

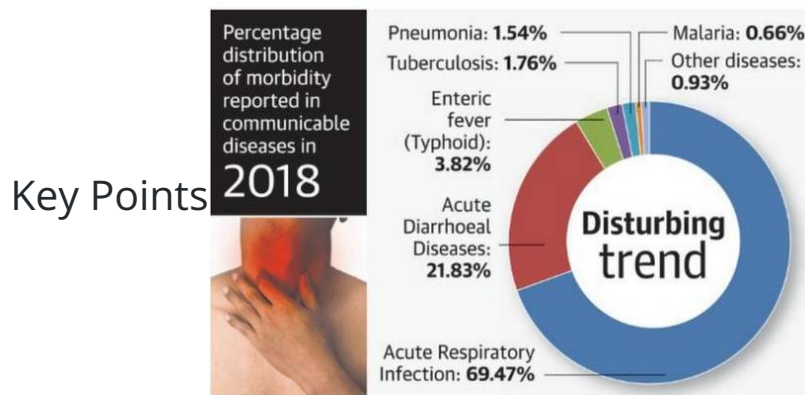


Acute Respiratory Infections

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Why in News

Recently, the data released by **the National Health Profile (NHP)-2019** showed a **higher number of people affected by Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI)** in the country.



- According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), ARI is a serious ailment that **prevents normal breathing** function.
- ARI accounted for **69.47% of morbidity** in 2018.
It was the **highest in the communicable disease category** leading to **27.21% mortality**.
- Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal reported a large number of patients and fatalities as per NHP-2019.

What Happens When You Breathe Polluted Air?

- When you breathe in polluted air, particles and pollutants penetrate and inflame the linings of your bronchial tubes and lungs.
- This leads to respiratory illness such as chronic bronchitis, emphysema, heart disease, asthma, wheezing, coughing and difficulty in breathing.

Impact on Health

- **Children:** Indians face the double burden of heavy air pollution in addition to the high rate of ARI which hits children the hardest.

The mortality rate among children due to **ARI is 2.6 million annually across the world.**

- **Pregnant Women:** Prenatal exposure to pollutants increases the risk of **pre-term delivery** and **low birth weight** that can lead to **developmental disabilities.**
- **Senior Citizens:** The progressive declining of body functioning due to old age makes air pollution more fatal for them.

They face frequent breathing problems which may lead to respiratory illness such as chronic bronchitis, emphysema, heart disease, asthma, wheezing, coughing, etc.

The existing disease burden with increasing air pollution is deteriorating the human capital of the country and therefore needs to be checked regularly.

Source: TH