

MALNUTRITION AMONGST CHILDREN AND WOMEN

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Health & Sanitation and related issues

As per National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4), malnutrition indicators like stunting and underweight prevalence declined in rural areas as compared with NFHS-3. Prevalence of anaemia in women of reproductive age (WRA) group 15-49 years in rural areas also declined. Malnutrition is a multi-dimensional issue, affected by a number of generic factors. Anaemia in pregnant women increases the risk of low birth weight for the newborn.

Govt. has under taken several interventions under the Reproductive and Child Health Programme of National Health Mission, for carrying out various activities for management of nutrition and anaemia in women and children including the strategy for Anaemia Mukh Bharat (AMB), promotion of appropriate infant and young child feeding practices that include early initiation of breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding till 6 months of age, use of ORS and Zinc in diarrhoea, and Vitamin A supplementation programme for all children below five years of age.

Village Health and Nutrition Days and Mother and Child Protection Card are the joint initiative of the Ministries of Health & Family welfare and the Ministry of Woman and Child for addressing the nutrition concerns in children, pregnant women and lactating mothers. Janani Surksha Yojana (JSY) Scheme, incentivizes women for institutional delivery at public health facilities. Similarly, under Jananai Shishu Suraksha Yojana (JSSK), all infants seeking treatment in public health facilities are provided food, medicines and transport, free of cost as an entitlement. Under the Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) and Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK), systematic efforts are undertaken to detect nutrition deficiency including anemia among children and adolescents respectively.

This information was given by the Minister of Women and Child Development, Shri Smriti Zubin Irani, in a written reply in the Lok Sabha today.

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