**3rd wave imminent in Sept-Oct: Panel to PMO**

Ramp up paediatric infrastructure, expedite vaccination of kids (The Tribune: 20210825)


3rd wave imminent in Sept-Oct: Panel to PMO

Photo for representational purpose only.

An expert panel constituted by the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) has predicted a third Covid-19 wave hitting the country anytime between September and October.

Three likely scenarios based on the level of unlocking

Scenario 1: Third wave may peak in October with 3.2L cases/day

Scenario 2: More virulent variants emerge, 3rd wave may peak in September with 5L cases/day

Scenario 3: It could peak in late October with 2L cases/day

It would, however, not be as severe as predicted by some quarters, it said, adding that there still existed a cause of concern with respect to medical infrastructure, particularly paediatric facilities.

The panel strongly recommended ramping up vaccination at a significant level.

The panel, in its report to the PMO, observed that 7.6 per cent (10.4 crore) people had been fully vaccinated and if the current rate was not increased, the nation could see six lakh cases per day in the next wave.
Antibody that fights many variants identified in US

Antibody that fights many variants identified in US (The Tribune: 20210825)


A health worker collects a swab sample in Jakarta, Indonesia. REUTERS

Researchers have identified an antibody that is highly protective at low doses against a wide range of variants of the SARS-CoV-2 virus which causes Covid. The findings, posted as a pre-proof in the journal Immunity, could help develop new antibody-based therapies that are less likely to lose their potency as the virus mutates. The new antibody attaches to a part of the virus that differs little across the variants, meaning that it is unlikely for resistance to arise at this spot, the researchers said.
“Current antibodies may work against some but not all variants,” said Michael S Diamond, a professor at Washington University School of Medicine in St Louis, US. To find neutralising antibodies, the researchers immunised mice with a key part of the spike protein known as the receptor-binding domain (RBD) to reach the conclusion. — PTI

Lanka lauds India’s help to curb virus

Sri Lanka’s Foreign Minister GL Peiris appreciated India’s support in fighting Covid and also $15 million offer to preserve and promote Buddhist cultural sites in the island nation. PTI

**Covid vaccination appointments on WhatsApp**

**Users can now book Covid vaccination appointments on WhatsApp (The Tribune: 20210825)**


On August 5, MyGov and WhatsApp had introduced the ability for users to download vaccine certificates from the chatbot.

Users can now book Covid vaccination appointments on WhatsApp

Photo for representation only. iStock

WhatsApp on Tuesday said the MyGov Corona Helpdesk on its platform would now allow users to locate their nearest vaccination centre and book their vaccine appointments.

On August 5, MyGov and WhatsApp had introduced the ability for users to download vaccine certificates from the chatbot; and so far, over 32 lakh certificates have been downloaded by users across the country.

"The MyGov Corona Helpdesk on WhatsApp, since its launch in March 2020, has emerged as one of most authentic sources of Covid-related information during the pandemic and served as a critical instrument in fighting the public health crisis for over 41 million users across India," it added.

MyGov CEO Abhishek Singh said the MyGov Corona Helpdesk had been a path-breaking technological solution that benefited millions of citizens across the nation.

"Since its launch, MyGov Corona Helpdesk, enabled with support from Haptik and Turn.io, has evolved into a go-to platform that is not only helping citizens with authentic corona-related information but is now also aiding them in the process of vaccine booking as also finding vaccination centres and slots and downloading vaccination certificates," he added.
It is enabling digital inclusion in the true sense as most people find the AI-based interface enabled on WhatsApp easier to navigate, he further said.

"Our collaboration has unlocked technology's potential to extend benefits to citizens. Judging by the large numbers of people who have placed their trust in the MyGov Corona Helpdesk chatbot and availed themselves of the benefits, this is an important step in our journey to become a digitally empowered country.

“As a platform, we are fully committed to supporting our government's efforts to help fight this pandemic,” WhatsApp Public Policy Director Shivnath Thukral said.

