



DAILY NEWS BULLETIN

LEADING HEALTH, POPULATION AND FAMILY WELFARE STORIES OF THE DAY
Tuesday 20220524

NFHS illustrates

Inequality worries bigger than what NFHS illustrates (Hindustan Times:20220524)

<https://epaper.hindustantimes.com/Home/ShareArticle?OrgId=24532013605&imageview=0>

The fifth round of the National Family and Health Survey (NFHS), conducted between June 2019 and May 2021 was among the biggest in India. It was conducted in all of India's 707 districts (as on March 31, 2017) and its sample included 101,839 men, 724,115 women and 636,699 households. NFHS sought information a variety of metrics and issues, making it a rich source of information on the India's economy and society. While summary findings of NFHS-5 were released last year, unit level data – this makes it possible to retrieve information beyond tables given in the report – were only released earlier this month. Based on its analysis of NFHS unit level data, HT's data and political economy team has put together a five-part series data journalism series, which will appear over this week.

India has an inequality problem and it is far sharper than what it is made out to by NFHS data. Here are three charts that explain this.

1 More people own basic assets and amenities now than before

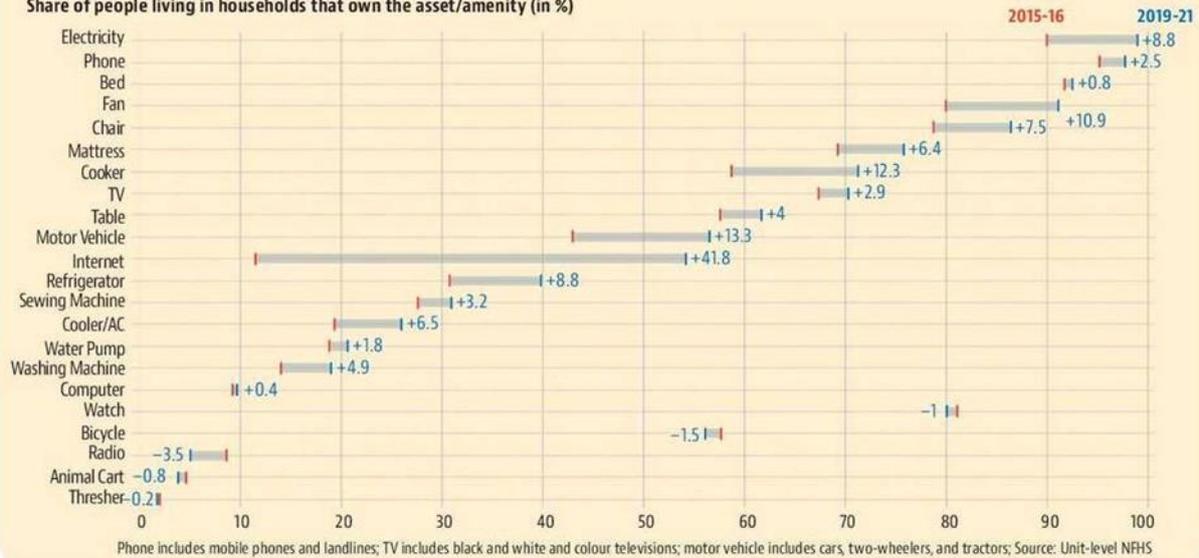
NFHS sought responses from households on ownership of 26 assets and amenities. A comparison of results from the fourth (2015-16) and fifth (2019-21) rounds of NFHS shows that there has been an increase in ownership of all assets except ones which are likely obsolete now. For example, the share of households owning a radio has declined from 8.4% to 4.9%.

Of the 17 of 22 assets (some have been clubbed together for simplicity) that show increase in ownership, the five that show the biggest proportional increase are internet connectivity, washing machines, coolers and air conditioners (NFHS does not differentiate between the two), motor vehicles

(this includes cars, two-wheelers, and tractors), and refrigerators. The five assets that show the least increase are beds, phones, televisions, computers, and tables. To be sure, all the five assets that show the biggest increase were owned by less than 50% people in 2015-16, and the all five assets with the least increase (except computers) were owned by more than 50% back then. However, some of the assets that have shown less growth – such as televisions and computers – have indeed not reached saturation levels. That 93% owned mobile phones even in 2015-16 (this is now 95.5%), may actually explain why growth of computers and televisions is lagging.

CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP OF ASSETS AND AMENITIES

Share of people living in households that own the asset/amenity (in %)



2 Socially disadvantaged classes are now better represented among the richest

The assets shown above are only a subset of assets that NFHS captures. NFHS unit-level files also combine the data on over 130 assets and amenities, assigning more weight to assets which can explain difference in wealth among households the most. This information is used to rank households from the richest to the poorest in each round. This wealth index shows that the proportion of all the traditionally socially disadvantaged class and caste groups – the Scheduled Tribes (STs), the Scheduled Castes (SCs), and the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) – belonging to the richest 20% segment in India has

increased since 2015-16. To be sure, the degree of upward mobility is different for these groups.

