

08-12-2022

iNCOVACC Vaccine

Why in Newspapers?

Recently, India's biotechnology company Bharat Biotech has launched **iNCOVACC**, a new vaccine for Corona. This is the **world's first intranasal vaccine**. This vaccine has been approved by the **Central Drugs Standard Control Organization**. It is the **first intranasal vaccine in the world to be approved for both primary series and booster doses**.

Quick Issue?

- India has achieved a new achievement in manufacturing Corona vaccine. This new vaccine will be given through drops in the nose instead of injection.

Other Key Facts?

Bharat Biotech

- Bharat Biotech International Limited is an Indian multinational biotechnology company headquartered in the city of **Hyderabad**, engaged in drug discovery, drug development, vaccine manufacturing, production of bio-therapeutics, pharmaceuticals and healthcare products. It was founded in 1996 by **Krishna Ella**.
- Establishment date:** 1996
- Founders:** Krishna Ella, Suchitra Ella
- Associate Company:** Chiron Behring Vaccines Private Limited

Historical Background?

- This vaccine has been approved for a **primary 2 dose schedule and a heterologous booster dose**.
- In heterologous boosting, an individual is injected with a different vaccine. The booster dose is different from the dose used for the primary dose.
- It is an **adenovirus vector vaccine**. Bharat Biotech says the **Nasal Delivery System is designed to be cost-effective in low- and middle-income countries**.
- iNCOVACC has just been granted **emergency approval for restricted use**. Under this, booster doses can be given only to people who are 18 years of age or older.
- Booster dose can also be taken by those who have already taken Covishield or Covaxin vaccine
- The success of this intranasal vaccine was widely tested across the country. The success of this vaccine was evaluated based on the results of three Phase I, II, and III trials.
- This vaccine was tested for safety and immunogenicity on **4000 volunteers at 14 sites across the country**, none of which showed any side effects.
- About the **Central Drugs Standard Control Organization** that has recognized this vaccine. CDSCO is the national regulatory authority under the Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Nutrition Initiatives in India

Why in Newspapers?

Highlighting the recently released **Fifth National Family Health Survey (NFHS-V) 2019-21**, this article brings to the fore the unfinished agenda and the **slow rate of decline in malnutrition in India**.

Quick Issue?

- Malnutrition refers to a deficiency, excess or imbalance in an individual's intake of energy and/or nutrients. The term malnutrition covers 2 broad groups of conditions - undernutrition and overweight.
- Undernutrition includes stunting (low height for age), wasting (low weight for height), underweight (low weight for age) and micronutrient deficiencies or insufficiency (lack of important vitamins and minerals).
- Overweight, obesity and diet related non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer.

Historical Background?

- Malnutrition in India has many dimensions such as calorie deficit, protein starvation and micronutrient deficiencies.
- According to NFHS-V data, the under-five mortality rate is 68.2% due to child malnutrition (35.5% stunted, 67.1% anaemic), a major health problem facing India.

Other Key Facts?

Ways to deal with the nutritional challenge

- **Revised ICDS:** ICDS needs to converge with health, education, water, sanitation and food security at all levels under the supervision of local governments.
- **Collective Approach:** Gram Panchayat, Gram Sabha, women groups and other community organizations need to be made responsible for education, health, nutrition, skills and diversified livelihoods.
- **Nutrition Awareness:** Addressing malnutrition requires not only breastfeeding, behaviour change in favour of natural foods instead of junk food, and clean water and sanitation.
- **Decentralized planning and fund allocation:** Decentralized district plans based on village plans should be prepared to ensure that the Anganwadi does not suffer from any deficit such as no building or no open resource.
- Also, there is a need to drive village-specific planning process with decentralized financial resources.
- **Capacity building:** There is a need to assess the capacity development of caregivers to ensure monitoring of family visits for outcomes to accelerate behaviour change communication.
- **Food and medicine availability:** There is a need to encourage diversity of local food, including millets, and ensure availability of basic medicines and equipment for health care, along with monitoring development in each village.
- Monthly Health Day in each Anganwadi centre needs to be institutionalized with community mobilization and parent participation.



- India is also ranked 107 out of 123 countries in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2022, down from 101 in 2021.
- The GHI also pointed out that the prevalence of undernutrition in India has also increased from 14.6% in 2018-2020 to 16.3% in 2019-2021.
- Malnutrition is an ecological problem that does not occur in isolation. It comes with poverty, disturbed family structure, ignorance and despair.
- **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme:** It was launched in 1975 with the objective of providing food, preschool education, primary health care, immunization, health check-up and referral services to children below the age of 6 years and their mothers.
- **Mid-Day Meal Scheme:** It aims at improving the nutritional level among school children besides increasing enrolment, retention and attendance.
- **National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013:** It assured food and nutritional security for the most vulnerable by making access to food a legal right.
- **Anemia Mukht Bharat Abhiyan:** It was launched in 2018 with an aim to reduce the decline of anaemia by one to three percentage points annually.
- **Poshan Abhiyaan / National Nutrition Mission:** It aims to reduce stunting, undernutrition and anemia (among young children, women and adolescent girls) and reduce low birth weight by 2%, 2%, 3% and 2% per annum respectively have to reduce
- It also aims to bring down stunting among children in the age group 0-6 years from 38.4% to 25% by 2022. It also emphasizes the need for nutrition-sensitive interventions with high impact. Improving coverage of maternal-child health services, access to water, sanitation, diverse diets and hygiene, which indirectly affect the mother, infant and young child.
- **Bharatiya Poshan Krishi Kosh:** It was launched to address the most malnourished centres and develop mechanisms to check the nutritional security of villages.
- **Limitations of Poshan Initiative**
 - **Inadequate financial commitment:** For example, the Poshan 2.0 program has seen a marginal increase in budgetary allocations this year.
 - **Under-utilisation of funds:** For example, 32% of the funds released to states and union territories under the POSHAN Abhiyaan have not been utilised.
 - **Initiatives have been fragmented:** For example, ICDS is lagging behind in the institutional role of local panchayats and communities with limited financial resources.

Expected Questions for Preliminary Exam

Que. When was the first National Nutrition Week celebrated?

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| (a) 1982 | (b) 1980 |
| (c) 1985 | (d) 1990 |

Answer: (a) 1982