To contact MyGov Corona Helpdesk chatbot, citizens can save the WhatsApp number +91 90131 51515 on their phones; start a chat by typing “Book Slot” and send it to the number. This will generate a six-digit one-time password on the respective mobile phone number.

Users then choose a preferred date and location, based on the PIN code and vaccine type. All users can follow this sequence to get a confirmation of their centre and day of their vaccine appointment. PTI

New Cases (The Asian Age: 20210825)

India logs 25,467 new Covid cases, toll lowest since Mar.

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA
NEW DELHI, AUG. 24

India added 25,467 new Covid-19 cases, while the active cases declined to 3,19,551, comprising 0.68 per cent of the total infections, the lowest since March 2020, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Tuesday.

The total tally of Covid-19 cases has increased to 3,24,74,773.

The death toll has climbed to 4,35,110 with 354 fresh fatalities, according to the data updated at 8 am.

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Tuesday said that Covid-19 vaccine slots can now be booked via WhatsApp.

Elaborating on the process, he said one needs to send “Book Slot” to MyGovIndia Corona Helpdesk on WhatsApp, verify and then follow the requisite steps.


The active cases were the lowest in 156 days, while the national Covid-19 recovery rate has increased to 97.68 per cent, the highest since March 2020, the ministry said. A reduction of 14373 cases has been recorded in the total number of active Covid-19 cases in a span of 24 hours.

Also, 16,47,526 tests were steps...

Also, 16,47,526 tests were conducted across the country to 50,93,91,792.

The daily positivity rate was recorded at 1.94 per cent. It has been less than three per cent for the last 28 days.

The weekly positivity rate was recorded at 1.90 per cent. It has been below three per cent for the last 60 days, according to the ministry. The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 3,17,20,112,
India’s population

On India’s population, let the data speak (The Indian Express: 20210825)


Mohd Shahid, Manoj Kumar Jha write: Fertility rates are reflective of the progress in respective states on schooling, income levels, decline in neonatal and infant mortality rates and increase in the contraceptive prevalence rate.

The old slogan, “Hum do hamare do, woh panch unke pachchees (We are two, we have two; they are five and have 25)” is probably still potent enough to appeal to popular perceptions of “uncontrolled” Muslim population growth — despite scientific evidence to the contrary.

At a critical juncture, when the states and Union territories in India are experiencing a sharp decline in fertility rates, population laws are back in the conversation. Though there is nothing on “record” that these are specifically for Muslims, the writing on the wall is clear. And it is a travesty, given the facts and figures available from government agencies.

The recently released empirical data from the National Family Health Survey 2019-20 (NFHS-5) for 22 states and Union territories provides that except for three states — Bihar, Manipur and Meghalaya — the fertility rates have gone below the replacement level of 2.1 children per woman.

The total fertility rates (TFR) in the Union territories of Lakshwadeep and Jammu & Kashmir, which have sizeable Muslim populations, have gone substantially below the replacement level with 1.4 children per woman. In Jammu & Kashmir, this is on account of a modest percentage of women with 10 or more years of schooling (51.3 per cent), fewer women marrying before the age of 18 years (4.5 per cent), declining infant mortality (20 per 1,000 live births) and more current users of family planning methods (59.8 per cent).

In all the seven Northeastern states, the fertility rates range from 1.1 in Sikkim to 1.9 in Assam, except Manipur (2.2) and Meghalaya (2.9). In nine out of 10 states, fertility rates range from as low as 1.3 in Goa to as high as 1.9 in Gujarat. Among populous states, the TFR has gone down to 1.6 children in West Bengal. It is only 1.7 each in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. In Telangana and Kerala, the fertility rate is getting stabilised at 1.8 children per woman. Even in Bihar, where the TFR is 3, there is a relative decline in fertility from 3.4 in NFHS-4 (2015-16). In NFHS-4 itself, as many as 23 states and Union Territories, including all the states in the south region, showed fertility below the replacement level. In Uttar Pradesh, too, there is a declining trend in TFR from 3.8 in NFHS-3 (2005-06) to 2.7 in NFHS-4 (2015-16).
In West Bengal, the figures for women with 10 or more years of schooling (32.9 per cent) and women marrying before age 18 years (41.6 per cent) are almost similar to Bihar and worse than Uttar Pradesh. But it seems that West Bengal reached a TFR of 1.6 on account of sharply declining neonatal mortality rate (15.5 per cent), infant mortality rate (22.0 per cent) and high contraceptive prevalence rate (74.4 per cent). In brief, the probable fruit of better health facilities and wider contraceptive choices.