The proportion of SCs in the bottom three quintiles has decreased and that in the top two quintiles, increased. The proportion of OBCs, on the other hand, has decreased only in the bottom quintile, but by the biggest degree. Moreover, despite a bigger share of their groups now present among the richest 20%, all three groups remain under-represented in the top 20% relative to their share in population.

SHARE IN WEALTH QUINTILE RELATIVE TO SHARE IN POPULATION



3 Regional inequality has not improved much

If the richest of the country were not geographically concentrated, 20% of the population of each state would belong to the richest quintile. That is clearly not the case. 16 of the 35 states and Union territories (UTs) (for comparison across rounds Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh; and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu have been taken as single territories respectively) had less than 20% of their population in the richest quintile in 2015-16. In eleven of them – the big states among them being Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and

Assam – the share of the richest is now even smaller. However, in five states (Bihar, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Sikkim), the share of the richest has increased. To be sure, Bihar and Odisha still rank 5th and 10th from the bottom on this metric. Since the wealth index distributes the country's population equally into five groups, it is obvious that the increase in share of the rich in some states will lead to a decline in their share in others. However, Karnataka is the only state where the share of the richest has declined from being at the 20% mark in 2015-16 to below it (18.9%) in 2019-21.

SHARE OF STATE'S POPULATION THAT BELONGS TO THE RICHEST 20% IN INDIA

Less than 20% in richest in 2015-16 and proportion decreased further

2019-21 • 2015-16 (in %)

Monkeypox

Monkeypox likely spread by sex at 2 rave parties in Europe: Expert To date, WHO has recorded more than 90 cases of monkeypox in a dozen countries (The Tribune:20220524)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/monkeypox-likely-spread-by-sex-at-2-rave-parties-in-europe-expert-397428>

Monkeypox likely spread by sex at 2 rave parties in Europe: Expert
Photo used for representational purposes only. Reuters

A leading adviser to the World Health Organization described the unprecedented outbreak of the rare disease monkeypox in developed countries as “a random event” that might be explained by risky sexual behaviour at two recent mass events in Europe.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Dr David Heymann, who formerly headed WHO's emergencies department, said the leading theory to explain the spread of the disease was sexual transmission among gay and bisexual men at two raves held in Spain and Belgium.

Monkeypox has not previously triggered widespread outbreaks beyond Africa, where it is endemic in animals. “We know monkeypox can spread when there is close contact with the lesions of someone who is infected, and it looks like sexual contact has now amplified that transmission,” said Heymann.

That marks a significant departure from the disease's typical pattern of spread in central and western Africa, where people are mainly infected by animals like wild rodents and primates and outbreaks have not spilled across borders.

A German government report to lawmakers, obtained by the AP, said it expected to see further cases and that the risk of catching monkeypox “mainly appears to lie with sexual contacts among men.” The four confirmed cases in Germany have been linked to exposure at “party events including on Gran Canaria and in Berlin, where sexual activity took place,” it said.

To date, WHO has recorded more than 90 cases of monkeypox in a dozen countries including Britain, Spain, Israel, France, Switzerland, the U.S. and Australia. On Monday, Denmark announced its first case, Portugal revised its total upwards to 37 and Italy reported one further infection.

Madrid's senior health official said on Monday that the Spanish capital has recorded 30 confirmed cases so far.

Enrique Ruiz Escudero said authorities are investigating possible links between a recent Gay Pride event in the Canary Islands, which drew some 80,000 people, and cases at a Madrid sauna.

Heymann chaired an urgent meeting of WHO's advisory group on infectious disease threats on Friday to assess the ongoing epidemic and said there was no evidence to suggest that monkeypox might have mutated into a more infectious form.

Monkeypox typically causes fever, chills, rash, and lesions on the face or genitals. It can be spread through close contact with an infected person or their clothing or bedsheets, but sexual transmission has not yet been documented.

Most people recover from the disease within several weeks without requiring hospitalization. Vaccines against smallpox, a related disease, are also effective in preventing monkeypox and some antiviral drugs are being developed.

In recent years, the disease has been fatal in up to 6% of infections, but no deaths have been reported among the current cases.

WHO said confirmed cases have so far been the less severe West African group of monkeypox viruses and appeared to be linked to a virus that was first detected in exported cases from Nigeria to Britain, Israel and Singapore in 2018-2019.

The UN agency said the outbreak is “a highly unusual event” and said the fact that cases are being seen in so many different countries suggests the disease may have been silently spreading for some time.

The agency's Europe director warned that as summer begins across the continent, mass gatherings, festivals and parties could accelerate the spread of monkeypox.

Other scientists have pointed out that it will be difficult to disentangle whether it is sex itself or the close contact related to sex that has driven the recent spread of monkeypox across Europe.

