

Cough Syrup Deaths Trigger National Advisory

Twelve children in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan have reportedly died following the use of cough syrup suspected to cause kidney failure. In response, the central government has issued an advisory urging doctors and pharmacists to avoid prescribing or dispensing cough and cold medications to children below five years of age, and especially not to those under two years.

The Directorate General of Health Services emphasized that non-pharmacological measures such as hydration, rest, and supportive care should be the first line of treatment. It also reiterated that all cough syrups must use pharmaceutical-grade excipients and adhere strictly to good manufacturing practices.

Authorities in Chandigarh clarified that none of the implicated syrup batches were supplied there and that local stocks have been declared safe.

Early Flu Surge in Chennai Raises Concern

Chennai is witnessing an unusual early surge in influenza and other respiratory viral infections for the second consecutive year. Health officials report a rise in cases among both children and adults, with respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) infections also being observed.

Experts warn that the combination of monsoon weather, temperature fluctuations, and high humidity is creating ideal conditions for viral spread. Hospitals have been advised to prepare isolation areas and increase testing capacity in anticipation of further cases.

CGHS Package Rates Revised

The government has announced a major revision of reimbursement rates for nearly 2,000 medical procedures under the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS), effective from October 13, 2025.

Key highlights include differentiated rates based on city categories, with Tier 2 cities receiving slightly lower rates than Tier 1. NABH-accredited

hospitals will receive higher reimbursements, while non-accredited institutions will see reduced rates. Super-speciality hospitals with over 200 beds are also set to receive enhanced package rates.

The Association of Healthcare Providers of India (AHPI) welcomed the move, calling it a “positive step toward aligning costs with quality of care.”



Strengthening Public Health Infrastructure

A new study has found that Punjab’s public health system is only moderately prepared to handle elderly care, with significant gaps in primary and community health services. The report recommends focused investment in geriatric wards and long-term care training for medical staff.

In Andhra Pradesh, the health department has prepared proposals worth ₹33 crore to upgrade and strengthen de-addiction centres across the state. The funds will be used for equipment upgrades, medicines, and staff training to tackle rising substance abuse.

Meanwhile, AIIMS Bilaspur has been recognized for completing its full infrastructure within just three years, now offering advanced imaging, transplant, and emergency care facilities.



Mental Health and Medical Education Initiatives

CBSE, in collaboration with AIIMS, has launched a virtual “Mental Health Series” beginning October 4 to mark World Mental Health Week. The week-long program is designed for students, teachers, and parents, promoting awareness of mental wellness and stress management.

In another significant policy update, the Union Cabinet has approved the addition of 10,023 new MBBS and postgraduate medical seats across India, backed by an allocation of ₹15,034 crore. The move aims to address the shortage of doctors and expand medical education capacity across underserved regions.

Global Traditional Medicine Summit Announced

India and the World Health Organization have signed an agreement to host the Second Global Summit on Traditional Medicine in New Delhi from December 17 to 19, 2025. The event will focus on integrating traditional systems such as Ayurveda, Siddha, and Unani into modern health frameworks and promoting evidence-based research in traditional therapies.

Lifestyle & Health Awareness

A leading nutritionist has warned that one in every 28 Indian women is at risk of developing breast cancer. She emphasized the importance of incorporating cancer-preventive foods such as pomegranate, cruciferous vegetables, and flaxseeds into regular diets.

Doctors are also raising alarms about the rising incidence of heart disease among younger Indians in their 20s and 30s, attributed to sedentary habits, poor diet, and high stress levels. Preventive lifestyle changes, regular screenings, and physical activity are being urged as essential measures.