



High-Risk Pregnancies in India

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Why in News?

A recent study published in Journal of Global Health by researchers from the [ICMR's National Institute for Research in Reproductive and Child Health \(NIRRCH\)](#) in Mumbai, sheds light on the prevalence of **high-risk pregnancies** across India.

- A high-risk pregnancy indicates that a woman possesses one or more factors that elevate the **likelihood of health complications for either herself or the baby**, as well as an increased risk of preterm delivery.

What are the Key Findings of the Study?

- **High Prevalence:** The study found that **49.4% of pregnant women in India** had high-risk pregnancies.
 - Approximately **33%** of pregnant women had a single high-risk factor, while 16% had multiple high-risk factors.
- **Regional Disparities:** States like **Meghalaya, Manipur, and Mizoram**, along with **Telangana**, exhibited the highest prevalence of high-risk factors.
 - Conversely, **Sikkim, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh** had the lowest prevalence of high-risk pregnancies.
- **Factors Contributing to High-Risk Pregnancies:**
 - **Birth Spacing:** Short birth spacing, defined as **less than 18 months between previous birth and current conception**, was identified as a primary factor contributing to high-risk pregnancies.
 - **Maternal Risk Factors:** These included factors such as maternal age (adolescent or older than 35 years), short stature, and higher body mass index (BMI).
 - **Lifestyle and Previous Birth Outcome Risks:** Lifestyle risk factors like **tobacco and alcohol use**, as well as previous adverse birth outcomes such as miscarriage, abortion, or stillbirth, were significant contributors to high-risk pregnancies.

What are the Indian Government Initiatives Related to Pregnant Women?

- **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana:** It is being implemented as per provisions under **Section 4 of the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013** which provides for financial support for pregnant and lactating mothers to improve the health and nutrition for mother and child as well as compensation for wage loss.
- **Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY):** Provides cash assistance to pregnant women, especially from vulnerable sections, to encourage institutional delivery.
- **Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK):** Entitles all pregnant women to free delivery, including **C-sections (Cesarean section)**, in public health institutions along with free transport, diagnostics, medicines, and diet.
- **Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA):** Provides pregnant women a fixed day, free of cost assured and quality antenatal check up by a **Specialist/Medical Officer** on the 9th day of every month.

- **Surakshit Matratva Ashwasan (SUMAN):** Aims to ensure dignified, respectful, and quality healthcare at no cost for every pregnant woman and newborn in public facilities.
- **LaQshya:** Aims to improve the quality of care in **labour rooms**, potentially reducing complications and improving maternal and newborn outcomes.

Read More: [Stem Cells in Menstrual Blood](#)

Legal Insight: [Supreme Court Rejects Plea to Abort 26-Week Pregnancy](#)

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UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims:

Q. The endeavour of Janani Suraksha Yojana Programme is (2012)

1. to promote institutional deliveries
2. to provide monetary assistance to the mother to meet the cost of delivery
3. to provide for wage loss due to pregnancy and confinement

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (a)

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