Jamnagar

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/india-honoured-to-be-global-centre-for-traditional-medicine-pm-modi-380991>

India honoured to be Global Centre for Traditional Medicine: PM Modi  
Prime Minister Narendra Modi- File photo

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday expressed happiness for India to be the home of Global Centre for Traditional Medicine as Ayush Ministry signed agreement with the WHO. The Ayush Ministry and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have signed host country agreement for establishing WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in India at Jamnagar with its interim office at the Institute of Training and Research in Ayurveda in Gujarat.

PM Modi expressed hope that the centre will contribute towards making a healthier planet and leveraging our rich traditional practices for global good.

Replying to the tweets of Ayush Ministry and WHO, the Prime Minister said, "India is honoured to be home to a state-of-the-art @WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine. This Centre will contribute towards making a healthier planet and leveraging our rich traditional practices for global good." "Traditional medicines and wellness practices from India are very popular globally. This WHO Centre will go a long way in enhancing wellness in our society", he said in another tweet.

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya also tweeted on this occasion and said, "Welfare of the world with the knowledge of India! The traditional medicine of India, Ayurveda has carved a unique place for itself across the world. The WHO 'Global Centre for Traditional

Medicine' to be set up in Jamnagar, Gujarat is going to be of great benefit to the global society and will also lead to the expansion of traditional medicine".

## **Oral cancer**

### **Oral cancer patients with less circulating tumour cells live longer than those with more**

**As many as 500 patients analysed during the four-year long study (The Tribune: 20220328)**

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/oral-cancer-patients-with-less-circulating-tumour-cells-live-longer-than-those-with-more-381216>

Oral cancer patients with less circulating tumour cells live longer than those with more  
Photo for representational purpose only. Thinkstock

A study conducted by a team of Indian researchers has found that oral cancer patients having a lesser number of circulating tumour cells (CTCs) in blood live longer than patients with a greater number of such cells.

The four-year long study, among the largest clinical trials in head and neck cancers in which 500 patients were analysed, was led by Dr Pankaj Chaturvedi of Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai, Dr Jayant Khandare and a team of Pune-based Actorius OncoDiscover Technology.

“Altogether 152 oral cancer patients were analysed and 1.5 ml blood per patient was monitored for the presence of CTCs,” Khandare told PTI.

“The study showed that patients with over 20 CTCs per 1.5 ml blood are more likely to have an advanced-stage disease and nodal metastasis (cancer cells breaking away from where they first formed), while patients with less than 12 CTCs per 1.5 ml blood survive for a longer period,” he said.

The study was published in the international peer-reviewed Journal Triple OOO recently, he added.

As per the national cancer registry, there are about 14 lakh cancer patients in India and about nine per cent of these (1.2 lakh) are in Maharashtra, Khandare said.

Cancer cases and deaths in Maharashtra have increased by 11,306 and 5,727, respectively in last three years, a collective increase of around eight per cent, he added.

The OncoDiscover test, funded by the government through Biotech Ignition Grant and Small Business Industry Research Initiative of the Department of Biotechnology, is the sole CTC test approved by Drugs Controller General of India as per the Medical Device Rules 2017, he said.

The test is used to detect CTCs for diagnosis of cancers like those of head and neck, breast, lung, colon and rectal, Khandare said. “Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope has evinced an interest in our work and will be visiting our Pune facility soon,” he added.

## **Caught Covid**

### **Caught Covid? Here's what you should and shouldn't do when self-isolation isn't mandatory**

**Being alert, treating illness with respect, washing hands, covering face among a few safe practices (The Tribune: 20220328)**

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/caught-covid-heres-what-you-should-and-shouldnt-do-when-self-isolation-isnt-mandatory-381215>

Caught Covid? Here's what you should and shouldn't do when self-isolation isn't mandatory  
Photo for representational purpose only. File photo

We are all tired of Covid. But even though the news has moved on to other concerning geopolitical issues, it is a fact that Covid is still very much with us. Vaccines have certainly helped drive down its worst effects, but the disease is here to stay, and we must learn to live with it.

So what should you do now if you get Covid?

Anecdotally, many people seem to be ignoring the virus and carrying on regardless. This is perhaps not surprising given the end of self-isolation requirements in England, with Wales set to lift them very soon too. The message seems to be that Covid is no longer so important. But even as the rules do relax, living with Covid must not mean ignoring it.

Here are five things that Covid has shown that we need to do, especially as cases are yet again increasing and new variants like ‘deltacron’ continue to be discovered.

Be alert and stay away from others

Colds and respiratory illnesses are quite common, especially during the autumn, winter and spring months. For the majority of people, they are an inconvenience and not harmful.

But the older you get, the riskier they become. So even if you are young and at low risk, there are plenty of people who might get very ill if you give them Covid. Likewise, there are plenty of people with complex health conditions who are at high risk of getting severely ill if they catch the coronavirus. Covid can also trigger life-changing conditions such as type 1 diabetes in people who are susceptible but otherwise apparently healthy.

So if you start to feel ill, rather than carrying on regardless, acknowledge the infection. Look at your diary and reschedule events where you will come into contact with lots of other people. Take advantage of flexible working opportunities if available. The sicker you are, the more you

should stay away from others, as this is the best way to stop the virus from spreading (although clearly seek medical help should you need it).

Your employer should respect this, as even in England, where self-isolation is no longer legally enforced, government advice is still to self-isolate if you have tested positive or have Covid symptoms. You can use the NHS website to get an isolation note following a positive PCR test should you need to provide evidence.

Treat illness with respect

If you are the “carry on regardless” type, you may also be quite active and used to exercising. But if you sense you're getting ill, give your body a break.

