PLI scheme

Local manufacturing of 35 APIs started after PLI scheme: Mandaviya
These 35 active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) are among the 53 APIs, for which India has 90 per cent import dependence (The Tribune:20220330).


Local manufacturing of 35 APIs started after PLI scheme: Mandaviya
Minister Mansukh Mandaviya releases a book in New Delhi. PTI

Manufacturing of 35 active pharmaceutical ingredients, which have been imported earlier, has started in India under the production linked scheme for the pharmaceuticals sector, Union minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Tuesday.

These 35 active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) are among the 53 APIs, for which India has 90 per cent import dependence.

“The 35 APIs are being manufactured from 32 different manufacturing plants. This will give a boost to AatmaNirbhar Bharat,” Mandaviya, the Minister of Health & Family Welfare and Chemical and Fertilisers, told reporters here.

This would lead to reduction in import dependence of the key raw materials used for producing medicines, he added.

He said there has been a good response from the pharma industry to the PLI scheme and manufacturing of the other APIs is also expected to start in India in due course of time.

Last year, the government had announced the Rs 15,000 crore PLI scheme for the pharmaceutical sector and 55 companies, including Sun Pharmaceutical Industries, Aurobindo Pharma, Dr. Reddy’s Laboratories, Lupin, Mylan Laboratories, Cipla and Cadila Healthcare, had qualified for incentives under the scheme.
The incentives are to be paid for a maximum period of six years to each qualified company depending upon the threshold investments and sales criteria achieved by the applicant.

The products covered under the scheme include formulations, biopharmaceuticals, active pharmaceutical ingredients, key starting material, drug intermediates, and in-vitro diagnostic medical devices, among others.

According to the government, the objective of the PLI scheme is to enhance India’s manufacturing capabilities by increasing investment and production in the pharma sector and contributing to product diversification to high value goods in the pharmaceutical sector.

Also, it aims “to create global champions out of India who have the potential to grow in size and scale using cutting edge technology and thereby penetrate the global value chains”.

China is the world’s largest producer and exporter of APIs and many of the Indian companies depend on imports of the ingredients to produce formulations.

**Active Covid cases**

**Active Covid cases dip to 14,704**  
India logs 1,233 new Covid cases, 31 more deaths(The Tribune:20220330)  

With 1,233 new coronavirus infections being reported in a day, India's total tally of Covid cases rose to 4,30,23,215, while the active cases dipped to 14,704, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Wednesday.

The death toll climbed to 5,21,101 with 31 fresh fatalities, the data updated at 8 am stated.

The active cases comprise 0.03 per cent of the total infections, while the national Covid recovery rate remained at 98.75 per cent, the ministry said.

A reduction of 674 cases has been recorded in the active Covid caseload in a span of 24 hours.

The daily positivity rate was recorded as 0.20 per cent and the weekly positivity rate was recorded as 0.25 per cent, according to the ministry.

**Cancer drugs**

**Prices of over 40 cancer drugs slashed: Mansukh Mandaviya**

**Prices of over 40 cancer drugs slashed: Mansukh Mandaviya**  
Picture for representational purpose only. (The Tribune:20220330)
Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Tuesday informed the Rajya Sabha that with the government deciding to fix the trade margins for 44 costly cancer drugs, the prices of life-saving medicines have come down significantly.

Responding to a number of supplementary questions in the House, Mandaviya also asserted that India now has the capability to manufacture cancer treatment drugs, which were otherwise imported. “We had to import cancer medicines, but now India is capable of manufacturing it. We have introduced PLI scheme under which the manufacturing of APIs (active pharmaceutical ingredients) required for making cancer medicines have also started in India,” the Health Minister said.

He informed the House that the MRP of these cancer medicines had been capped in such a manner that it could not be more than 60 per cent of the first price that a manufacturer sells to a distributor in India. “After fixing the trade margins, the price of cancer treatment medicines have come down significantly, which is benefiting cancer patients,” he noted.