“By nature, sexual activity involves intimate contact, which one would expect to increase the likelihood of transmission, whatever a person's sexual orientation and irrespective of the mode of transmission,” said Mike Skinner, a virologist at Imperial College London.

On Sunday, the chief medical adviser of Britain's Health Security Agency, Dr Susan Hopkins, said she expected more monkeypox cases to be identified in the country “on a daily basis.” UK officials have said “a notable proportion” of the cases in Britain and Europe have been in young men with no history of travel to Africa and who are gay, bisexual or have sex with men.

Authorities in Portugal and Spain also said their cases were in men who mostly had sex with other men and whose infections were picked up when they sought help for lesions at sexual health clinics.

Heymann, who is also a professor of infectious diseases at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, said the monkeypox outbreak was likely a random event that might be traceable to a single infection.

“It's very possible there was somebody who got infected, developed lesions on the genitals, hands or somewhere else, and then spread it to others when there was sexual or close, physical contact,” Heymann hypothesised. “And then there were these international events that seeded

the outbreak around the world, into the US and other European countries.” He emphasised that the disease was unlikely to trigger widespread transmission.

“This is not COVID,” he said. “We need to slow it down, but it does not spread in the air and we have vaccines to protect against it.” Heymann said studies should be conducted rapidly to determine if monkeypox could be spread by people without symptoms and that populations at risk of the disease should take precautions to protect themselves.

Cell-based therapy

Cell-based therapy shows promise against Type-1 diabetes

In Type 1 diabetes, immune system mistakenly destroys the cells within islets so patients have to take insulin by injection (The Tribune:20220524)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/cell-based-therapy-shows-promise-against-type-1-diabetes-397433>

Cell-based therapy shows promise against Type-1 diabetes

Photo for representational purpose only. File

An islet cell transplant programme developed by a team of Canadian researchers is a safe, reliable and life-changing treatment for people with hard-to-control Type 1 diabetes.

Islets are clusters of cells which produce insulin, a hormone that allows the body to control the flow of energy from food, storing the excess after meals and releasing it to allow the body to function between meals.

In Type 1 diabetes, the immune system mistakenly destroys the cells within islets so patients have to take insulin by injection. Patients with hard-to-control or “brittle” diabetes face life-threatening low or high blood sugars and long-term complications.

“We’ve shown very clearly that islet transplantation is an effective therapy for patients with difficult-to-control Type 1 diabetes,” said James Shapiro, Professor of surgery at the University of Alberta. “This long-term safety data gives us confidence that we are doing the right thing.” “This data shows really strong proof that cell-based therapies can deliver a meaningful and transformative impact for people with diabetes,” added Peter Senior, director of the Alberta Diabetes Institute at the varsity.

“We are delivering something which all other treatments for diabetes don’t deliver—there’s a comfort, a predictability, a stability to blood sugar levels that don’t exist with anything else.” In the study published in *The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology*, the researchers report on patient survival, graft survival, insulin independence and protection from life-threatening low blood sugars for 255 patients who have received a total of more than 700 infusions of islets at the University of Alberta Hospital between March 1999 and October 2019.

The results showed that 70 per cent of the grafts survived for a median time of nearly six years, 79 per cent of the transplant recipients were able to stop taking insulin after two or more islet infusions and a median time of 95 days following the first transplant.

About 61 per cent were still insulin-independent a year later, 32 per cent at five years and eight per cent after 20 years, the researchers reported. While most patients had to resume taking insulin injections, the doses were usually much smaller than their original needs and their diabetes control was better.

“Being completely free of insulin is not the main goal,” said Shapiro. “It’s a big bonus, obviously, but the biggest goal for the patient - when their life has been incapacitated by wild, inadequate control of blood sugar and dangerous lows and highs - is being able to stabilise. It is transformational.”— IANS

Covid shots

Pfizer says 3 Covid shots protect children under 5 18 million tots under 5 are the only group in US not yet eligible for Covid-19 vaccination (The Tribune:20220524)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/pfizer-says-3-covid-shots-protect-children-under-5-397409>

Pfizer says 3 Covid shots protect children under 5
Photo for representational purpose only. Reuters file

Three doses of Pfizer’s COVID-19 vaccine offer strong protection for children younger than 5, the company announced Monday.

Pfizer plans to give the data to US regulators later this week in a step toward letting the littlest kids get the shots.

The news comes after months of anxious waiting by parents desperate to vaccinate their babies, toddlers and preschoolers, especially as COVID-19 cases once again are rising.

The 18 million tots under 5 are the only group in the US not yet eligible for COVID-19 vaccination.

The Food and Drug Administration has begun evaluating data from rival Moderna, which hopes to begin offering two kid-sized shots by summer.

Pfizer has had a bumpier time figuring out its approach. It aims to give tots an even lower dose — just one-tenth of the amount adults receive — but discovered during its trial that two shots didn’t seem quite strong enough for preschoolers.