Even after a mild Covid case, doctors recommend waiting until you're over your sickness before exercising and easing back in gradually. Some experts believe that rushing back to exercise too quickly may raise the risk of developing post-exertional malaise, a symptom of long Covid.

When living a fast-paced life, it can be difficult to slow down. But sometimes a day or two in bed and then returning to exercise slowly can be the main factor in preventing longer-term ill health.

Wash hands, cover face

As children, we are trained to wash our hands often, so the Covid advice to keep good hand hygiene was perhaps not a surprise. However, people's response to wearing face masks was far more complex.

Face masks are particularly important if you have a respiratory infection like Covid because they stop you spreading germs over other people, much like covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze. The Conversation

## **Drinking coffee**

**Drinking coffee could benefit heart, help you live longer: Study  
For all the studies, the researchers used data from UK Biobank, which follows the health outcomes of more than 500,000 people for at least 10 years (The Tribune: 20220328)**

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/drinking-coffee-could-benefit-heart-help-you-live-longer-study-381003>

Drinking coffee could benefit heart, help you live longer: Study  
Photo for representational purpose only.

Contrary to worries among some doctors and the public, drinking coffee may protect your heart instead of causing or worsening heart problems, find a new study.

According to three research abstracts, drinking two to three cups of coffee daily has been associated with a 10 per cent to 15 per cent lower risk of getting heart disease, heart failure or a heart rhythm problem, or dying early for any reason, CNN reported.

"We found coffee drinking had either a neutral effect -- meaning that it did no harm -- or was associated with benefits to heart health," said researcher Peter M. Kistler from the University of Melbourne.

For all the studies, the researchers used data from UK Biobank, which follows the health outcomes of more than 500,000 people for at least 10 years.

When joining the registry, participants reported that their coffee consumption fell on a range from up to a cup to six cups or more daily.

The authors of the current research wanted to examine the relationship between coffee drinking and heart rhythm problems (arrhythmias); cardiovascular disease, including coronary heart disease, heart failure and stroke; and total and heart-related deaths among people with and without heart disease.

The first study focused on more than 382,500 adults who did not have heart disease and was age 57 on average. Participants who drank two to three cups of coffee daily had the lowest risk for later developing the heart problems the study focused on, the researchers found.

People who drank roughly one cup of coffee per day had the lowest risk of having a stroke or dying from cardiovascular disease.

Another study looked into the relationships between different types of coffee -- caffeinated ground, caffeinated instant and decaffeinated -- and the same health outcomes. Whether the decaf coffee was ground or instant wasn't specified.

Drinking one to five cups of ground or instant coffee a day was linked with lower risks of having arrhythmia, heart disease or failure, or stroke. Drinking two to three cups of any type of coffee every day was associated with a lower risk of dying early or from heart disease.

Participants analysed in a third study were those who already had arrhythmia or a type of cardiovascular disease. For people with cardiovascular disease, no level of coffee intake was found to be linked with developing arrhythmia.

Of the adults with arrhythmia, coffee intake -- especially one cup per day -- was associated with a lesser risk of premature death.

## 3rd Covid vax

### 3rd Covid vax may improve immune response in blood cancer patients (The Tribune: 20220328)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/3rd-covid-vax-may-improve-immune-response-in-blood-cancer-patients-380982>

3rd Covid vax may improve immune response in blood cancer patients  
Photo for representation only.

The weakened immune systems of blood cancer patients can improve after they receive a third Covid-19 vaccination, finds a new study.

Patients with lymphoma have defects in their immune system that restrict their response to vaccination. Despite this, the new study found improvements in antibody and T-cell responses after a third vaccine dose, except in patients who had recently received a certain antibody treatment for their cancer.

"Despite the gradual lifting of Covid-19 restrictions worldwide, a cloud continues to hang over immunosuppressed patients, who may not develop protective immune responses after vaccination," said Sean Lim from the University of Southampton, who led the research.

"In particular, individuals with haematological malignancies are at greater risk of severe Covid-19 disease even if they have been vaccinated," Lim added.

For the study, published in the journal Nature Cancer, the team collected blood samples from 457 adult lymphoma patients before they received their first vaccination of either the Oxford-AstraZeneca or BioNTech Pfizer vaccines, and four weeks after the first dose, two to four weeks and six months after the second dose, and four to eight weeks after the third dose.

The study aimed to evaluate the strength of the immune system's response to the vaccines and to help predict how effective the vaccine could be for lymphoma patients.

To achieve this, the scientists measured the ability of antibodies in the blood samples to prevent the viral spike protein from binding to ACE2 proteins, which are the virus's key point of entry into the human body.

They also measured the response of T cells, which form part of the body's immune system, when stimulated by the viral spike.

The results showed that whilst just over half of patients undergoing active cancer treatment had no detectable antibody levels after the second vaccination, T cell responses could be detected in about two-thirds of all patients.

After a third dose, 92 per cent of patients who were not undergoing anti-CD20 treatment for their cancer showed improved antibody responses, compared to 17 per cent who were receiving that treatment.

## **Covid infection**

### **Covid infection linked to higher risk of neuropathy (The Tribune: 20220328) Covid infection linked to higher risk of neuropathy**

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/covid-infection-linked-to-higher-risk-of-neuropathy-380981>

Some people infected with Covid-19 during the pandemic's early months experienced peripheral neuropathy, pain, tingling and numbness in the hands and feet, during and following their bouts with the virus, finds a new study.

The study, published in the journal *Pain*, found that those who tested positive for the virus were about three times more likely to report pain, numbness or tingling in their hands and feet as those with negative tests.

