



# 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 9<sup>th</sup> 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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