

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**RAJYA SABHA  
STARRED QUESTION NO. 80  
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 30<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2024**

**MOTHER TO CHILD TRANSMISSION OF HIV**

**80 SMT. MAHUA MAJI:**

Will the Minister of Health and Family Welfare be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is taking effective measures to reduce the transmission rate of HIV from mother to child during breastfeed with appropriate medical interventions;
- (b) if so, the details of steps being taken;
- (c) whether Government is taking measures in collaborating with healthcare providers to facilitate linkage of HIV infected women to their nearest public health center and ensure that all HIV-infected pregnant women receive the treatment promptly; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER  
THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
(SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA)**

- (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO RAJYA SABHA  
STARRED QUESTION NO. 80 \* FOR 30<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2024**

(a)&(b): Yes. Government through National AIDS and STD Control Programme (NACP) has implemented the strategies for prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV from the HIV positive pregnant women to their babies through interventions under the initiative of "Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV (PPTCT) since 2002. These interventions are continuing under the phase V of National AIDS and STD Control Program (NACP) under the strategies for 'Elimination of Vertical Transmission of HIV and Syphilis' (EVTHS).

The medical interventions for elimination of vertical transmission of HIV from HIV positive pregnant women to their children include early diagnosis of HIV infection through universal screening of all pregnant women for HIV preferably during the first trimester of pregnancy at all public health facilities having Integrated Counseling and Testing Centres (ICTC) for HIV, Community Health Centres (CHC), Primary Health Centres (PHC), Ayushman Arogya Mandir, including Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Day (VHSND) sites.

The pregnant women screened reactive for HIV are then linked to the nearest Integrated Counseling and Testing Centres (ICTC) under the NACP for confirmation of their HIV diagnosis. Confirmed HIV positive pregnant women are then immediately linked to the nearest Anti Retro-Viral Treatment Centres (ARTC) where they are promptly initiated on effective free-of-cost lifelong Anti-Retro Viral Treatment.

All HIV positive pregnant women are provided with regular counseling by the counselor at the ARTC and the treatment adherence to the established protocol is closely monitored. Regular HIV viral load testing is undertaken for the HIV positive pregnant women on treatment so as to achieve viral suppression before delivery, thereby minimizing the chances of vertical transmission of HIV during pregnancy, at the time of delivery and during breastfeeding.

Babies born to HIV positive women are put on Anti Retro Viral prophylaxis treatment, preferably within 72 hours of birth and thereafter for 6 to 12 weeks. Mothers are provided counseling and advice on options for infant feeding practices. While the mother is being continuously counseled and monitored for treatment adherence and optimal viral load suppression during the breastfeeding period, the baby is monitored for early identification of HIV infection through Early Infant Diagnosis (EID) for HIV at 6 weeks, 6 months, 12 months and 18 months or three months after cessation of breast feeding, whichever is later. All these interventions are provided free of cost under the National AIDS and STD Control Program.

(c) & (d) Yes. The Government through its various National Health Programs like National Health Mission, National AIDS and STD Control Program provides training on screening and linkages, to all health care providers such as counselors, ANM, Staff Nurses, Laboratory technicians etc who are engaged in provisioning of the services for HIV screening under antenatal care.

Any pregnant woman found reactive for HIV during screening at peripheral health institutions like Ayushman Arogya Mandir, PHC, CHC and VHSND sites, are referred for confirmation of diagnosis to the nearest ICTC, which are located at District Hospitals and Medical Colleges, PHCs and CHCs. After confirmation of HIV diagnosis at the ICTC, the counselor at ICTC immediately links the HIV positive pregnant women to the nearest Anti Retro Viral Treatment Centre for initiation of treatment.

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