"Several viral infections, such as HIV and shingles, are associated with peripheral neuropathy because viruses can damage nerves," said co-author Simon Haroutounian from the Washington University.

"We found that nearly 30 per cent of patients who tested positive for Covid-19 also reported neuropathy problems at the time of their diagnosis and that for 6 per cent to 7 per cent of them, the symptoms persisted for at least two weeks, and up to three months, suggesting this virus may have lingering effects on peripheral nerves," Haroutounian added.

For the study, the team surveyed patients who were tested for Covid-19 from March 16, 2020, through January 12, 2021. Of the 1,556 study participants, 542 had positive Covid-19 tests, and 1,014 tested negative.

Many of those who tested negative were tested because they were undergoing surgery or were already hospitalised with cancer, diabetes or other health problems, Haroutounian said.

Because of those existing health problems, many who tested negative already experienced chronic pain and neuropathy unrelated to Covid-19, he added.

Study patients who tested positive tended to be healthier and younger, and 29 per cent reported symptoms of neuropathy at the time of their diagnosis.

That compared to neuropathy problems in about 13 per cent of the participants who tended to have health challenges but tested negative for Covid-19.

**Covid infection linked to higher risk of neuropathy  
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**vaccines for children, SC asks Centre**

**What is the plan on vaccines for children, SC asks Centre (Hindustan Times: 20220328)?**



<https://epaper.hindustantimes.com/Home/ShareArticle?OrgId=75764f616d&imageview=0>

he Supreme Court on Thursday asked the central government about its preparedness to deal with the third wave of Covid-19 pandemic, underlining that the vaccination of everyone below 18 must also be undertaken as soon as possible.

Starting May 1, anyone aged 18 or over is eligible for a Covid vaccine. Out of country's total population of 1.3 billion, around 450 million are under 18 and, as such, not eligible for a vaccine yet. Around 160 million doses of a coronavirus vaccine have been administered so far with 30 million people, which is just a little over 2% of India's population getting the complete two doses.

Most vaccines are not yet approved for people below 18, and Canada became the first country in the world on Wednesday to approve Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccine for ages as young as 12. HT reported this week that experts have pointed to the importance of planning for the vaccination of those below 18 because there cannot be a proper opening up until the entire population is protected. The number of companies conducting trials of vaccines for children is limited and if India doesn't move fast enough, supplies may not be available.

On Thursday, the bench of justices Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud and MR Shah sought to know from the government whether any policy was being contemplated to combat a third Covid-19 wave in the wake of expert opinions that it may affect children worse than the first two waves have.

“In the third wave, children are going to be affected. And the issue is that when they will have to be taken to hospitals and they will have to be accompanied with by their parents.

Therefore, we say that when we plan for the third stage, the vaccination process for young children has to be complete,” the bench told the solicitor general Tushar Mehta. P10

## **Brazil variants**

**‘Modified vaccine effective against SA, Brazil variants’(Hindustan Times: 20220328)**

<https://epaper.hindustantimes.com/Home/ShareArticle?OrgId=759a552550&imageview=0>

Moderna Inc. said on Thursday that mid-stage trials showed its booster shots were effective against immune system-evading coronavirus variants that emerged in South Africa and Brazil. “We are encouraged by these new data, which reinforce our confidence that our booster strategy should be protective against these newly detected variants,” Stephane Bancel, Moderna’s chief executive officer, said in a statement. The pharma major also said studies of its Covid-19 vaccine in teenagers also showed that it was 96% effective. P13

## **Covid-19**

### **Covid-19: What you need to know today (Hindustan Times: 20220328)**

<https://epaper.hindustantimes.com/Home/ShareArticle?OrgId=7599377c10&imageview=0>

Life is almost back to normal after the coronavirus pandemic in the global north.

Following the example of the UK, the US and many other countries, have even given those over the age of 50 years a third shot of the Pfizer/BioNTech or Moderna vaccine.

Economies are growing; it isn’t quite like the roaring twenties that followed the Spanish Flu (and preceded the Great Depression), but things are definitely looking up.

There are still stray, minor outbreaks caused on account of the anti-vaxxers (who have no protection against the disease other than what they get on account of herd immunity, which has been achieved thanks to the widespread vaccination) and the rare mutant strain, but because most vaccines offer protection from serious illness, none of these is serious enough to warrant the closure of anything.

School is on. As is college. Offices are open (although many companies continue to offer people the flexibility of working from home, or just about anywhere). Shops and restaurants are open. Large-scale sporting and cultural events have restarted. And countries have full-time vaccine czars running huge departments that have figured out schedules for revaccinations and booster shots. Vaccines, these countries have discovered, are the only way to get the better of the pandemic.

In short, life is good.

But that’s in the global north.

It’s October 2021.

Things are still bad in the global south. There are not enough vaccines to go around. Some countries have vaccinated around 20-25% of their population and they are the outliers. Many others have vaccinated far fewer. Even those that have vaccinated a fourth of their population are struggling. The only way they have been able to keep infections under check is by

continuing with harsh non-pharmaceutical interventions. Everyone continues to wear masks and practice social distancing. School is still online (or hybrid). As is college. That means the underprivileged who are at the wrong end of the digital divide slide even further down. Most offices remain closed — indoor spaces are lethal — and people continue to work from home. Shops and restaurants follow stringent rules.

Large outbreaks are common. As are attacks by variants of the Sars-CoV-2 virus that result in flare-ups of infections. Herd immunity (the good kind, achieved through vaccination) is some distance away. Every time there is an outbreak, there is a lockdown. Some last weeks, others months. Everyone is tired of stopping and starting, then stopping and starting again. Economies are in tatters.