He was responding to a question by DMK MP M Shanmugam on what steps have been taken by the government to reduce the prices of imported cancer drugs and medical devices like stents which poor people are unable to afford.

On being asked that what steps the government had taken on reports of 175 healthcare organisations refusing to clear bills of ex-servicemen under the CGHS, Mandaviya said the government would look into the matter.

**Medical Education**

**MBBS seats up 75%, colleges 55% in 8 years (The Tribune:20220330)**


Amid a raging debate over gross mismatch between the demand and supply of medical education in India causing children to go abroad for studies despite qualifying NEET-UG, the government on Tuesday said MBBS seats rose 75 per cent and PG seats 93 per cent since 2014.

Answering a question in the Rajya Sabha, Minister of State for Health Bharati Pawar said, “The number of UG seats has increased from 51,348 before 2014 to 89,875 seats as of date which is an increase of 75%. The numbers of PG seats have increased by 93% from 31,185 seats before 2014 to 60,202 seats.”
She added that there had been 55 per cent increase in medical colleges from 387 in 2013-14 to 596 in 2021-22, including 77 medical colleges with an increase of 16,425 seats in the private sector.

The ministry said there was no proposal to change the medium of instruction of medical education. The medium is English. A query was raised about whether Hindi language instruction was being considered.

On fee caps, the government said Clause (i) of Sub-section (1) of Section 10 of the National Medical Commission Act, 2019, provided for framing of guidelines for determination of fees in respect of 50 per cent seats in private medical institutions and deemed universities.

Child Right (The Asian Age:20220330)


Physical Fitness (The Asian Age:20220330)

SWATI SHARMA

THE ASIAN AGE

Stretch It Out

Simple routines that can be done unobtrusively even at work can do wonders in relaxing tense muscles and correcting posture.

POOR POSTURE AND SITTING STILL FOR LONG PERIODS CAN WRECK YOUR SPINE AND PARTICULARLY YOUR BACK, NECK AND SHOULDERS FEELING STIFF AND ACHY.

Shoulders are the worst affected by prolonged sitting, making them unsightly and further contributing to bad posture. So, whenever you get time in the midst of work, raise your shoulders to the ear level and bring them back to their original position. You can repeat this simple stretch 10 to 30 times during your work to correct your posture.

NO PILLOWING EFFECT

When the neck is hunched forward in the same position for too long, it can lead to stiffness and lack of support. If you’re working at a desk or computer screen, it tends to tense up at the back of the neck and spine. The resulting stiffness prevents the spine from relaxing even in sleep and often, pillows are changed in the quest for comfort. That won’t help, but neck reroutings will. Also, stretch your neck up and down and turn your head to both the sides till you feel the pull.

STRAIGHTEN UP

The chest is also affected by a sedentary job. Bunching over a desk or keyboard causes the spine to be bent at a certain angle instead of the straight spine recommended by yoga and other fitness disciplines.

For a chest stretch, hold your hands behind with the fingers tucked together. Push your head backward and out as far as you can while pulling your shoulders forward. This relaxes your chest muscles and gives you a good posture.

AT ARMS’ LENGTH

Arms have to be held steady for a full stretch. Bring some movement to them by raising and lowering them, or holding them out and rotating them.

THE LEGS HAVE A SAY

Relaxing your lower body requires you to either stand up or lie on your back. Stand behind your chair and do some butt kicks to engage your butt.

STRETCHING CAN BE UNCOMFORTABLE AT FIRST, BUT IT SHOULD NOT BE PAINFUL. AN INDIVIDUAL STRETCH TYPICALLY LASTS 15-30 SECONDS. IT CAN ALSO REDUCE PAIN FROM CHRONIC CONDITIONS, SUCH AS ARTHRITIS AND LOWER BACK PAIN.
Protein

What happens when you consume too much protein?
Although high-protein diets claim to help you lose weight, if one exceeds the total caloric requirement, then it is stored as energy reserves that could lead to increased fat stores (The Indian Express:20220330)


protein overconsumption, eating too much protein, how much protein should one eat, what happens when you eat too much protein, excess protein, protein side effects, indian express news

Identify how much protein the body needs. Each Individual’s protein needs depend on many aspects. (Photo: Getty/Thinkstock)

Overconsumption of anything is bad for health, and that includes proteins as well. According to the ICMR (latest 2020 guidelines) a healthy adult would need about 0.8 to 1 gm of protein per kg of their body weight. In India, people either over consume protein just by a rough estimate, or hardly even reach 0.6 gm per kg body weight.