So researchers gave a third shot to more than 1,600 youngsters — from age 6 months to 4 years — during the winter surge of the omicron variant.

In a press release, Pfizer and its partner BioNTech said the extra shot did the trick, revving up tots' levels of virus-fighting antibodies enough to meet FDA criteria for emergency use of the vaccine with no safety problems.

Preliminary data suggested the three-dose series is 80% effective in preventing symptomatic COVID-19, the companies said, but they cautioned the calculation is based on just 10 cases diagnosed among study participants by the end of April.

The study rules state that at least 21 cases are needed to formally determine effectiveness, and Pfizer promised an update as soon as more data is available.

The companies already had submitted data on the first two doses to the FDA, and BioNTech's CEO, Dr. Ugur Sahin, said the final third-shot data would be submitted this week.

“The study suggests that a low, 3-microgram dose of our vaccine, carefully selected based on tolerability data, provides young children with a high level of protection against the recent COVID-19 strains,” he said in a statement.

What's next? FDA vaccine chief Dr. Peter Marks has pledged the agency will “move quickly without sacrificing our standards” in evaluating tot-sized doses from both Pfizer and Moderna.

The agency has set tentative dates next month for its scientific advisers to publicly debate data from each company.

Moderna is seeking to be the first to vaccinate the littlest kids. It submitted data to the FDA saying tots develop high levels of virus-fighting antibodies after two shots that contain a quarter of the dose given to adults.

The Moderna study found effectiveness against symptomatic COVID-19 was 40% to 50% during the omicron surge, much like for adults who've only had two vaccine doses.

Complicating Moderna's progress, the FDA so far has allowed its vaccine to be used only in adults.

The FDA is expected to review Moderna's data on both the youngest age group, plus its study of teens and elementary-age children. Other countries already have expanded Moderna's shot to kids as young as 6.

While COVID-19 generally isn't as dangerous to youngsters as to adults, some children do become severely ill or even die.

And the omicron variant hit children especially hard, with those under 5 hospitalised at higher rates than at the peak of the previous delta surge.

It's not clear how much demand there will be to vaccinate the youngest kids. Pfizer shots for 5- to 11-year-olds opened in November, but only about 30% of that age group have gotten the recommended initial two doses.

Last week, US health authorities said elementary-age children should get a booster shot just like everyone 12 and older is supposed to get, for the best protection against the latest coronavirus variants. AP

Midwifery training institute in Patiala to stem C-sections

Midwifery training institute in Patiala to stem C-sections A National Midwifery Training Institute has been set up at Mata Kaushalya School of Nursing in Patiala. (The Tribune:20220524)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/punjab/midwifery-training-institute-in-patiala-to-stem-c-sections-397150>

With an aim to reduce the number of Caesarean section (C-section) deliveries and increase the number of natural births, a National Midwifery Training Institute by the Government of India has been commissioned at Mata Kaushalya School of Nursing in Patiala.

According to the National Family Health Survey-5, the rate of C-sections has increased from 24.6 to 38.5 per cent in Punjab. Also, there is a huge shortage of gynaecologists across the state which is one of the major issues highlighted by the survey. The Centre has decided to introduce a dedicated cadre of professional midwives as Nurse Practitioner in Midwifery (NPM) across the country. For this, 16 National Midwifery Training institutes were identified across the nation, where training would be provided to midwifery educators who, in turn, would develop the cadre of NPMs.

Two International Midwifery Educators from New Zealand and Kenya have also been brought in by the state government in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), an international organisation to impart training. International midwifery educators will take up the first batch of 30 midwifery educators at state level for an 18-month course. The first midwifery training programme at the institute is likely to start in June in Punjab, for which in-service candidates will be enrolled. Applications are being invited from eligible candidates from nursing schools. The eligibility criteria to appear for the examination is BSc and MSc Nursing with five-year experience.

Dr Areet Kaur, Director, Health and Family Welfare, said with the trained staff, the rate of C-sections would drop. Maternal and Child Health State Programme Officer Dr Inderdeep said: “The initiative will promote natural birth with respectful maternity care and also take the load off gynaecologists.”

Rate up from 24.6% to 38.5%

According to the National Family Health Survey-5, the rate of C-sections has increased from 24.6 to 38.5 per cent in Punjab

A National Midwifery Training Institute by the Government of India has been commissioned at Mata Kaushalya School of Nursing in Patiala
At the institutes, training would be provided to midwifery educators who, in turn, would develop the cadre of Nurse Practitioner in Midwifery
Tribune Shorts

vitamin D

Scientists make way for gene-edited tomatoes as vegan source of vitamin D Tomato leaves naturally contain one of the building blocks of vitamin D3, called 7-DHC (The Tribune:20220524)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/science-technology/scientists-make-way-for-gene-edited-tomatoes-as-vegan-source-of-vitamin-d-397435>

Scientists make way for gene-edited tomatoes as vegan source of vitamin D
Photo for representational purpose only. iStock

If British scientists have their way, two medium-sized tomatoes a day could keep the doctor away.