Travel outside the countries, especially to the global north, is difficult. Those that want to travel need to prove that they have been vaccinated; everyone is tested on landing; and some countries insist on a quarantine on top of everything else.

And because even the first round of vaccination isn't complete, these countries are caught between universal coverage (for at least everyone who wants a shot), and revaccination, and booster-shot drives.

In short, life is a mess.

October is four months away. India, a country that is in the global south, still has a shot at living the scenario described above for the global north. But for that, it will need to resurrect its faltering vaccine drive (which means, most importantly, accepting that it is faltering). It's the only way to crush the second wave of the pandemic — and prevent (or lessen the impact of) a third that the government told us on Wednesday was coming.

It's still not too late to do what it takes to make the first scenario India's reality by October 2021.

## **Health Care**

**HC: State must ensure treatment to all patients (Hindustan Times: 20220328)**

<https://epaper.hindustantimes.com/Home/ShareArticle?OrgId=751ac92334&imageview=0>

The Delhi high court on Thursday directed the Delhi government to ensure treatment was available to all Covid patients from the national capital, and said that medical facilities in city was unable to hold up to the test it was put under by the pandemic's current wave.

The remarks and directions were given by a bench of justices Vipin Sanghi and Rekha Palli which was hearing a plea by a 53-year-old Covid patient who was unable to get an ICU bed with a ventilator after his oxygen saturation fell to around 40 (from the ideal 95 and above).

“The existing medical infrastructure in the state is completely exposed... when it was put to the test... The obligation of the state to provide sufficient infrastructure to protect the lives of the people cannot be understated. At the same time, one cannot lose sight of the fact that we are faced with a once-in-a-century pandemic and even most economically advanced nations have found their infrastructure to be lacking to deal with the massive surge of cases,” it noted in its oral order.

When senior advocate Rahul Mehra, representing the Delhi government, argued that the court should not say the medical infrastructure was in “shambles”, the bench responded: “Now you are behaving like the ostrich with its head in the sand. When you defend this situation, then you are not rising above the politics. We always call a spade a spade.”

Mehra admitted that existing infrastructure is “struggling”, but requested the court that it is not in shambles as that has a different connotation to it.

“In the absence of oxygen what could the infrastructure do? Hospitals were reducing beds due to lack of oxygen,” he said, adding that the city government has taken several initiatives, like augmenting beds by 15,000 and ICU beds by 1,200, which are in the pipeline and the oxygen is also coming in.

To this, the bench said: “It is not just oxygen. Is oxygen enough? If you have oxygen, do you have everything? Pipeline is pipeline. They are not there now.”

Mehra withdrew the statement saying that he only wanted to state the reasons behind the infrastructure failure.

The court said that it was bound to issue directions to the state for the petitioner, and several others like him, because it was their fundamental right.

“The petitioner needs an ICU bed with ventilator facility and ideally the same should be available. We are bound to issue a writ to the state to provide the infrastructure to enable the petitioner to undergo the treatment required to save his life... At the same time we cannot lose sight of the fact that thousands of others are afflicted by the same disease in the city and whose condition may be as bad as that of the petitioner, if not worse,” it said.

The court added that just because the petitioner was able to approach the court cannot be a reason to pass an order in his favour so that he can steal a march over others who may not have had the same option.

“We, therefore, dispose of the petition with a direction to the respondent (Delhi government) that they shall provide facility for medical treatment as may be required by all the residents of Delhi who are suffering from Covid-19.

“In case they require hospitalisation, it shall be provided. If medicines, it shall be provided. If oxygen, it shall be provided. If ICU with or without a ventilator, the state would be obligated to provide that too,” the bench said.

Meanwhile, another bench of the Delhi high court on Thursday asked why the Delhi government was not using a 150-bed multi-speciality hospital, which was closed down due to

an insolvency resolution process against its parent company, and whose services were being offered by the doctor who established it.

The high court said the Delhi government should “think out of the box” in view of the Covid wave, which has led to a shortage of beds for patients in the national capital.

“150 beds are there. We are struggling to find beds every day. We are fighting for it everyday, and you are saying you will not touch it (hospital)... He (petitioner-doctor) is offering his hospital, he is ready to bring in his medical team, what else can you ask for?”chief justice DN Patel said.

The bench was hearing a plea by Dr Rakesh Saxena seeking permission to operate the Febris Multispeciality Hospital to cater to Covid-19 patients in the national capital.

**Diet (The Asian Age: 20220328)**

<http://onlinepaper.asianage.com/articledetailpage.aspx?id=16256666>

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

Several such cases are coming up since the last one year or so as per physiotherapists and health experts.

**FAULTY WORKOUT TECHNIQUES**

Acclaimed physio-occupational therapist and obesity management specialist Dr Sameera Gupta avers, "I find almost eight out of 10 patients coming to me for pain management, have injured themselves while exercising at home during the pandemic. The usual complaints are knee and shoulder pain, swelling in joints, ligament tear, tendon injury, spine and low back pain. They are enthusiastically opting for online workout and taking up programmes like seven-day abs challenge or getting in shape within a month etc. without expert guidance, without taking into consideration their physiodynamics, BMI and ergonomics and other health contraindications."

"Almost all of them are over-indulging in workouts, like excessive cardio and lifting weights, which may not suit their body types or doing it in wrong postures. They are directly and abruptly getting into intense exercising without a warm-up session, without progressively increasing the weights and repetitions and without a cool down session. All these habits are backfiring, making matters worse and several cases of injuries and rebound weight gain have been noted," says the therapist who is also the founder and medical director at Dr Sameera's Physio Slim Clinic.