Dr Eileen Canday, HOD – Nutrition and Dietetics, Sir HN Reliance Foundation Hospital, says consuming more than double the requirement of protein for a prolonged period of time can pose a risk to vital organs to metabolise the waste from the body’s system.

ALSO READ |Vegetarians, you must have these top five sources of protein in your diet
The doctor adds that risks associated with chronic protein overconsumption in individuals who already have a compromised organ function, include:

– Cardiovascular disease
– Blood vessel disorders
– Liver and kidney injuries
– Further damage to these organs could be fatal

Overconsumption has also been linked to

– Increased risk of complications in people with type-2 diabetes
– A higher risk of cancer for those who over-consume processed meats
– Osteoporosis and osteopenia if consuming protein devoid of essential minerals

ALSO READ |Protein: Know the best sources, benefits, and how much is too much

The doctor explains some of the dangerous side-effects that could result from protein overconsumption:

1. Weight gain
Although high-protein diets claim to help you lose weight, if one exceeds the total caloric requirement, then it is stored as energy reserves that could lead to increased fat stores. This could interfere with the weight loss regime by excess protein being retained as fat.

2. Kidney damage
Excess protein can harm patients who already have renal disease. The abundant nitrogen contained in amino acids that make up proteins is the reason behind this. Kidneys that have been damaged must work harder to eliminate excess nitrogen and waste products from protein metabolism.

3. An increased risk of cancer
Certain high-protein diets, particularly those excess in red meat-based protein, have been associated with an elevated risk of several health problems, including cancer, according to studies. Colorectal, breast, and prostate cancer are all linked to eating more red and/or processed meat. Eating protein from other sources, on the other hand, has been linked to a lower risk of cancer.

4. Heart disease
A high-protein diet that includes a lot of red meats with saturated fats and full-fat dairy foods can contribute to heart disease. This might be linked to greater saturated fat and cholesterol consumption. According to a 2010 research, women who consumed a lot of red meat and high-fat dairy had a higher risk of coronary heart disease. Poultry, fish, and nuts were shown to reduce the risk. Long-term eating of red meat can also raise trimethylamine N-oxide (TMAO), a gut-produced molecule related to heart disease, according to a 2018 research.

5. Calcium deficiency
It was previously thought that calcium loss can occur if you consume a high-protein, meat-based diet. This has been linked to osteoporosis and poor bone health in the past. A review of data published in 2013 indicated a link between excessive protein consumption and poor bone health. However, recent findings suggest the effect of protein on bone health remains unproven. Adequate intake of protein, particularly from dairy sources is essential to support bone growth.

According to Dr. Canday, if one wishes to consume high proteins, they must keep in mind the following:

* Identify how much protein the body needs. Each Individual’s protein needs depend on many aspects such as weight, age, body composition goals, stage of life cycle, medical issues.

* Choose good quality protein source from egg whites, low fat dairy products such as buttermilk, curds, paneer or cottage cheese, soya or tofu, lean meats such as fish or lean cuts of poultry, other sources such as legumes, lentils, dals, nuts and seeds.

* If you suffer from any organ disorder such as compromised liver disease, kidney failure, diabetes, cancer or medical conditions that need close monitoring of protein intake, consult a dietician so that the amount of protein can be accurately calculated.

* While avoiding overconsumption, be cautious so as to not to drop the levels to such an extent that it leads to deficiencies and loss of muscle mass.