A research team led by scientists at the John Innes Centre in Norwich has edited the genetic makeup of tomatoes to become a robust source of vitamin D, which regulates nutrients like calcium that are imperative to keeping bones, teeth and muscles healthy.

Although vitamin D is created in our bodies after exposure to sunlight, its major source is food, largely in dairy and meat.

Low vitamin D levels -- associated with a plethora of conditions from cancer to cardiovascular disease -- affect roughly 1 billion people globally, the researchers said.

Tomato leaves naturally contain one of the building blocks of vitamin D3, called 7-DHC. Vitamin D3 is considered best at raising vitamin D levels in the body.

Scientists used the Crispr tool - which is designed to work like a pair of genetic scissors - to tweak the plant's genome such that 7-DHC substantially accumulates in the tomato fruit, as well as the leaves.

When ultraviolet light was shined on leaves and sliced fruit for an hour, one tomato contained the equivalent levels of vitamin D as two medium-sized eggs or 28 grams (1 ounce) of tuna, the researchers wrote in a paper published in the journal Nature Plants.

Most vitamin D3 supplements come from lanolin, which is extracted from sheep's wool. Since the sheep stays alive, it works for vegetarians, but not vegans.

Lichen is considered a vegan source of vitamin D3, but the data underpinning its effectiveness is limited - and it is also expensive, said Susan Lanham-New, head of the department of nutritional sciences at the University of Surrey. IANS

Mental health

Kids who play adventurously may have better mental health

The study seeks to test theories that adventurous play offers learning opportunities that help build resilience in children, thereby helping to prevent mental health problems, say researchers (The Tribune:20220524)

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/kids-who-play-adventurously-may-have-better-mental-health-396869>

Kids who play adventurously may have better mental health
Photo for representational purpose only. Tribune file

Children who spend more time playing adventurously may have lower symptoms of anxiety and depression, finds a new study.

The study, published in *Child Psychiatry and Human Development*, indicates that children, aged 5-11, who spent more time playing outside had fewer "internalising problems", characterised as anxiety and depression. Those children were also more positive during the first lockdown.

"We are more concerned than ever about children's mental health, and our findings highlight that we might be able to help protect children's mental health by ensuring they have plentiful opportunities for adventurous play," said researcher Helen Dodd from the University of Exeter, who led the study.

"This is really positive because play is free, instinctive and rewarding for children, available to everyone, and does not require special skills. We now urgently need to invest in and protect natural spaces, well-designed parks and adventure playgrounds, to support the mental health of our children," Dodd added.

The researchers said that the study sought to test theories that adventurous play offers learning opportunities that help build resilience in children, thereby helping to prevent mental health problems.

For the study, the research team surveyed nearly 2,500 parents of children aged 5-11 years. Parents completed questions about their child's play, their general mental health (pre-Covid) and their mood during the first Covid-19 lockdown.

The research was carried out with two groups of parents, a group of 427 parents living in Northern Ireland and a nationally representative group of 1,919 parents living in the UK. —

Insomnia

Expert shares simple diet tips to relieve constipation, insomnia

In an Instagram video, Ayurvedic practitioner Dr Mihir Khatri shared a few tips that will help regulate bowel movement, and also improve sleep 'within a week' (Indian Express:20220524)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/relieve-constipation-insomnia-ayurveda-week-diet-tips-7840496/>

constipationCount on these ayurvedic tips to relieve constipation, insomnia (Source: Pexels)
Owing to hectic schedules and unhealthy eating habits, certain lifestyle conditions like constipation, and insomnia are becoming increasingly popular. While there are medicines to help overcome the same, why not opt for a natural and sustainable cure that comes with no side effects?

Also Read |Yoga asanas and tips to relieve constipation, according to Ayurveda

In an Instagram video, Ayurvedic practitioner Dr Mihir Khatri shared a few tips that will help regulate bowel movement, and also improve sleep.

Here's what he suggested.

*Include papaya in your breakfast. Papayas contain papain enzymes which are good for abdominal disorders and help to clear bowels.

*Have 5-10 black raisins that have been soaked overnight in the morning or evening. Doing so will help clear motion and you will also get good sleep, he said.

*Have vegetable soup for dinner, as it is rich in fibre that helps clear bowels. Avoid raw vegetables as it can lead to gas formation.

ghee Ghee with milk at bedtime can help you with insomnia and constipation (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)

*Have a cup of warm milk with two teaspoon cow ghee at bedtime. "Having ghee doesn't increase cholesterol, or fat. This helps lubricate the intestines, and clear the bowels in the morning," he said.