If an alarm bell is to be pressed, then it is not for population laws but for declining fertility. Replacement level fertility demands heavy investment in education, health and employment opportunities so that the “limited working population” in the near future is robust and skilled enough. What is needed is a comprehensive policy ensuring dignified living — easy access to quality education, better health services and sound livelihood opportunities.

Let the data speak on the “need” for population laws. The NFHS-4 (2015-16) shows interesting linkages of fertility with education and economic well-being. For example, women with no schooling have an average of 3.1 children, compared with 1.7 children for women with 12 or more years of schooling. Among Hindus, TFR was 2.1 and among Muslims it was 2.6, that is a difference of 0.5 children. For the same period, the most populous state, Uttar Pradesh, had a TFR of 2.7; in the case of Muslims, it was 0.6 points more than that of Hindus. In some states with high Muslim populations, the TFR of Muslims was little more than that of Hindus — 0.6 in West Bengal, 0.8 in Assam and 1.0 in Bihar (NFHS-5). For sure, this difference in TFR does not support the charade that Muslim population will overtake Hindus.

Lest there be any doubt left, one must understand that there is a steep decline in the fertility of Muslims from NFHS-1 (1992-93) to NFHS-4 (2015-16) (by 1.78 in comparison to 1.17 for Hindus). There is also a continuous decline in the population growth rate over decades. The decline in decadal growth rate was sharp in Census 2011 and sharper for Muslims. The decadal growth rate (2001-2011) for Muslims was 24.6 per cent in Census 2011. Though high, it marked a sharp decline from 29.5 per cent, which was registered in Census 2001. This decline of 4.9 per cent among the Muslims is higher than the corresponding 3.1 per cent decline for the Hindu community, whose decadal growth percentage declined from 19.9 (1991-2001) to 16.8 (2001-2011).

Before we forget the propaganda of Muslims “having more wives”, last available figures from Census 1971 provide that the incidence of polygyny (two or more wives) is highest among Adivasis (15.25 per cent) followed by Buddhists (7.9 per cent), Jains (6.27 per cent), Hindus (5.80 per cent) and Muslims (5.70 per cent).

Fertility rates are reflective of the progress in respective states on schooling, income levels, decline in neonatal and infant mortality rates and increase in the contraceptive prevalence rate. States with relatively higher TFR like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh need to work on these fronts. Hence, any talk of population laws in India at this juncture would at best be like putting the cart before the horse.
Protein count

The protein count: Do you need supplements even if you don’t work out? (The Indian Express: 20210825)


Doctors say incorporating protein supplements in your diet with no workout at all is not recommended proteins, protein supplements, how much protein does one need, do you need protein supplements, protein supplements for working out, training, natural proteins vs protein supplements, indian express newsA healthy individual needs 1 g protein per kg body weight per day. When training, however, they need about a half gram of protein per pound of body weight. (Photo: Getty/Thinkstock)

For those who work out, protein supplements are a part of their life. Protein intake may vary from person to person, but a diet is incomplete without it.

Medical researchers advise against protein supplements for an average person, because the amount of protein every person requires depends on factors like age, sex, health and activity level. Ideally, your daily food should provide you with the required protein, say Dr Sanjay Shah, general physician, Fortis Hospital, Mulund and Shweta Mahadik, clinical nutritionist, Fortis Hospital Kalyan.