According to Dr Shajin Chandran, chief physiotherapist for Indian Super League, ISL, and Chennai Hockey Association and director of AlignPeak Pvt Ltd, the right approach to workout consists of certain steps including evaluation of BMI, body mass index, musculoskeletal evaluation, strength and endurance level, taking the clinical history of the client and identifying one's pre-existing health problems, conducting blood tests for checking the levels of haemoglobin, calcium, thyroid etc, warm up exercises and maintaining a particular workout timing.

"However, none of these are evaluated and checked while starting a workout on one's own by watching online videos. People straightaway start intense cardio workouts like walking, running, cycling besides several repetitions of planks, squats, lunges, push-ups and heavy-weight lifting for defined abs, core muscles and biceps etc. Even in most gyms, trainers themselves lack proper

# DON'T FALL FOR DIY WORKOUTS & FAD DIETS



**Fallouts of unsupervised home workouts:**

**IMMEDIATE RISKS:** Muscle pull, cramps, inflammation, pain on the spine, back, neck, shoulder, knees and ankles.

**LONG TERM HEALTH RISKS:** Wear and tear injuries and mobility issues due to overuse causing arthritis or joint pains, stress fractures, tendon and ligament issues, slip discs. Also fall in haemoglobin, cardiac ailments, migraine, digestive and infertility issues, weight bouncing back due to unhealthy and unsustainable weight loss techniques.



“Yoga is about attaining stillness and calmness through certain kinds of movements. Alignment and correct posture is very important. But here again, people rush with repetitions of the asanas under the impression that it would enable swift weight loss. With an incorrect posture, they bend and stretch too much causing injuries like slip disc, knee and spinal issues and even digestive and infertility problems in the long run.”

— Rajesh Singh Maan, also known as Acharya Advait Yogbhushan, founder of Swamarpan Foundation



training and medical understanding of individual client needs. Also, the fitness tracker apps installed on smart phones and watches are not completely reliable because fitness requirements and normal parameters vary from one continent to another depending on climate, race, age, sex, food habits, lifestyle and so on. The apps are mostly developed in the West and therefore for Indians, the calorie requirements as per

**YOGA IN WRONG POSTURE**

Given the health benefits and hype about yoga, many people had been trying to do it at home for the first time by watching yogasanas and pranayamas online. Spiritual yoga guru and teacher of sacred Sciences Rajesh Singh Maan, also known as Acharya Advait Yogbhushan, and founder of Swamarpan Foundation says, "Yoga is about attaining stillness and calmness through certain kind of movements. Alignment and correct

posture is very important. But here again, people rush with repetitions of the asanas under the impression that it would enable swift weight loss. They think sweating is beneficial but unlike gym workouts, yoga is about conserving one's energy and there should be little or no sweating and no bodyache. With an incorrect posture, they bend and stretch too much causing injuries like slip disc, knee and spinal issues and even digestive and infertility problems in the long run. Yoga should be ideally performed under expert guidance and supervision. It is better that



beginners chant the Omkara mantra nine times to revitalise the neurons, slowly perform Suryanamaskars a couple of times to activate the major joints of the body and follow the right breathing techniques to fill the lungs with oxygen."

**FALLACY OF FITNESS FOOD FADS**

Not only exercise, people are also drawing up diet plans for themselves by checking social media and YouTube again without consulting nutrition experts. From prolonged fasting to liquid diets, keto diet, GM diet, options galore on the internet and people are randomly experimenting with dangerous food fads for a quick fix answer to weight-loss. "Nutritionists prescribe diet based on one's BMI, height to weight ratio, associated ailments and general lifestyle. For instance, someone with high BP is supposed to eat a low-salt diet, those with kidney issues must avoid excess protein and diabetics should eat food with low glycemic index. However, without understanding the nitty-gritty, people are opting for a high protein and low carb diet including protein shakes and supplements. Protein is best consumed post-workout. Consuming a high amount of protein without doing workouts would turn into fats if one doesn't burn it," says Dr Sameera.

“People straightaway start intense cardio workouts like walking, running, cycling besides several repetitions of planks, squats, lunges, push-ups and heavy-weight lifting for defined abs, core muscles and biceps etc. Even in most gyms, trainers themselves lack proper training and medical understanding

— Dr Shajin Chandran, chief physiotherapist for Indian Super League, ISL, and Chennai Hockey Association

## Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

**Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month: Symptoms that are most often missed About 1 in 78 women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer in their lifetime. But four out five are not diagnosed in early stage, Dr Dhivya, consultant - obstetrician and gynaecologist, Kauvery Hospitals Electronic City (Bengaluru) (The Indiann Express:20220328)**

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/ovarian-cancer-awareness-month-symptoms-diagnosis-treatment-7831254/>

ovarian cancer Here's why early diagnosis is key. (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)  
Ovarian cancer affects ovaries, which are female reproductive organs that sit on either side of the uterus. "Ovarian cancer represents three per cent cancer cases in women. It is hard to spot ovarian cancer early. The symptoms can mimic other conditions and there is a chance you might not have any. There are no reliable screening tests to find early signs of the disease," said Dr Dhivya, consultant – obstetrician and gynaecologist, Kauvery Hospitals Electronic City (Bengaluru).

If detected early, chance of five-year survival rate is 93 to 98 per cent. About 1 in 78 women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer in their lifetime. But four out of five are not diagnosed in early stage, said Dr Dhivya.

However, you can take charge of your health.

This Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, observed every year in March, learn which symptoms to be aware of so you can discuss with your doctor. Also, find what things put women at high risk of the disease so you can get preventive treatment, if necessary.

Also Read | New test to help early diagnosis of ovarian cancer  
Why does ovarian cancer often go undetected?

