**Wockhardt Hospitals, Mira Road Rolls Out Immunization Program Catering to People of All Age Groups**

Mumbai: A team of doctors have come together to bring awareness about Vaccination catering to all age groups at Wockhardt Hospitals, Mira Road. Millions of children are being deprived of essential routine vaccinations, putting their lives at risk. Not only does vaccination safeguard individual health, but it also plays a significant role in enhancing immunity by preventing the spread of contagious illnesses. Vaccinations offer long-term benefits by reducing the burden on healthcare systems and preventing unnecessary hospitalizations. Emphasizing the importance of vaccination and creating a safer environment for everyone, Wockhardt Hospitals, Mira Road conducts an immunization program catering to people of all age groups**.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a decline in routine childhood vaccines with nearly 67 million children missing out on one or more potentially life-saving vaccines, according to a UNICEF report titled “The State of the World's Children 2023”. There is also an alarming surge in cases of measles in the country as a large number of children have fallen prey to this vaccine-preventable condition. In 2022, an estimated 11 lakh children missed their first dose of the measles vaccine in India, placing the country among the ten nations with the highest measles vaccination gap, even post-pandemic, a report from the World Health Organization and the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reveals. The report also highlights India as one of the 37 countries that experienced outbreaks, recording 40,967 cases in 2022. (<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/11l-children-in-india-missed-1st-measles-shot-in-22-report-9031554/>)

Doctors highlights on Immunity is nothing but power to prevent infections, vaccines produce immune reactions from the body without producing disease. When someone receives the Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR vaccine), it triggers a similar immune response as if the body had encountered the pathogens naturally. In India, there are vaccines for 26 diseases but typically only 10-12 diseases are vaccinated against. Vaccination is crucial for people of all ages, including adolescents, pregnant women, and the elderly over 40, and helps protect against various infections such as Influenza, Pneumonia, and Hepatitis. The DTaP vaccine is crucial for combating Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Whooping cough (pertussis), while the MMR vaccine is effective against Measles, Mumps, and Rubella. Meningitis can be prevented with the Meningococcal vaccine, chicken pox due to the varicella vaccine, polio with the IPV vaccine, and pneumonia through the pneumococcal vaccine. The government also provides HPV vaccines to raise awareness about Cervical Cancer Prevention.

**Dr Ankit Gupta, Paediatric Critical Care Specialist, Wockhardt Hospitals, Mira Road** explained, “Vaccination rates are declining across the nation, affecting both children and adults due to a lack of awareness about immunization. Those with mumps present with severe headaches, Encephalitis, and symptoms such as headaches, fever, seizures, unconsciousness, altered sensorium, CSF flow obstruction leading to long-lasting complications in the brain, orchitis an inflammation of one or both testicles causing infertility in men due to mumps and skipping MMR vaccine. The cases of empyema, a complication of pneumonia caused by not receiving the pneumonia vaccine, are on the rise.

"Despite the government offering free vaccines, many people are still not getting vaccinated, leading to complications. Unvaccinated children born just before or during the COVID-19 pandemic are now suffering from various vaccine-preventable disease. The children who missed their vaccinations have now aged out of routine immunization programs and are considered zero-dose children who are not vaccinated at all even with the first dose. Boosting vaccination rates in children through targeted campaigns that educate parents will be beneficial. By highlighting the benefits of vaccinations in preventing serious diseases and debunking common myths, parents can make informed decisions for their children's health,” concluded **Dr Badshah Khan, Consultant Paediatrics, Wockhardt Hospitals, Mira Road**

“Optional vaccines such as Pneumococcal Vaccine, flu vaccine, Varicella vaccine for chickenpox, Hepatitis A vaccine should be given to adult. Flu or influenza vaccine should be taken every year by people of all age groups especially Diabetes, Kidney, Heart, and Lung disease patients. Every year based on the mutation of the virus, a new vaccine is administered to adults. Even Pneumococcal vaccine should be given to high-risk populations having Kidney, and Heart Disease, taking Chemotherapy, and those awaiting Transplant. Pneumonia can be fatal in those who are immunosuppressant. Females are given Gardasil vaccine for prevention of Cervical Cancer for HPV-associated cancers ideally till puberty age. The Shingles vaccine is given to the geriatric population after 50 for the prevention of herpes zoster (HZ). These vaccines are available for adults in the country. Flu is like an epidemic, Influenza should be included in the mass vaccination program for the benefit of everyone,” concluded **Dr Jinendra Jain. Consultant Internal Medicine, Wockhardt Hospital, Mira Road.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Age Group** | **For** |
| After Birth | Hepatitis B vaccine. Ideally, the first dose is given within 12–24 hours of birth, but kids not previously immunized can get it at any age. Some low birth weight infants will get it at 1 month or when they're discharged from the hospital. |
| **1–2 months** | * HepB**:** Second dose should be given 1 to 2 months after the first dose. |
| 2 months and 4 months | Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine, Rotavirus vaccine, Inactivated poliovirus vaccine, Haemophilus influenzae type b vaccine, Diphtheria, tetanus, and acellular pertussis vaccine |
| 6 months | Diphtheria, tetanus, and acellular pertussis, Haemophilus influenzae type b vaccine and Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine |
| 6 months and annually | Influenza (Flu) |
| 6 months to 18 months | **Hep B and IPV** |
| 9 months of age | measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) |
| 15-18 months | * **Hib** * MMR**:** Measles, mumps, and rubella (German measles) vaccine. Sometimes given together with the varicella vaccine and called MMRV. * **PCV** * Varicella (chickenpox) |
| 12–23 months | * Hep A**:** Hepatitis A vaccine; given as 2 shots at least 6 months apart |
| 15–18 months | * DTaP |
| 4–6 years | * DTaP * MMR * IPV * Varicella |
| 11–12 years | * **HPV, tdap,** |
| Above 50 years | * Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine is now approved in India for those >50 y for the prevention of pneumonia and invasive pneumococcal disease * **Shingles Vaccine** |
| Every Year | * **Influenza Vaccine** |