But many sports trainers continue to push them on amateur athletes.

ALSO READ | Nutritionist explains the connection between premature ageing and lack of fats in diet

The question then arises of whether you need protein when you exercise, particularly when you try to build muscle through weightlifting or other forms of resistance training. The doctors answer in the affirmative. “The process of building muscle involves causing damage to muscle filaments and then rebuilding them, and this requires more protein,” they say.

Why do we need proteins?

Protein is an essential macronutrient made up of amino acids. These chain-like compounds can be broken apart and put back together in a nearly endless variety of patterns which are used to create different kinds of cells.
“Your body can make some of these amino acids on its own, but not all of them. The complete proteins found in animal products are your best sources of the essential amino acids that your body cannot produce.”

ALSO READ | Don’t like milk? Check out these easily available non-dairy sources of calcium

But keep in mind that you shouldn’t consume extra protein. “Dairy products are also high in protein, as are certain green leafy vegetables and legumes. Too much protein can put a strain on your kidneys, so if you’re using protein supplements to lose or maintain weight without working out, you need to balance your diet with fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, healthy fats and 1-2 litres of water per day. Tofu, soya milk, lentils, chickpeas, pinto beans, almond milk, nuts and oil seeds like sunflower, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds etc., are rich sources of protein for vegetarians and vegans,” they explain.

Consuming proteins in the right way

A healthy individual needs 1g protein per kg body weight per day. When training, however, they need about a half gram of protein per pound of body weight.

proteins, protein supplements, how much protein does one need, do you need protein supplements, protein supplements for working out, training, natural proteins vs protein supplements, indian express news If you’re using protein supplements to lose or maintain weight without working out, you need to balance your diet with fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, healthy fats and 1-2 litres of water per day. (Photo: Getty/Thinkstock)

“If you want to slim down or need more protein in your diet, feel free to have a protein shake on your off-training days. For example, if you skip breakfast or have a meeting to rush to in the morning, drinking a protein shake can provide you with the energy needed to function optimally. These, however, cannot replace meals; their role is to supplement your diet only,” the experts say.

The risk factor is that all food and beverages provide calories. Protein supplements — in the form of shakes and bars — are no exception. They work best when used as part of a training program since they fuel your muscles into growth and increase fat burning.

ALSO READ | From tea, coffee to milk and apples: Nutritionist suggests the best time to have them

Keep in mind

The doctors say that incorporating protein supplements in your diet with no workout at all is not recommended. “If you go overboard, you may end up gaining weight — especially if you have a sedentary lifestyle. You may also develop hyperaminoacidemia (excess of amino acid in the bloodstream) with nausea and diarrhoea symptoms; other health concerns may include kidney problems. Extra intake will slow down the kidney’s metabolism.
“If you need to consume more protein, but you do not exercise, it is best to have natural sources of the macronutrient — as mentioned above — coupled with minimum exercising. Remember to keep the nutrition factor high, and the calorie counts low if you aren’t exercising– to burn off extra calories.”

5 diet and lifestyle measures
5 diet and lifestyle measures to ward off heartburn (The Indian Express: 20210825)

If you already have acid reflux, there’s much you can do to minimize symptoms and perhaps avoid them entirely

acid refluxReflux can also affect the respiratory tract, resulting in hoarseness, wheezing, postnasal drip, cough or asthma. (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)
The childhood admonition to refrain from swimming for an hour after eating, ostensibly to avoid cramp, is not nearly long enough for me anymore. I now have to wait at least two hours before attempting any vigorous activity, or chores that involve bending over, to avoid the miserable sensation of acid reflux, commonly recognized by its frequent symptom of heartburn.

I’ve also found that a favorite breakfast food — peanut butter — is especially troublesome, along with smoked fish, pickled herring or brewed coffee on an empty stomach.

How common is acid reflux?

