

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:673  
ANSWERED ON:26.02.2016  
Myopia in Children  
Senguttuvan Shri Balasubramaniam

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

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that the incidence of myopia is on the rise among children, particularly among schoolchildren, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether the Government is aware that AIIMS conducted study has revealed the prevalence of myopia in an alarming degree in school children, if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the initiatives/programmes undertaken by the Government to rid the children of the myopia disorder?

**Answer**

ANSWER  
THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
(SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA)

(a) & (b): According to the study conducted by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, the prevalence rate of myopia in school going children in Delhi schools has been found to be 13.1%, which is significantly higher than the findings of the studies conducted in 2001. However, nation-wide data on the prevalence rate of myopia among school children in the country is not available.

The likely reasons for increase in prevalence rate of myopia among school going children are as under:

- â€¢ Spending greater number of hours in reading and writing at school and home;
- â€¢ Excess use of computers, video games and television;
- â€¢ Family history of myopia;
- â€¢ Poor nutritional status;
- â€¢ Reduced outdoor activities etc.

(c): The following initiatives have been taken under the National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB) to rid the children of the myopia disorder:

- â€¢ Training of school teachers to identify refractive errors and common eye ailments among school children;

- â€¢ Distribution of free spectacles to school children detected with refractive errors under School Eye Screening Programme;
- â€¢ Training of eye surgeons in various eye specialties including pediatric ophthalmology to enhance skill level;
- â€¢ Development of IEC material to create awareness about preventive measures for eye diseases including myopia among children;
- â€¢ Financial assistance to NGOs for treatment of childhood blindness;
- â€¢ Setting up of pediatric ophthalmology units at Medical Colleges and Regional Institutes of Ophthalmology.