Eye disease

From colour testing to peripheral vision: Mandatory eye tests for those over 30

Regular eye check-ups are even more important if you are suffering from diabetes, high blood pressure, or have a family history of eye disease (Indian Express:20220524)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/mandatory-eye-tests-over-30-7818786/>

eyesight Long working hours has been known to cause some strain in the eyes, and in the pandemic, find out here what you can do for your eyesight (Photo: Getty/Thinkstock)

Having your eyes checked regularly is extremely important, and even more, after you turn 30 and wear eyeglasses or contact lenses. This is because you need to keep up with the changes in your vision, if any, and ensure no new problem is beginning to develop.

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Some of these problems may not have physical symptoms until way later, making it all the important to visit an expert, said Dr Neeraj Sanduja, MBBS, MS – Ophthalmology, Ophthalmologist, Eye surgeon.

“These eye tests are even more important if you are suffering from diabetes, high blood pressure, or have a family history of eye disease. Of course, in between examinations, if you notice any changes or have injured your eye in any way then you must contact your eye doctor as soon as possible,” he said.

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eye health Eye exams are even more important if you are suffering from diabetes, high blood pressure, or have a family history of eye disease. (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)

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During a routine eye exam, a doctor will review your personal and family history for any eye disease to see if you're at any special risk for eye problems, and then conduct some of the following eye tests:

1. Vision: The doctor will check for myopia (nearsightedness), hyperopia (farsightedness), and also presbyopia or astigmatism.

2. Eye muscles coordination: During this, the doctor will move light in a set pattern to check your ability to use both eyes together.

Also Read |Know the many healing properties of cardamom and how you can add it to your diet

3. Color testing: The doctor will ask you to describe some figures in a series of illustrations made up of numerous coloured circles which will help to test your ability to differentiate colour.

4. Pupil's response to light: For this, the doctor will shine a light on your pupils and notice the reaction.

World Health Organization, report, indianexpress.com, indianexpress, blindness, vision report, world sight day, cataract report, glaucoma, If you notice any changes or have injured your eye in any way then you must contact your eye doctor as soon as possible. (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)

5. Fluid pressure measurement: The expert will measure the pressure of your eyes using a tonometer. High pressure can be an early indicator of glaucoma or other diseases.

6. Eyelid's function and health: The doctor will examine the eyelids inside and out.

7. Peripheral vision: In this, the doctor will move an object to the end of your vision to make sure you can see it.

8. The interior and back of the eye: The doctor will use an instrument called ophthalmoscope to see through to the retina and your optic nerve at the back of your eye as this is where clues to many diseases first show up.

glaucoma, eyesight, vision problem, glaucoma treatment, indian express To ensure better vision as you get older, have regular eye tests, wear prescribed glasses and adopt a healthy lifestyle. (Photo: Thinkstock Images)

To ensure better vision as you get older, do these things:

- Regular eye tests
- Wear prescribed glasses
- Adopt a healthy lifestyle
- Do not smoke
- Ensure you glucose, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels are normal: These diseases are not only linked to cardiovascular disorders but also increase the risk of loss of vision due to adverse changes in the blood vessels of the eyes

Fruity alert

Fruity alert: Here's what makes peach or aadu a summer 'superstar'
One of summer's fruit superstars is peach that abounds in essential nutrients and confers some fantastic benefits for human health, said nutritionist Lovneet Batra on Instagram (Indian Express:20220524)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/peaches-summer-fruits-health-benefits-7900971/>

peachesPeaches have many health benefits (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)
Experts regularly advise consuming seasonal fruits and vegetables. And one summer fruit which is known to be extremely beneficial is the peach or aadu. Taking to Instagram, nutritionist Lovneet Batra shared a detailed note on why one much include this fruit in their diet.

Also on summer fruits |Health alert: Nutritionist shares the 'truth about eating mangoes'
"Summer produce is, objectively, the best. One of the summer's fruit superstars is peach or aadu that abounds in essential nutrients and confers some fantastic benefits for human health," she said.

She listed down the following benefits.

🍑 May aid in digestion

Peaches, being a rich source of natural dietary fibre, help in regulating appetite. Furthermore, they facilitate the movement of processed and unprocessed food particles through the gut, reducing the occurrence of constipation.

🍑 May reduce allergy symptoms

When your body is exposed to an allergen, it releases histamine, or chemicals made by the immune system to help rid your body of the allergen. Histamines are part of your body's defence system and trigger allergy symptoms like sneezing, itching, or coughing. Peaches may help reduce allergy symptoms by preventing the release of histamines in the blood.