In its early stages, ovarian cancer may not present any noticeable signs when symptoms do appear. There are other kinds of symptoms you normally associate with more common conditions like irritable bowel syndrome and urinary tract infection. In general, women start getting symptoms when cancer begins to spread, invading other parts of the body.

What are the so-called 'silent symptoms' of ovarian cancer?

Early signs of ovarian cancer overlap with symptoms of other common conditions. Most of the time these symptoms are caused by something that is not cancer.

Waiting, ignoring your symptoms or hoping they will go away is not the safest option, the expert said. “You are the expert on your body, so trust your intuition if something feels wrong or abnormal, and follow up with your doctor,” she said while listing down symptoms like:

- \*Bloating, difficulty in eating
- \*Abdominal or pelvic pain, abdomen swelling
- \*Change in your bowel habits like constipation, diarrhoea, or others
- \*Urinary frequency and urgency
- \*Back pain
- \*Appetite changes (loss of appetite, feeling full after small meal)
- \*Menstrual changes – missing period, bleeding heavily, spotting, bleeding when not in periods, unusual vaginal discharge
- \*Pain during sex
- \*Chronic fatigue and weight loss

Also Read |Journalist Christiane Amanpour reveals ovarian cancer diagnosis: Know the symptoms, causes, treatment

“If you get treatment for one of these conditions and your symptoms stick around for two or more weeks, follow up with gynaecologist,” she said.

Lilly Singh, Lilly Singh health, Lilly Singh hospitalised, Lilly Singh in hospital, Lilly Singh ovarian cyst, what are ovarian cysts, what causes ovarian cyst, ovarian cyst signs and symptoms, ovarian cyst treatment, indian express news Here’s what to keep in mind (Photo: Getty/Thinkstock)

What could put you at high risk?

You may be at high risk for ovarian cancer if you have:

- \*Family history of ovarian cancer
- \*Had breast, gynaecological or colon cancer in the past
- \*BRCA1 or BRCA2 genetic mutation
- \*Obesity
- \*Never had a pregnancy
- \*Used hormone therapies or fertility drugs
- \*Have had endometriosis

How is ovarian cancer diagnosed?

Unlike other types of cancer, there’s currently no screening test to detect ovarian cancer at early stage. There is no single test to detect ovarian cancer. Instead, several tests are used to look for tumour in ovaries and then test it to determine if it’s benign or malignant.

ALSO READ |Sweeteners may be linked to increased cancer risk, says new research  
Diagnostic tests most often used are

- \*Pelvic examination – to check change in size and shape of your ovaries
- \*Vaginal ultrasound – to take picture of ovaries, tubes and uterus
- \*CA125 – higher level in ovarian cancer
- \*Biopsy – Take a sample of tissue and test



How to be an advocate for yourself?

Delaying the diagnosis of cancer can danger life. Given that there is not a regular screening test and symptoms overlap with other conditions, good treatment outcomes may depend on your ability to self advocate.

Take away

Many don't notice symptoms until ovarian cancer has progressed to an advanced stage. But knowing what symptoms to look for can help with early detection. Make an appointment with your doctor if you are worried about cancer risk. The outlook for ovarian cancer can improve with early diagnosis and detection, stated Dr Dhivya.

## Memory

**How memory 'clutter' makes it harder to remember things as we get older  
A recent study suggests that instead of a difficulty in storing memories, poorer memory as we get older is a result of being less able to focus our attention on relevant target information, meaning we put too much information into our memory. (The Indiann Express:20220328)**

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/life-style/memory-clutter-older-remember-7790378/>

memory clutterOur memories remain good, but they get cluttered as we age. (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)

Memories are a crucial part of what makes us who we are. Yet we all know it can become more difficult to remember things as we get older. From forgetting why you came into a room, to not being able to recall details of a special family event, to forgetting familiar names.

Forgetting things can even be a way of defining old age. Many people will cry something along the lines of "oh my goodness, I'm getting old" when they can't remember something that had previously been easy to recall.

Also Read |New landmark study sheds light on the possible cause of Alzheimer's-related symptoms

This forgetfulness as we get older is easy to demonstrate but harder to explain. An obvious explanation might be that remembering things becomes difficult because something changes in the brain that makes it more difficult to store information.

But a paper published recently in the journal Trends in Cognitive Sciences has presented an alternative explanation for this phenomenon: that our memories remain good, but they get cluttered as we age.

Imagine if you remembered every single detail of every minute of every hour of every day. It would be overwhelming, and most of the information you remembered would be fairly pointless. (Representative photo: Getty Images/Thinkstock)

First, it's important to understand that memory isn't an accurate recording of life as it happens.

Imagine if you remembered every single detail of every minute of every hour of every day. It would be overwhelming, and most of the information you remembered would be fairly pointless.

If you're remembering what you had for breakfast this morning, is it relevant to be able to remember the shape of the cloud you could see outside the window, or the number of times you blinked while you ate?

Also Read | Is it advisable to eat right before bedtime? Experts answer

Instead, we attend to different parts of our environment, and the attention we pay to different parts of our experience shapes our memory.

The authors of this new study reviewed a range of evidence on this topic. They suggest that instead of a difficulty in storing memories, poorer memory as we get older is a result of being less able to focus our attention on relevant target information, meaning we put too much information into our memory.

This is not something we have any control over – it just seems to be a natural consequence of ageing.

Why would focusing on too much information make us worse at remembering it? Think of something you do every day in the same way, like brushing your teeth.

