

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6961  
ANSWERED ON:18.05.2012  
INFERTILITY IN URBAN COUPLES  
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**Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of rising cases of infertility among urban Indian couples;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the steps taken/proposed by the Government to address this problem;
- (d) whether various fertility drugs being marketed in the country are safe and effective;
- (e) if so, whether attention of the Government has been drawn to some reports which suggest that fertility drugs raise leukaemia risk in babies; and
- (f) if so, the facts in this regard?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY)

- (a): The Government is aware about the trend of infertility in the Country through the published studies carried out in the Country.
- (b): The following studies have reported the percentage of infertility in certain areas of the country.
  - (i) A study on epidemiology of Infertility was conducted in Chandigarh as a part of WHO multicentric study and a prevalence of 8% was reported.
  - (ii) A prevalence of 6.4% was revealed using WHO criteria at resettled colony at Chandigarh. (primary infertility 2.8% and secondary infertility 3.6%)
  - (iii) Another study reported from tertiary care medical center in the Kashmir Valley of India. 15% couples interviewed has primary infertility.
  - (iv) The study conducted by Dr. Unisa revealed a high incidence of childlessness in Andhra Pradesh compared to rest of India and suggested for infertility investigation and treatment of be included in the reproductive health programmed in India.
  - (v) Among the major states of India, Andhra Pradesh has the highest prevalence rate 7.4 per cent in the rural areas and 8.7 per cent in urban areas.
- (c): To collect comprehensive data indicating overall percentage of infertility in India community based survey under the study entitled 'Prevalence of Infertility in India, is ongoing in 13 States of Country covering both rural and urban areas.
- (d): Based on the reported information majority of the fertility drugs marketed in the country are safe and effective except the drug the 'Letrozole' marketing of which has been suspended by DCGI.
- (e) & (f): The Government is aware about the report indicating increase incidence of cardiac and bone anomalies in babies born in Letrozole group in comparison to control group. A abstract was presented during the annual meeting of the America Society of Reproductive Medicine during 2005 where it was reported that the incidence of cardiac and bone anomalies were higher in letrozole group in comparison to control group. Marketing of letrozole has been suspended by DCGI.