



# Pneumonia

## Why in News

Recently, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare reported that **Pneumonia contributes 16.9% of infant deaths** and it is the **2<sup>nd</sup> highest cause of infant mortality (after prematurity & low birth weight)**.

- In November 2020, the annual [Pneumonia and Diarrhoea Progress Report](#) was released by the **International Vaccine Access Centre (IVAC)**.

## Key Points

### ▪ About:

- Pneumonia is **an acute respiratory infection of the lungs**. It is also a Pneumococcal disease caused by bacteria called **Streptococcus pneumoniae or pneumococcus**.

### ▪ Cause:

- It doesn't have one single cause - it can develop from either **bacteria, viruses or fungi in the air**.

### ▪ Vulnerability:

- **Children whose immune systems are immature** (i.e. newborns) or weakened - such as by undernourishment, or diseases like [HIV](#) - are more vulnerable to pneumonia.

### ▪ Spread:

- Pneumonia is **contagious and can be spread through coughing or sneezing**. It can also be spread **through fluids**, like blood during childbirth, or from contaminated surfaces.

### ▪ Vaccine:

- Pneumonia caused by bacteria **is easily preventable with vaccines**. 3 doses of the primary vaccine ([Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine \(PCV\)](#)) to prevent it are recommended.
- A new vaccine for one of the main viral causes of pneumonia is under development.

- India has introduced **nationwide rollout of PCV under [Universal Immunisation Programme \(UIP\)](#)**.

### ▪ Diseases Burden:

- **Global:** Together, the **Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria and Pakistan account for more than half of all deaths** due to pneumonia among children under 5.
- **Annually, India witnesses an estimated 71% of pneumonia deaths** and 57% of severe pneumonia cases.

### ▪ Initiatives Related to Pneumonia:

- [Social Awareness and Action to Neutralise Pneumonia Successfully \(SAANS\)](#): The aim is to reduce child mortality due to pneumonia, which contributes to around 15% of deaths of children under the age of five annually.
  - The government aims to achieve a target of reducing pneumonia deaths among children to **less than three per 1,000 live births by 2025**.
- In 2014, India launched '**Integrated Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Pneumonia and Diarrhoea (IAPPD)**' to undertake collaborative efforts towards prevention of diarrhoea and Pneumonia related under-five deaths.
  - The **WHO and UNICEF** had launched an integrated **Global Action Plan for Pneumonia and Diarrhoea (GAPPD)**.

**[Source: PIB](#)**

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