“Healthy people need not double or triple their protein intake. Generally people who are physically active such as athletes, weight trainers (gym goers) additionally, pregnant, lactating women, people who are undergoing medical treatment for cancer or on dialysis would need higher that 1 gm per kg body weight, but this has to be prescribed by a qualified nutritionist or a dietician,” the doctor concludes.
Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month: Importance of timely diagnosis, symptoms to watch out for, and more

"One must remember that treatment largely depends on the patient's condition, including the location of the cancer, the stage and other health concerns like comorbidity", said oncologist (The Indian Express:20220330)


Colorectal cancer is a serious concern for adults across all age groups. The disease is a form of cancer that occurs due to the “abnormal growth of cells in the lining of the colon or rectum”, said Dr Niti Raizada, Director, Medical Oncology & Hemato Oncology, Fortis group of Hospitals, Bangalore.

As such, since March is celebrated as Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, read on to know more about the importance of timely diagnosis, regular screenings, risk factors, and treatment options that will help you keep yourself and your loved ones safe.

ALSO READ | Colorectal cancer: Simple lifestyle modifications to keep you safe

How important is timely diagnosis?

“Timely diagnosis is important as the cancer only starts showing symptoms at an advanced stage and, therefore, the key to prevention is early detection and treatment”, said Dr Raizada. The expert further suggested that ideally, colorectal cancer screenings should start by early 40s for every individual.

Abdominal cramps may be a symptom of colorectal cancer, warned an expert. (Source: Representative image/Pixabay)

What are some of the common symptoms?

Some symptoms that need to taken note of are “fatigue, weakness, constipation problems, abdominal cramps, and bloating”, noted Dr Raizada. A few of the more serious symptoms of
this disorder include “rectal bleeding, constant abdominal discomfort, and a change in your bowel habits.”

These symptoms may be a result of other digestive health concerns, but consultation with an expert is necessary.

What are the risk factors for developing colorectal cancer?

Junk food-759 Lessen your intake of junk food that contains a lot of fat and little to no fibre.
(Source: Representative image/Pexels)

Unhealthy diet – “Regular consumption of food items that are rich in fat and low in fiber may lead to colorectal cancer”, warned the expert. The consumption of processed or red meat is another major factor that can contribute to the onset of this kind of cancer. Dr Raizada suggested a plant-based diet to avoid this health condition.

Physical inactivity – It is important to be physically fit and exercise for a few hours in a day. Following a sedentary lifestyle with unhealthy eating habits can not only negatively affect your overall health, but also increase the chances of being diagnosed with colorectal cancer.

Consumption of alcohol and smoking – Smoking and alcohol consumption contribute as one of the main factors that can cause colorectal cancer. “It reduces a person’s lifespan and increases the possibility of attracting more health problems over time”, said Dr Raizada.

Family history – Immediate family members suffering from colorectal cancer have an increased chance of being susceptible to the disease. Therefore, it is advisable to consult with an expert and understand the chances of getting diagnosed with this health condition.

In recent times, there are new diagnostic and treatment options in place for this disorder. Dr Raizada said, “The approach we have is now shifting away from generalised medicines to that of personalised medicine. The treatment is now focused on the wellbeing of the patient and a faster recovery with multimodality approaches such as surgery, radiotherapy, and chemotherapy. Common screening methods like Fecal Occult blood test (FOBT) and colonoscopy helps to diagnose the condition at an early stage and seek the right treatment option.”

ALSO READ | Colon cancer: When should you get yourself screened?
The expert further said one must remember that treatment largely depends on the patient’s condition, including the location of the cancer, the stage, and other health concerns like comorbidity. “Once surgery is concluded, it is followed by chemotherapy, radiation, targeted drug therapy and immunotherapy as is needed,” she said.