Also Read | Ireland Baldwin opens up about coffee-triggered anxiety: 'Currently writing this from the bathroom floor'

You can probably remember whether you brushed your teeth this morning, but can you really remember the difference between the time you brushed your teeth this morning, and the time you brushed them yesterday? Or the day before that? Situations like brushing your teeth are hard to remember as individual events because they have so much in common.

They are therefore easy to confuse.

Events which are distinct from one another are more memorable. The less events overlap in terms of their content, the less chance there is to confuse one event for another, or mix up what happened in those different events.

Older people have more material to navigate when trying to access a memory, which can compound the errors we make in memory as we age. (Photo by Thinkstock Images)

For example, it's easy to remember what happened when you took the dog for a walk and what happened when you went swimming separately. They're highly unlikely to be confused because they share so little in common.

So, if older people are less focused when they put things into their memories, then their memories will be "cluttered" with information that doesn't matter.

Also Read |Dysmenorrhea: Know all about the types, risk factors, and treatment

This clutter means there will be more chance for information from one memory to overlap with information from another. This in turn means there will be more chance for memories to be confused with one another, making it harder to remember what happened.

A previous study, which was included in the review, shows this theory in action. An older and a younger group were shown two types of objects (faces and scenes) and told which type of object they would be tested on.

The older adults exhibited higher levels of brain activity when they were shown the irrelevant objects later on. Further, the more brain activity they demonstrated in response to these irrelevant objects, the poorer their memory for the objects they were trying to remember.

Also Read |Hoarding: People with ADHD are more likely to have problems, says new research  
The review found that not only do older adults add clutter to their memory by taking in too much information from the environment, but they also accumulate information from knowledge gained over many years.

This means older people have more material to navigate when trying to access a memory, which can compound the errors we make in memory as we age.

According to the researchers, evidence suggests that older people demonstrate preserved, and at times enhanced, creativity as a result of their “enriched memories”.

Also Read |Mental health in India: Community-based interventions as the answer to India’s mental health burden

When we are faced with a novel problem, sometimes we need to come up with a creative solution. This can involve bringing together bits of knowledge we have that may not be obviously connected, or remembering similar (though not identical) previous experiences which might be relevant.

The “clutter” in an older person’s memory might be a strength in this process.

Being able to make connections between apparently unrelated memories could allow them to find creative solutions to problems by drawing on a much bigger range of experience.

So perhaps we can stop seeing ageing and the inevitable memory decline that comes with it as only a bad thing.

## **Effective alternative therapies**

**Effective alternative therapies to help manage work-from-home breakdowns  
WFH fatigue is real, so here are some simple tips to beat it. (The Indiann  
Express:20220328)**

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/effective-alternative-therapies-help-manage-work-from-home-breakdowns-7831496/>

work from home Offices are planned and built to support work for hours on end with designated workstations; WFH is not. (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)

The work-from-home (WFH) phenomenon, that became common amid the COVID-19 pandemic, changed the way we did things before. The trend not only disrupted the work-life balance for many but also created a stressful environment at most homes. “When the pandemic struck, most people didn’t even have seating arrangements suitable for long working hours, and it affected the physical and mental well-being of home workers. Hence, health complaints — chiefly relating to aches — developed due to the said conditions and has now become an endemic of massive proportions for WFH workers. Now currently in the hybrid mode of work, it is important to balance our health with both the models,” said Dr Deepak Mittal, Founder, Divine Soul Yoga.

ALSO READ | Tips for maintaining eye health amid work from home  
Why is WFH ache-central?

Offices are planned and built to support work for hours on end with designated workstations; WFH is not. “The first thing to go when you’re working at home is your posture. While at office, there’re ergonomic chairs to support your back, at home several of us are parked at our dining, beds or study table-chair sets, neither of which supports your back and the tables are too high or low to work comfortably at—so pains of the back (41.2% of home workers complain of low back pain), shoulder, neck (23.5% of home workers complain of it) as also dry eye syndrome and other issues, text neck syndrome, stress headaches, and the resultant weight gain are very common. This is all of this adding up to a WFH breakdown,” he explained.

The shift to WFH is disconcerting; approximately 19% of home workers reported chronic feelings of extreme isolation and loneliness, which cause deterioration of mental well being. In addition, workloads have increased leading to frequent bouts of anxiety, stress and burnouts.

How alternative therapies help

Alternative therapies like yoga and meditation along with eating superfoods soothe our minds and body. “Getting in touch with your personal peace and combining that to a healthy diet along with adequate amounts of rest and sleep is what will turn around a breakdown into a mental breakthrough,” he said.

Easy tips on dealing with WFH fatigue

WFH fatigue is real, so here are some simple tips to beat it.

Practice mindfulness: Stay in the moment; when you stay attentive to your current circumstances it’s unlikely that thoughts of the past or future can stress you.

Take breaks: Eye doctors say take a break for 20 seconds after every 20 minutes of work. Just like that, take a mental vacation from your present circumstances every now and then—you will find that when you return, you're feeling so refreshed.

Dedicate a separate area for your workstation: When the lockdowns were announced, many people would wake up and log in to work from their beds. It was noted that these people were also the ones who complained of major insomniac episodes. This happened because their minds were confused about what to associate the bed with—work or sleep. Hence, try to have a small dedicated place of work, which's far away from your sleeping chambers and comfortable at the same time.

Practice meditation, Pranayama and Yoga: You'll find nothing better than these three factors to help you calm and soothe your mind and align it with inner peace. Simple practice like Surya Namaskar can strengthen bones, fight insomnia, bring down blood sugar levels and improve metabolism & blood circulation.

Consume Superfoods: Balanced and nutritious foods not only keep you healthy but also improve your productivity. Do not skip your food, eat on time and eat healthy snacks. Sabja Seeds, Flax seeds, Ginger, turmeric & berries are some of the superfoods which can be consumed for healthy bones & balanced mind.

