

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3609

ANSWERED ON:11.12.2009

HEPATITIS DISEASE

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Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has proposed/conducted any survey regarding number of persons dying of hepatitis every year in the country;
- (b) if so, the details and the findings thereof;
- (c) the reasons for the spread of the disease in the country; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to make the people aware of the symptoms of this disease and to check its spread in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE(SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD)

(a): No.

(b): Does not arise.

(c): Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver, most commonly caused by a viral infection. There are five main Hepatitis viruses, referred to as types A, B, C, D and E.

Hepatitis A and E are typically caused by ingestion of contaminated water or food. Hepatitis B, C and D usually occur as a result of parenteral contact with infected body fluids (eg. from blood transfusion, or invasive medical procedures using contaminated equipment). Hepatitis B is also transmitted through sexual contact.

(d): Hepatitis B and C are major causes of Viral Hepatitis, and can be best prevented by use of safe blood/blood products and through safe sex practices. Government promotes safe blood supply through campaigns on voluntary blood donation, and safe sex as part of the Information, Education and Communication (IEC) strategy for prevention and control of HIV/AIDS. Besides, the following steps have been taken to check the spread of Viral Hepatitis:

Incorporation of Hepatitis B vaccine in Universal Immunization Programme (UIP) was implemented in a phased manner in 2002 in 15 city slum areas and 33 districts. Presently, 10 states namely Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal are carrying out Hepatitis B vaccination as part of UIP.

Since April 2005, the Government has also introduced auto disabled (AD) syringes for all vaccinations under the UIP in all states. AD syringes are single use, self-locking syringes that cannot be used more than once. This prevents misuse and contamination/cross infection through repeated use of unsterile injection/equipment.

Routine screening of blood units collected by blood banks has been made mandatory to detect and discard contaminated blood units.