Migrain

All you need to know about migraine attacks and triggers
Nonpharmacological therapies like deep breathing, yoga and relaxation techniques are found to be effective in preventing migraine, says a doctor (Indian Express:20220524)

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/migraine-pain-headache-attacks-triggers-treatment-7886223/>

migraine, migraine headache, migraine pain, how to treat migraine pain, migraine triggers, what triggers migraine pain, chronic migraine, indian express news
In women, the frequency of migraine can increase during menstruation, possibly due to fall in the hormone levels (estrogen). (Photo: Getty/Thinkstock)

Migraine is a common health issue, affecting 1 in every 7 people globally, three times more common in women than men. But, what causes it? According to Dr Lakshmi Krishna V, consultant neurology at Kauvery Hospitals, Electronic City, Bengaluru, migraine is a neurological disease wherein a person experiences moderate to severe one-sided headache that may last for 4-72 hours, and is often associated with nausea, vomiting, dizziness and extreme sensitivity to light and sound.

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“Most people with migraine will have only a few attacks per month, and 2 per cent of total cases are chronic migraine cases, wherein people may experience headache for more than 15 days a month,” she explains.

Migraine triggers

Cheese, wine, chocolate, nuts, processed meals, certain odours, bright light, sleep disturbances, menstruation, menopause, travel, weather changes, and stress can all trigger migraine pain.

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Migraine phases

The doctor explains that an episode of migraine exhibits 4 phases: first is the prodrome phase, which happens a few hours to days before a headache. During this phase, the person will be irritable, depressed and will have increased yawning, food cravings.

Second one is the aura phase, where a person sees flashes of light in front of their eyes, sees zig-zag lines, feels numbness and tingling in the body. Migraines can occur with and without aura.

The third phase is the headache phase lasting for 4-72 hours and the fourth phase is migraine hangout phase in which the person will be generally unwell, irritable, and confused.

migraine, migraine headache, migraine pain, how to treat migraine pain, migraine triggers, what triggers migraine pain, chronic migraine, indian express news Migraine is a neurological disease wherein a person experiences moderate to severe one-sided headache. (Photo: Getty/Thinkstock)

“In women, the frequency of migraine can increase during menstruation, possibly due to fall in the hormone levels (estrogen). In 2/3 of cases, migraine decreases during menopause. But in a few patients, it can begin after menopause,” she says.

Did you know that children also get migraines?

“For them, it is usually presented as cyclical vomiting syndrome or abdominal migraine with no headache. Colic in infants may be the earliest sign of migraine. Children with one parent suffering from migraine have 50 per cent chance of getting migraine, and if both parents are affected, then the chances are 75 per cent.”

ALSO READ |Does Covid-19 affect the brain? Answer is a resounding yes...focus on nutrition, physical activity and positive outlook

Treatment

Migraine is a benign condition, says the doctor, adding that reassurance is the first part of treatment. “Avoidance of triggers is key. It includes quitting smoking, avoiding alcohol, reducing excessive caffeine, and avoiding birth control pills in women with migraines.”

Nonpharmacological therapies like deep breathing, yoga and relaxation techniques are also found to be effective in preventing migraine. “It is recommended to maintain a migraine diary to understand the correlation between triggers and onsets to improve the treatment,” the doctor concludes.

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Drinking Water

Why you must drink water stored in a clay pot or ‘matka’ (Indian Express:20220524)

In case you have not had water saved in a clay pot, also referred to as matki or even matka in Hindi, then you're passing up lots of health benefits, Ayurvedic expert Dr Nitika Kohli wrote on Instagram

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/drinking-water-storied-clay-earthen-pots-matka-health-benefits-7917136/>

earthen pot Drinking water from an earthen pot curbs acidity and boosts metabolism, according to Ayurveda. (Source: Wikimedia Commons)

Clay pot, or ‘matka’ as it is commonly known, is a staple in many Indian households, especially during the summer season. Apart from being refreshing and cooling, water stored in a clay pot or bottle is also known to be extremely beneficial.

“Having water from a clay pot is not new to a lot of people because many of them know the health benefits of drinking water from clay pots. Yet, in case you have not had water saved in a clay pot, also referred to as matki or even matka in Hindi, then you’re passing up lots of health benefits,” Ayurvedic expert Dr Nitika Kohli wrote on Instagram, sharing the many benefits of drinking water stored in a clay container.

Take a look.

Keeps your metabolism intact

Drinking water from a clay pot “helps in improving metabolism“. “The body’s natural metabolic system is boosted with water stored in a clay pot,” the expert said.

Keeps water naturally cool

Forget refrigerating your water, store them in clay bottles or pots for “perfect temperature levels”. It hydrates water properly, gives a cooling effect and is gentle on the throat.

WHO

Dismayed and concerned, Health Minister tells WHO assembly (The Hindu:20220524)

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/dismayed-and-concerned-health-minister-tells-who-assembly/article65454778.ece>

India’s main grouse has been that the WHO ignored data officially collated by the Centre Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said at the World Health Assembly in Geneva, at the headquarters of the World Health Organization (WHO), that India was “dismayed and concerned” over the WHO’s recent exercise on all cause excess mortality. India’s main grouse has been that the WHO ignored data that was officially collated by the Centre.

