



What's New in Health & Medicine

- **World Health Organization (WHO) issues global guideline endorsing GLP-1 drugs for obesity treatment**

For the first time ever, WHO has released a global guideline recommending the use of GLP-1 therapies (such as drugs like semaglutide, tirzepatide) for long-term treatment of adult obesity (BMI ≥ 30 kg/m²), as part of a comprehensive care plan including diet, exercise and professional support.

The guideline marks obesity as a chronic relapsing disease — underscoring the gravity of rising obesity globally and signalling that medications alone can't solve the crisis; lifestyle, prevention and social measures remain vital.

- **New research links early-life iron deficiency to long-lasting damage in lung immunity**

A recent study shows that iron deficiency during childhood can impair lung-resident immune cells' ability to mount strong antiviral responses — even if iron levels are later corrected.

The findings raise serious concern over nutritional deficiency in children and its long-term impact on susceptibility to respiratory infections.

- **Air pollution undermines health benefits of exercise — global study's implications for India**

An international study published recently found that in areas with high levels of fine particulate pollution (PM_{2.5}), the protective effects of regular exercise (such as lower risk of heart disease or cancer) are substantially diminished.

Given India's air-quality challenges in many cities, the study underscores the need to combine physical activity with efforts to reduce pollution for real health impact.

- **In India: ~25.61 lakh people living with HIV in 2024 — second highest globally**

A recent government-linked report cited by media notes that India's estimated number of people living with HIV (PLHIV) stands at about 25.61 lakh (2.561 million) as of 2024.

Although the annual HIV incidence rate remains low (0.05 per 1,000 uninfected population) and adult prevalence at 0.20%, the absolute burden remains large — making continuous prevention, testing and treatment critical.

- **In Madhya Pradesh: Internship counselling begins for foreign-medical-graduate doctors; High Court challenges NEET-PG admission rule**

The Madhya Pradesh Medical Council (MPMC) has started the FMG (Foreign Medical Graduate) clinical-clerkship/internship counselling process for those seeking mandatory training in MP medical colleges.

Meanwhile, the state's High Court has taken up a plea challenging the notification that barred MBBS graduates from outside the state from participating in the first round of the NEET PG 2025 counselling — a case now scheduled for a hearing in January 2026.

- **India sends vaccines abroad; global malaria and meningitis drug-resistance remain threats**

According to recent coverage, India delivered 63,734 doses of influenza and meningitis vaccines to Kabul, continuing its support to neighbouring countries.

Separately, the World Health Organization (WHO) warned that drug resistance remains a major challenge in global malaria control, after reporting that malaria caused about 6,10,000 deaths worldwide in 2024.

What It Means for India — & For You

- The WHO's guideline on GLP-1 therapies could change how obesity is treated globally and in India — but health experts emphasize that lifestyle and preventive care remain essential.
- The iron-deficiency study reminds us of hidden long-term risks of poor childhood nutrition — particularly relevant in regions where child nutrition remains suboptimal.
- The pollution-exercise research suggests that just doing physical activity isn't enough in polluted cities — improvements in air quality are equally important for long-term health benefits.
- A large HIV-positive population means sustained public-health focus on prevention, awareness, testing and treatment — even if prevalence rates appear low.
- Regulatory and educational updates in medical training (FMG counselling, NEET-PG rules) may impact how and where new doctors practice in India — which in time could influence availability of healthcare in different states.
- Vaccine deliveries and global disease-control efforts (malaria, meningitis) highlight India's dual role — as a nation dealing with its own health burdens, and as a contributor to global health solidarity.