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Fibromyalgia cases

Amid surge in fibromyalgia cases in Covid patients, experts share symptoms and tips to stay safe

Dr Rakesh Nair, consultant knee replacement surgeon, said that "a lot of patients have complained of increase in the joint pains post-Covid: almost all had increased pain which varied from three weeks to six months". (The Indian Express:20220330)


bone, bone injury, cartilage
Joint pains have risen post-Covid (Source: Thinkstock Images)
In the last few months, experts say that there has been an uptick in the number of patients with fibromyalgia — a painful condition leading to fatigue in joints, chest wall, elbows, legs, shoulder, and also headache.

Dr Girish L Bhalerao, super specialty consultant orthopaedic surgeon, Wockhardt Hospital Mira Road says, “Around 15-20 cases have been observed in the last two to four months. We have observed more women complaining of the condition compared to men among the middle aged and elderly population.”

Also Read | Mental health: How to deal with stress in a post-Covid world
There were many health problems that came to the fore during the pandemic, and one of them is fibromyalgia, adds Dr Gaurav Khera, orthopedic Surgeon (Karol Bagh) Apollo Spectra Delhi.

“It is a painful and chronic condition leading to muscle pain along with fatigue, sleep disturbances, mood-related disorders, and memory problems. So, patients will notice pain in the shoulders, chest, elbows, and joints. Furthermore, one may also experience constant fatigue, stress, anxiety, sleep problems, mood swings, and memory fog. The symptoms may be similar to arthritis, but it does not cause joint or muscle inflammation. It impacts the soft tissue and not the joints as a whole. Fibromyalgia is also a long covid symptom known as FibroCovid. It is seen commonly in women compared to men,” Dr Khera explains.

tiredness One may also experience constant fatigue, stress, anxiety, sleep problems, mood swings, and memory fog (Source: Getty Images/Thinkstock)
Dr Rakesh Nair, consultant knee replacement surgeon at Zen Multispeciality Hospital informs that “a lot of patients have complained of increase in joint pains post-Covid: almost all had increased pain which varied from three weeks to six months”.

“Patients suffering from this condition experience sudden shoulder, joint, elbow, and chest pain. This pain can be triggered due to the stress, tension, and emotional disturbance due to coronavirus and also deficiency of calcium: vitamin D 3 and vitamin B12 which aggravated the symptoms. Women of post-menopausal status had increased pain compared to men. The pain is there for some months and one may have some trigger points in the body,” he says.

Also Read | ‘I had never felt worse’: Long Covid sufferers are strug

**Fake medical products**

**Substandard, fake medical products increased by almost 47% from 2020 to 2021 during pandemic: report (The Hindu:20220330)**


Criminals saw crisis as an opportunity to sell more such products, taking advantage of vulnerability of people in need, ASPA president says

During the COVID-19 pandemic, incidents of substandard and falsified (SF) medical products increased by almost 47% from 2020 to 2021. Trade-in pharmaceutical counterfeits during this period spiked majorly relating to COVID-19 products, including vaccines, medicines, test kits, antibiotics, face masks and sanitizers. This, according to the latest report released by the Authentication Solution Providers’ Association (ASPA), an organisation working against fake medical products.

During the COVID-19 peak, incidents of SF medical were observed in 23 out of 29 States and seven Union Territories. The report pointed out that SF products were impacting every product sector, and the incidents of counterfeiting had risen with a 20% growth from January 2018 to December 2020. Globally also, pharmaceutical SF incidents rose 111% over the past 10 years, say experts.

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Cosmetic Surgeries

Watch | Zoom Boom and the rise of Cosmetic Surgeries (The Hindu:20220330)


A video on the phenomenon of Zoom Boom and how it is giving rise to cosmetic surgeries around the globe. Medical aesthetic procedures are seeing a surge in China. The Chinese Association of Plastics and Aesthetics estimates that the cosmetic industry will grow to $46 billion in 2022 as compared to $6.5 billion in 2013.

According to recent data, a major segment of this market is micro-procedures. Micro-procedures are those which are considered to be less invasive, like laser

Junk Food

Soft drinks, instant noodles harming human, planetary health 14 hours ago (New Kerala: 20220330)

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Spirituality

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