



## Covid-19 Vaccine Hesitancy

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### Why in News

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Various online surveys have been conducted recently to check vaccine acceptance among the general population.

### Key Points

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- **Vaccine Hesitancy**

- **Meaning:** It refers to **delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccines** despite availability of vaccine services. It is complex and **context specific** varying across time, place and vaccine. It is influenced by factors such as **complacency, convenience and confidence**.
- **Reasons for Vaccine Hesitancy:** The main issue with **vaccine hesitancy** is **mis-information**.
  - **Religious propaganda** that the vaccine may contain microbes, chemicals and animal-derived products which is forbidden by religious laws.
  - **Social media** is used in stirring fear in people by falsely blaming vaccines for unrelated diseases. This is the bedrock of the vaccine hesitancy all across the globe.

For example, some sections in India have refrained from the polio vaccine. This is due to the misconception that the polio vaccine causes illness, infertility and is ineffective.
  - **Vaccine-derived diseases:** Oral Polio Vaccines (OPV) contains weakened but **live poliovirus**. This virus from the vaccine is excreted by **immunized children** which can move from one person to another.

This allows the virus **to stick around and mutate** to a more virulent form, raising the threat of **vaccine-derived poliovirus (VDPV)**.
  - **Inconvenience** in accessing vaccines is also the leading cause of vaccine hesitancy.

- **The Case of Covid-19 Vaccine Hesitancy:**
  - In an **online study** conducted by infectious diseases consultants at Apollo Hospital, Chennai, among 1424 health professionals, only 45% said they will take the **Covid vaccine** as soon as it becomes available.
    - **55% will either defer the vaccination** or are yet to decide what to do.
  - Another recent online survey by the agency Local Circles, where **59% of the public** surveyed said they prefer to defer vaccination.
- **Associated Issue:**
  - Can have a **negative consequence** on effort to control the pandemic.
  - May lead to massive spread of the disease.
- **Solution:**
  - **Make Public Aware:**
    - Give confidence to the public by discussing the **robustness** of various processes involved in drug/vaccine development - **clinical trial designs, monitoring, analysis and the regulatory reviews** that happen before it is approved.
    - Use **Social Media Platforms** to counter any mis-information regarding vaccines and spread awareness.

**Source:TH**