## **Sweeteners**

**Sweeteners may be linked to increased cancer risk, says new research  
Sweeteners can also have a profound effect on the bacteria that live in our gut (The Indiann Express:20220328)**

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/sweeteners-linked-cancer-risk-new-research-7836069/>

sugar and cancer, sugar intake, can excessive intake of sugar cause cancer, what is the connection between sugar and cancer, blood sugar, cancer, health, indian express newsCancer cells multiply "very fast" and require a lot of "sugar glucose for metabolism". (Photo: Getty/Thinkstock)

Sweeteners have long been suggested to be bad for our health.

Studies have linked consuming too many sweeteners with conditions such as obesity, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. But links with cancer have been less certain.

An artificial sweetener, called cyclamate, that was sold in the US in the 1970s was shown to increase bladder cancer in rats.

Also Read |Effective dietary rules to help control blood glucose in diabetics

However, human physiology is very different from rats, and observational studies failed to find a link between the sweetener and cancer risk in humans.

Despite this, the media continued to report a link between sweeteners and cancer.

But now, a study published in PLOS Medicine which looked at over 100,000 people, has shown that those who consume high levels of some sweeteners have a small increase in their risk of developing certain types of cancer.

To assess their intake of artificial sweeteners, the researchers asked the participants to keep a food diary.

Around half of the participants were followed for more than eight years.

coffee-pexels Sweeteners should be consumed mindfully (Representative photo/Pexels)  
The study reported that aspartame and acesulfame K, in particular, were associated with increased cancer risk especially breast and obesity-related cancers, such as colorectal, stomach and prostate cancers.

This suggests that removing some types of sweeteners from your diet may reduce the risk of cancer.

Cancer risk

Many common foods contain sweeteners. These food additives mimic the effect of sugar on our taste receptors, providing intense sweetness with no or very few calories.

Some sweeteners occur naturally (such as stevia or yacon syrup). Others, such as aspartame, are artificial.

Although they have few or no calories, sweeteners still have an effect on our health.

For example, aspartame turns into formaldehyde (a known carcinogen) when the body digests it. This could potentially see it accumulate in cells and cause them to become cancerous.

Also Read |Why mishri or rock sugar is good for you

Our cells are hard-wired to self-destruct when they become cancerous. But aspartame has been shown to switch off the genes that tell cancer cells to do this.

Other sweeteners, including sucralose and saccharin, have also been shown to damage DNA, which can lead to cancer. But this has only been shown in cells in a dish rather than in a living organism.

Sweeteners can also have a profound effect on the bacteria that live in our gut.

Changing the bacteria in the gut can impair the immune system, which could mean they no longer identify and remove cancerous cells.

But it's still unclear from these animal and cell-based experiments precisely how sweeteners initiate or support cancerous changes to cells.

Many of these experiments would also be difficult to apply to humans because the amount of sweetener was given at much higher doses than a human would ever consume.

The results from previous research studies are limited, largely because most studies on this subject have only observed the effect of consuming sweeteners without comparing against a group that hasn't consumed any sweeteners.

A recent systematic review of almost 600,000 participants even concluded there was limited evidence to suggest heavy consumption of artificial sweeteners may increase the risk of certain cancers.

A review in the BMJ came to a similar conclusion.

Although the findings of this recent study certainly warrant further research, it's important to acknowledge the study's limitations.

First, food diaries can be unreliable because people aren't always honest about what they eat or they may forget what they have consumed.

Although this study collected food diaries every six months, there's still a risk people weren't always accurately recording what they were eating and drinking.

Though the researchers partially mitigated this risk by having participants take photos of the food they ate, people still might not have included all the foods they ate.

Based on current evidence, it's generally agreed that using artificial sweeteners is associated with increased body weight though researchers aren't quite certain whether sweeteners directly cause this to happen.

Although this recent study took people's body mass index into account, it's possible that changes in body fat may have contributed to the development of many of these types of cancers not necessarily the sweeteners themselves.

Finally, the risk of developing cancer in those who consumed the highest levels of artificial sweeteners compared with those who consumed the lowest amounts was modest with only at 13 per cent higher relative risk of developing cancer in the study period.

So although people who consumed the highest amounts of sweetener had an increased risk of developing cancer, this was still only slightly higher than those with the lowest intake.

While the link between sweetener use and diseases, including cancer, is still controversial, it's important to note that not all sweeteners are equal. While sweeteners such as aspartame and saccharin may be associated with ill health, not all sweeteners are.

Stevia, produced from the *Stevia rebaudiana* plant, has been reported to be useful in controlling diabetes and body weight, and may also lower blood pressure.

The naturally occurring sugar alcohol, xylitol, may also support the immune system and digestion.

Both stevia and xylitol have also been shown to protect from tooth decay, possibly because they kill bad oral bacteria.

So the important choice may be not the amount of sweetener you eat but the type you use.

## **COVID-19 vaccination**

### **COVID-19 vaccination | Debate on over efficacy of booster doses (The Indiann Express:20220328)**

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/covid-19-vaccination-debate-on-over-efficacy-of-booster-doses/article65264530.ece>

Booster or natural infection will reduce the chance of another infection for just a few months, they say.

India has opened up COVID-19 vaccine booster dose for its 60-plus population while discussion continues on the merits of providing precaution dose to the general population of those over 18 years. Though the government is yet to make any announcement on the issue, experts and doctors are divided on how many booster doses are needed to minimise the negative outcome of the infection.

Booster doses are given with two objectives — to reduce the chance of getting infection and to reduce the chance of death, in the event of an infection. These