

6. Vaccination

Navigating the Landscape of Vaccination: India's Remarkable Journey from Routine Immunization to COVID-19 Vaccination

- India's vaccination journey, spanning over a decade, stands as a testament to the country's unwavering commitment to public health.
- Marked by a relentless pursuit of immunization coverage and a steadfast dedication to scientific innovation, India has emerged as a global leader in safeguarding the health of its citizens and the world at large.

Routine Immunization: A Foundation for Public Health

- India's Universal Immunization Program (UIP) has played a pivotal role in transforming the country's immunization landscape. Through a multi-pronged approach that emphasizes outreach, infrastructure development, and comprehensive monitoring,
- India has achieved remarkable gains in routine immunization coverage. Over 90% of children are now fully vaccinated against seven life-saving vaccines, a testament to the country's unwavering commitment to protecting its youngest citizens.
- The introduction of new vaccines into the UIP further exemplifies India's proactive approach to immunization. Rotavirus vaccine, pneumococcal conjugate vaccine, and Japanese encephalitis vaccine have been successfully introduced, bolstering the country's defence against a wider spectrum of infectious diseases.

COVID-19 Vaccination: A Global Leadership Role

- The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic presented an unprecedented challenge to India's healthcare system. However, **the country rose to the occasion, spearheading one of the world's largest and most effective COVID-19 vaccination drives.**

- India's COVID-19 vaccination program is a resounding success, with over **2.2 billion vaccine doses administered** as of November 2023.
- This remarkable achievement has significantly shielded the population from the severe consequences of COVID-19, reducing mortality rates and alleviating the strain on healthcare systems.
- Beyond its domestic success, India has emerged as a global leader in vaccine production and supply.
- The country's pharmaceutical prowess and manufacturing capabilities have enabled it to export COVID-19 vaccines to over **90 countries**, playing a crucial role in addressing vaccine equity and protecting vulnerable populations worldwide.

CoWIN: A Technological Enabler of Vaccination Success

- The **CoWIN platform**, India's digital backbone for COVID-19 vaccination, has been instrumental in the country's vaccination success. This innovative platform has facilitated seamless registration, scheduling, and tracking of COVID-19 vaccinations, ensuring equitable access to vaccines for all citizens.
- CoWIN's user-friendly interface has streamlined the registration process, allowing individuals to conveniently schedule their vaccinations. The platform has also enabled efficient vaccine distribution and management, ensuring that vaccines are available at designated vaccination centres across the country.
- Furthermore, CoWIN has played a crucial role in monitoring vaccination progress and identifying potential gaps in coverage. The platform's real-time data analytics have enabled targeted interventions to reach underserved communities and ensure that no one is left behind.

Achievements in COVID-19 Vaccine Development

- India's contribution to COVID-19 vaccine development is a remarkable feat, showcasing the country's scientific prowess and commitment to global health security. **India's two indigenous COVID-19 vaccines, Covishield and Covaxin, have received Emergency Use Listing (EUL) from the World Health Organization (WHO), making them globally recognized and accepted vaccines.**
- Covishield, manufactured by the Serum Institute of India (SII), is a recombinant adenovirus vector vaccine based on the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine. Covaxin, developed by Bharat Biotech, is an inactivated whole virion vaccine that utilizes inactivated SARS-CoV-2 virus particles.
- These indigenous vaccines have played a significant role in India's COVID-19 vaccination drive, contributing to the country's remarkable vaccination coverage. Additionally, India has actively participated in international COVID-19 vaccine development collaborations, demonstrating its commitment to global health partnerships.

Conclusion: A Beacon of Hope in Global Health

- India's vaccination journey, from routine immunization to COVID-19 vaccination, serves as an inspiration to other nations. **The country's achievements in expanding access to vaccines, developing its own vaccines, and contributing to global vaccine equity provide a roadmap for strengthening public health systems worldwide.**
- As India continues to fortify its immunization program, it is poised to further protect its population from vaccine-preventable diseases and contribute to a healthier world. India's vaccination story is a testament to the power of collective action, scientific innovation, and unwavering commitment to public health.
- It is a story that offers hope and inspiration, demonstrating that even in the face of unprecedented challenges, nations can rise to the occasion, protect their citizens, and contribute to global well-being.