

be diagnosed earlier and controlled dietetically or otherwise.

Along with the above mentioned preventive aspects, the following factors should be kept in mind.

- ★ Avoiding child bearing before 20 years of age and beyond 35 years.
- ★ Preventing consanguineous marriage.
- ★ Advising the affected families regarding the risks of genetic disease.
- ★ Educating the public regarding all the above aspects of intellectual disabilities.

Prevention of intellectual disabilities is of first importance and needs top priority in the National Health Planning Programmes. It entails provision of comprehensive health care to all.

PREVENT INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

**‘Amongst your concerns
let prevention take top priority’**



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The complexity of Intellectual Disabilities requires the consideration of multiple factors in prevention. There are many causes for intellectual disabilities and prevention is possible at many stages. Proper care can prevent it from occurring at all, or control its ill effects. The important thing to remember is that mental handicap can be prevented by simple efforts from our side.

The prevention of intellectual disabilities begins from the time a woman becomes pregnant. It takes its importance at prenatal period, perinatal period, postnatal period and early years of development of the child.

PRENATAL PERIOD

There are multiple factors leading to intellectual disabilities which can be prevented at the prenatal period by.

- ✳ Periodic medical checkup for the pregnant mother. This would help in early diagnosis and intervention of various conditions which can lead to mental handicap in the child.
- ✳ Immunization against certain diseases during pregnancy.
- ✳ Avoiding unnecessary medication, exposure to radiation etc.
- ✳ Taking nutritious food.
- ✳ Abortion by qualified medical doctor.

- ✳ Avoiding accidents and hard work.
- ✳ Avoiding alcoholic drinks and smoking.

PERINATAL PERIOD

Perinatal factors producing damage to the brain during birth are responsible for a majority of cases of intellectual disabilities. This can be prevented by.

- ✳ Conducting deliveries by trained personnel
- ✳ Early detection of complications of pregnancy and instituting appropriate care.

POSTNATAL PERIOD

A number of factors should be taken care of during infancy and early childhood to prevent the occurrence of intellectual disabilities.

- ✳ Early immunization against disease.
- ✳ Early treatment of conditions like epilepsy.
- ✳ Providing the child with nutritious food.
- ✳ Adequate environmental stimulation and education.
- ✳ Protection from accidents and environmental pollutants such as lead and mercury.
- ✳ Periodic medical checkup for the child so that certain metabolic and endocrine diseases could