On May 5, the WHO said that there were likely 4.7 million deaths, directly or indirectly attributable to COVID-19 in India in 2020 and 2021. These are the highest, by far, for any country, and comprised nearly a third of the 15 million such deaths globally. India officially estimated only 4.8 lakh cumulative deaths linked to COVID-19 as of December 2021, which implies that the WHO estimate was nearly 10 times the government count.

Dr. Mandaviya in his address said that the Central Council of Health and Family Welfare, a representative body of Health Ministers from all States within India, had passed a unanimous resolution asking him to convey their “collective disappointment and concern” with WHO’s approach in this regard.

While India has officially contested the WHO's excess deaths estimates, this is the first time that it has raised the matter at an international podium.

“There is a need to ensure centrality of the WHO in global architecture and increase assessed contribution to WHO in a phased manner, but that should be linked to an accountability framework, value for money approach and genuine engagement with Member States,” Dr. Mandaviya remarked, “

Excess deaths or mortality is calculated as the difference between the number of deaths that have occurred and the number that would be expected in the absence of the pandemic, based on data from earlier years. Excess mortality includes deaths associated with COVID-19 directly (due to the disease) or indirectly (due to the pandemic's impact on health systems and society).

Days before the WHO publicised its estimates earlier this month, India made public birth and death registration data from 2020 that reported 4.75 lakh excess deaths from all causes in 2020 over 2019. This data is from the Civil Registration System (CRS) that only counts deaths registered and doesn't break down causes of death. The total number of deaths, from all causes, in 2020 was 81.2 lakh. The Health Ministry reported only 1.49 lakh COVID-19 deaths in 2020. The WHO, on the other hand, has estimated nearly 8.2 lakh excess deaths from all causes, or twice the official number.

In the context of pandemic deaths, India has accused the WHO of using mathematical modelling to estimate deaths for India using parameters from reports such as the Global Health Estimates, test positivity data, etc., that didn't accurately reflect the Indian situation and ignored official death estimates.

Scientists from the WHO have countered these points by stating that they relied on official data from the CRS, as well as reports that cited data accessed by Right to Information requests. They have said that they didn't use the estimates that the Indian government has claimed they used and that they relied on official data from 17 States and one Union Territory, compared death reporting trends from previous years in these regions, and then estimated deaths for months where data wasn't officially available.

Monkeypox

Biden says monkeypox cases something to be concerned about (The Hindu:20220524)

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/biden-says-monkeypox-cases-something-to-be-concerned-about/article65447546.ece>

President Joe Biden says cases of monkeypox are “something that everybody should be concerned about”

President Joe Biden said Sunday that recent cases of monkeypox that have been identified in Europe and the United States were something “to be concerned about.”

In his first public comments on the disease, Biden added: “It is a concern in that if it were to spread it would be consequential.”

Hepatitis

Mexico reports first death of child from mysterious severe hepatitis (The Hindu:20220524)

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/mexico-reports-first-death-of-child-from-mysterious-severe-hepatitis/article65447467.ece>

Mexican authorities confirmed on Friday the first death of a child from a severe form of hepatitis with unknown origin in the country, marking the first death in Latin America as cases spread worldwide.

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Please write complete sentences. Do not type comments in all capital letters, or in all lower case letters, or using abbreviated text. (example: u cannot substitute for you, d is not 'the', n is not 'and').

We may remove hyperlinks within comments.

Please use a genuine email ID and provide your name, to avoid rejection.

BP treatment

India registers success with BP treatment, control (The Hindu:20220524)

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/india-registers-success-with-bp-treatment-control/article65439102.ece>

The India Hypertension Control Initiative, started in 2018, has been expanded to more than 100 districts

Cardiovascular diseases (CVD) are the leading cause of death among adults in India. One of the major drivers of heart attack and stroke is untreated high blood pressure or hypertension. Hypertension is a silent killer as most patients do not have any symptoms.

India has more than 200 million people with hypertension, and only 14.5% of individuals with hypertension are on treatment. Unlike many other diseases,

Vaccination centres

Vaccination centres must not insist on any document of foreign travel for precaution dose' (The Hindu:20220524)

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/vaccination-centres-must-not-insist-on-any-document-of-foreign-travel-for-precaution-dose/article65439272.ece>

Centre urges States to significantly expedite pace of full vaccination coverage by saturating all eligible beneficiaries and adopt “First Expiry First Out” principle while using vaccines
The Union Health Ministry on Friday flagged concern over the considerably slow pace of COVID-19 vaccination across the States and urged them to significantly expedite the pace of full vaccination coverage by saturating all eligible beneficiaries and adopt a “First Expiry First Out” principle while using vaccines.

The Ministry directed that under no circumstances should any vaccination centre or any State government insist on any documentary proof of foreign travel for those who are seeking the precaution dose ahead of their travel abroad.