

## Press release

### Introduction of Pentavalent vaccine in Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu has always been one of the pioneer states in the country in implementing health care programmes with special attention on maternal and child health.

In order to provide basic health care services to the door steps of the poor communities, this Government has ordered to conduct immunization sessions in all villages by the Village Health Nurses besides institutional immunization services.

#### Success achieved through immunization programme in Tamil Nadu

Annually, about 11 lakhs newborns get immunized with 5 vaccines (BCG, OPV, DPT, Measles and Hepatitis-B) as per the National Immunization Schedule in Tamil Nadu in order to protect them against life threatening disease Diphtheria, Pertussis, Neonatal -Tetanus, Poliomyelitis, Measles and Hepatitis B. Due to the persistent successful implementation of the immunization programme over the last three decades, the state has not seen any polio case for the past 7 years. The incidence of Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus are almost nil. There is significant reduction in Measles cases.

As a result of its good health infrastructure and successful immunization programme, the Government of India has selected Tamil Nadu for the introduction of the Pentavalent vaccine.

The Pentavalent vaccine includes the Hib vaccine along with DPT and Hepatitis B which are already included as part of the routine immunization schedule.

#### Doses of Pentavalent vaccine

Infants are given 3 doses of the vaccine at the 6<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> weeks of age along with OPV polio drops. **From the month of December onwards, 1½ month old children, eligible for the 1<sup>st</sup> dose of DPT alone will be started with Pentavalent vaccine .**

#### Advantages of Pentavalent:

- The Pentavalent vaccine provides protection to a child from 5 life threatening disease : Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Hepatitis B and Pneumonia & Meningitis.

The Main advantages of the Pentavalent vaccine are:

- to reduce the number of pricks to a child.
- the new inclusion of Hib will reduce the burden of pneumonia and meningitis in the children of under 5 years.

#### Beneficiaries:

Approximately 3.60 lakhs infants will be getting benefited during the current year 2011-12. Every year, about 11.00 lakhs newborns will be covered with 3 doses of Pentavalent vaccine.

#### Inaugural Function:

Hon'ble Minister for Health and Family Welfare is launching the Introduction of Pentavalent vaccine at 10.00 a.m. in Alamelu Mangapuram Primary Health Centre in Vellore District on 17-12-2011.

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