Acid reflux is among the most frequent health complaints of American adults, and may have become even more common in the wake of pandemic-related stress and weight gain. Late last year, pharmacies reported an unprecedented run on antacids by people described as having a “pandemic stomach,” leaving those with serious ailments that required such products often out of luck.

Even before the pandemic, an online survey from 2019 of more than 71,000 adults found that nearly a third reported that they were affected at least weekly by the discomforting symptoms of acid reflux, in which a small amount of stomach contents reverses course and backs up into the esophagus.

What are the symptoms?

Common symptoms include a burning feeling in the chest, a sensation of a lump in the throat, belching and bloating, and regurgitation into the mouth of highly acidic, partially digested food from the stomach. Reflux can also affect the respiratory tract, resulting in hoarseness, wheezing, postnasal drip, cough or asthma.

But persistent acid reflux is more than just annoying. If it occurs too often and persists for too long, it can erode the lining of the esophagus and increase the risk of developing a deadly cancer called esophageal adenocarcinoma.

5 ways to reduce your reflux risk?

A Harvard research team recently reported that many people could avoid this misery by adhering to an anti-reflux lifestyle. The researchers analyzed periodic health surveys over 12 years from more than 40,000 nurses and identified five lifestyle characteristics that helped keep acid reflux at bay.

The more of these behaviors the nurses adhered to, the lower their risk of developing GERD, the popular acronym for gastroesophageal reflux disease, the most persistent and potentially
serious form of acid reflux. Following all five behaviors reduced the overall risk of developing GERD symptoms by 37 percent.

1. MAINTAIN A HEALTHY BODY WEIGHT: An analysis of the medical literature led by Dr. Jesper Lagergren of the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm found that GERD affected about 22 percent of people who were classified as obese, compared with about 14 percent of those who were not obese. After you eat, a muscular sphincter at the bottom of the esophagus opens to let food enter the stomach, and then closes to keep it from reversing direction. An oversized abdomen can put excess pressure on this sphincter and may prevent it from closing when it should, allowing contents from the acidic stomach to leach into the esophagus.

2. DON’T SMOKE: Dr. Lagergren’s team found that tobacco can extend the time it takes for acidic foods to leave the esophagus. In an analysis of 30 studies, GERD affected about 20 percent of smokers, compared with about 16 percent of nonsmokers.

3. EXERCISE: Those who engaged in moderate to vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day were less likely to develop symptoms of GERD, the Harvard team reported.

4. CUT DOWN ON COFFEE, TEA AND SODA: The risk of GERD was reduced among those who consumed no more than two cups of coffee, tea or soda each day.

5. FOLLOW A HEART-HEALTHY DIET: Those who followed a Mediterranean-style diet, for example, featuring fruits and vegetables, legumes, fish, poultry and whole grains, but little or no red meat and other sources of saturated fats, were less likely to develop acid reflux.

Genetics can also affect one’s risk of developing acid reflux, so people with a family history of the problem would do best to avoid the risks highlighted above. Doing so will also help protect against leading killers like heart disease, diabetes and many forms of cancer.

How to manage symptoms

If you already have acid reflux, there’s much you can do to minimize symptoms and perhaps avoid them entirely. Instead of consuming large meals, eat smaller ones more often. Minimize fatty foods and skip fried and fast foods entirely. A friend uses an air fryer to achieve a crispy skin on chicken, but I prefer grilled chicken and skip the skin. Choose lean meats (if you eat meat) and low-fat or nonfat dairy products, and avoid eating within three hours of bedtime. Also, try sleeping as if on a recliner, with the head of the bed propped higher than the foot.

