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Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.

Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
5570	13.10.2019	14.10.2019	Bengaluru Karnataka	www.timesofindia.com/English https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/diphtheria-cases-surge-84-in-2-months-north-karnataka-worst-hit/articleshow/71558533.cms
Title:	Diphtheria cases surge 84% in two months; north Karnataka worst hit			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU- Bengaluru , SSU- Karnataka			

The number of diphtheria cases has gone up 84% in less than two months — from 251 in mid-August to 464 as on October 12. Districts in North Karnataka are particularly affected.

2019 has witnessed more cases as compared to the previous two years: 203 were reported in 2017 and 115 in 2018.

It may be recalled that over 25 students of Gulbarga Institute of Medical Sciences had tested positive for diphtheria in the first week of September, which is said to be the largest outbreak in recent years.

The state-run Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health (IGICH) in Bengaluru has seen 42 cases of diphtheria referred from North Karnataka since April 2019. A severe infection can cause complications of the heart muscle, which was seen in 12 of the 42 cases, said Dr Sanjay KS, director, IGICH. "The cases have increased this year compared to previous years. Severe infection can affect heart functioning. Such patients need treatment for multiple weeks. No deaths due to diphtheria have been reported," said Dr Sanjay.

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Disclaimer:- This is a media alert subject to verification.

**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**

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Page 1



एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

13 CASES REPORTED IN BENGALURU THIS YEAR

Bengaluru has seen 13 cases of diphtheria – most patients have been treated at IGICH – and health authorities say there's no big threat in the state capital. "Most patients end up giving their relatives' addresses in Bengaluru when they are referred here for treatment," said Dr Sanjay. However, each diphtheria case is considered an outbreak as the infection can spread through respiratory droplets.



DISTRICTS WITH HIGHEST BURDEN

Name	Diphtheria cases (from Jan-Oct 12)
Kalaburagi	94
Vijayapura	60
Bagalkote	43
Koppal	43
Raichur	34
Belagavi	25
Chikkaballapura	21
State total	464

Data: Health and family welfare dept

According to him, diphtheria was seen among children who were vaccinated but may have missed the booster dose. "The outbreak suggests the vaccine itself is not enough and administration of the booster dose is equally important. There is lack of awareness in North

Karnataka districts of Kalaburagi, Ballari and Raichur, from where cases are referred to IGICH," added Dr Sanjay.

Diphtheria vaccine (pentavalent) is administered six, 10 and 14 weeks after the child's birth and DPT (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus) booster dose-1 at 18 months. The second booster dose is given when the child is aged 5-6. More booster doses are administered in the form of TD vaccine (tetanus, diphtheria) at the ages of 10 and 16.

Pankaj Kumar Pandey, commissioner, health and family welfare department said that the government has initiated measures to tackle spread of the infection. The health department will start a DPT/TD vaccination campaign from December 11-31 in the worst-hit North Karnataka districts. "The campaign will target all children in the age group of 5-16 in eight districts: Raichur, Yadgir, Kalaburagi, Bidar, Vijayapura, Bagalkote, Koppal and Chitradurga. It will focus on children in schools and anganwadis and even those out of schools. In the remaining districts of the state, the drive will target children aged 5-6 years (DPT vaccine), 10 and 16 (TD vaccine)," said Pandey.

Though the state was earlier facing a shortage of vaccines, the commissioner said Karnataka's request for supply has been approved by the Union health ministry. "Currently, we have no vaccine shortage," he said.

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