Foods that many people with GERD find most irritating include tomatoes and citrus (like oranges and grapefruit) and their juices, coffee (even decaf for some people), alcoholic and carbonated beverages, spicy foods, garlic, chocolate and peppermint. I long ago switched to low-acid orange juice, consuming only a few ounces a day to dissolve a fiber supplement. I’ve also found instant coffee to be less irritating than brewed, and drink the latter only with food to help protect my digestive tract.
To counter an occasional unexpected attack of heartburn, many people use a quick-acting antacid like Tums (calcium carbonate) to help neutralize stomach acid. A more modern remedy, an H2 receptor blocker like Pepcid (famotidine), can relieve symptoms within about 20 minutes by blocking the histamine receptors in the stomach that trigger acid production.

ALSO READ | A nutritionist shares 3 food hacks to prevent acidity

But chronic reflux sufferers may find the most effective relief with medications called proton pump inhibitors, or P.P.I.s, that shut down acid production in the stomach. Popular brands, sold over-the-counter and in higher doses by prescription, include Nexium (esomeprazole), Prevacid (lansoprazole) and Prilosec (omeprazole). They're among the country’s top-selling drugs.

However, like any medication, drugs that fight reflux can have side effects, so trial-and-error may be needed to find a product that works best for you. Also, the drugs should be used only as long as needed to control symptoms. Taken long-term, the P.P.I.s have been linked to a small increased risk of developing serious complications, including kidney disease, osteoporosis, stomach cancer, C. difficile infection and pneumonia.

Effective exercises

Effective exercises to increase lung capacity, reduce body stiffness (The Indian Express: 20210825)


"Always check with your doctor before starting a new exercise regime," suggested Dr Bhavik Patel, medical operations, Bhatia Hospital Mumbai

Yasmin Karachiwala, post covid exercises, what exercises to do after covid, indianexpress.com, indianexpress, long covid, fatigue, fitness post covid,If your symptoms are not mild or you are yet to fully recover, please consult your physician/doctor before doing any exercises. (Source: Pixabay)

It is advised to allow the body to take its time to heal and hence, only indulge in basic exercises after recovering from Covid-19. But if you are not too sure about where and how to begin, here is some help from Pilates trainer Yasmin Karachiwala who had earlier shared how a set of exercises helped her to reduce body stiffness as well as increase lung capacity in the post-Covid phase.
“I started these exercises very slowly with low intensity doing only as many reps as my body felt comfortable doing. I was also constantly listening to my body, which is the most important thing any of us can do post-Covid,” she said.

She went on to demonstrate the set of exercises that helped her.

**Caste counts: On census**

*Caste counts: On census and partisan political gains (The Hindu: 20210825)*


A vision for a just India, and not partisan political gains, should inspire a fresh census

The clamour for a fresh caste census is getting louder in the country. Bihar

**Coronavirus live updates**

*Coronavirus live updates | Active cases increase to 3, 22,327(The Hindu: 20210825)*


An increase of 2,776 cases has been recorded in the active COVID-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.

India logged 37,593 new coronavirus infections, while the active cases increased marginally to 3,22,327, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on
**Pecan-enriched diet**

**Pecan-enriched diet can reduce cholesterol: Study (New Kerala: 20210825)**

A new study has shown that a pecan-enriched diet can improve a person's cholesterol levels. The findings of the study were published in 'The Journal of Nutrition'. Participa-> View it-->

**Alcohol**

**Alcohol use in young adults is associated with early aging of blood vessels (New Kerala: 20210825)**


: Study Washington, August 24: Drinking alcohol during adolescence to young adulthood is associated with accelerated arterial stiffening, a precursor to cardiovascular diseas-> View it-->

**Vitamin D deficiency**

**Guntur university develops low-cost portable paper sensor to measure Vitamin D deficiency (New Kerala: 20210825)**

A University in Guntur has developed a unique paper sensor to measure vitamin D deficiency with high accuracy. It also claims to be the most -> View it-->

**Gut bacteria**

**Study shows gut bacteria, flavonoid-rich foods help improve blood pressure levels (New Kerala: 20210825)**
Washington, August 23: A new study has shown that flavonoid-rich foods appear to have a positive effect on blood pressure levels, an association that is partially explained. View it here: https://www.newkerala.com/news/2021/120956.htm