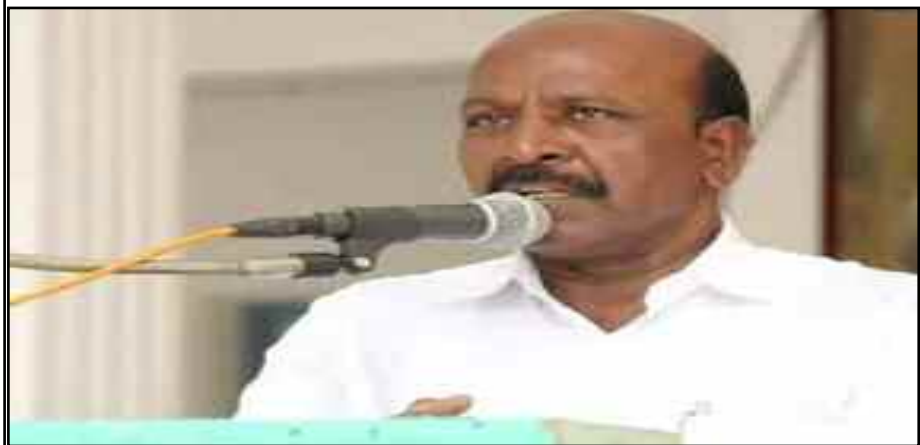


India's first free cancer vaccination programme for girls aged 1-14 in TN soon: Minister Subramanian



Tamil Nadu is poised to script a national milestone by becoming the first state in India to roll out a free cancer vaccination programme for girls aged between one and 14 years, state Health and Family Welfare Minister Ma. S u b r a m a n i a n announced on Sunday. Speaking at the 16th annual breast cancer awareness walkathon, titled 'Oru Nadai Oru Nambikkai' (One Step, One Hope), held at Island Grounds in Chennai, the Minister said the State govern-

ment has allocated Rs 38 crore for the landmark preventive healthcare initiative. "The tender process has been completed. Once launched, Tamil Nadu will be the first state in the country to provide the cancer-preventive vaccine entire-

ly free of cost to girls aged one to fourteen," the Minister said, adding that the initiative would set a precedent for similar projects across India. He also emphasised the growing importance of lifestyle and physical fitness in preventing cancer. "Scientific studies have proven that those who walk or run daily face a significantly lower risk of developing cancer. Regular exercise is one of the most effective preventive measures," he said. Highlighting Chief Minister M. K. Stalin's personal commitment to public health and

e n v i r o n m e n t , Subramanian noted that the former had inspected the Adyar estuary for the second consecutive day, as part of the state's flood-preparedness efforts. "I myself walked 13 kilometres this morning," he added, underscoring the event's theme of fitness and awareness. The Minister also revealed that six districts in Tamil Nadu had been placed on alert following reports of a possible global resurgence of polio after two decades. Precautionary vaccination drives, he said, were already underway

EDUCATION PLUS How are Indian schools addressing digital literacy and mental health challenges?



India's education system is witnessing a transformative shift, blending traditional values with modern innovations. Policies like NEP and RTE have redefined learning, emphasising inclusivity, skill-building, and emotional well-being. The Indian education landscape has undergone profound changes, driven by progressive policies and a growing emphasis on holistic learning. From democratising access to quality education through the Right to Education (RTE) Act to implementing the transformative National Education Policy (NEP), the sector has made significant strides in inclusivity and innovation. Today, education not only caters to academic excellence but also fosters partnerships between parents and schools, creating a robust support system for students.

Adapting to these changes, schools have embraced a forward-thinking approach while preserving core values. The essence of a strong education system lies in nurturing curiosity and critical thinking, equipping students with the tools to navigate an unpredictable future. Recognising this, schools are focusing on imparting skills for a world shaped by emerging technologies. Early exposure to fields like artificial intelligence, data science, and digital innovations prepares students for challenges that await them 10–15 years down the line. India's education system is evolving, blending tradition with modern innovations. India Today spoke with Praneet Mungali, Trustee, Sanskriti Group of Schools, Pune, to explore these changes.

INNOVATION TEACHING FOR AN ENGAGED FUTURE
Modern education demands more than rote learning; it requires engagement, relevance, and emotional connection. Schools have risen to this challenge by incorporating Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into their teaching methodologies. SEL blends seamlessly into subjects like history, science, and mathematics, making lessons more relatable and impactful.

For instance, students might role-play historical figures to explore their motivations or engage in peer interviews to discuss contemporary issues. Group projects encourage collaboration, as students learn to allocate roles and work towards shared goals, fostering both teamwork and empathy.

VALUES AT THE HEART OF EDUCATION
"In an era dominated by rapid technological and societal changes, schools are emphasising the importance of values. Striking a balance between personal fulfillment and material success, the curriculum is designed to nurture emotionally resilient individuals. Central to this framework is the concept of Vivek he ability to discern right from wrong," said Praneet Mungali, Trustee, Sanskriti Group of Schools, Pune.

This timeless skill is woven into daily learning, guiding students towards becoming morally upright and emotionally balanced adults. **ADDRESSING CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES**

As the education landscape evolves, schools are actively addressing pressing challenges such as digital literacy, curriculum adaptability, and mental health. Frequent workshops by experts on cyber safety ensure students are equipped to navigate the digital world responsibly. In-house AI coaches provide hands-on experiences, helping children embrace technology early on.

"Mental health, a cornerstone of student well-being, is prioritised through structured SEL programmes. These programmes equip students with the tools to manage emotions, build meaningful relationships, and express empathy. By fostering emotional intelligence, schools lay the foundation for happy, well-adjusted individuals who can thrive in any environment," said he further added.

As India continues to redefine education, the focus remains on creating a generation of learners who are curious, compassionate, and competent. By integrating innovation with tradition, schools are shaping a future where students not only succeed academically but also contribute meaningfully to society. The transformation of education is not just about adapting to change but leading it with vision and purpose.

Vijay GarG, Retired principal Educational Columnist Street kour Chand MHR Malout Punjab

Are Vitamins Actually Harming Your Body? Nutritionist Explains How

Hydration is the key to good health. Pooja Makhija, author of the best-selling book Eat Delete and celebrity nutritionist, recently shared a video addressing whether vitamin intake on a regular basis harms the body. She also explains what happens when you don't drink water in a proper quantity, highlighting a few unique nutritional hacks to deal with the situation. In the clip, she asks, "Are your vitamins actually harming your body?" further adding, "Well, without enough water, they just might be. Let me explain why. Having ample water with your vitamins is not an option. It is crucial for your health." As per Pooja Makhija, these are the major problems related to the consumption of water along with vitamins:

She says, "A cereal dose of vitamins requires anywhere between 250-300 ml of water- a regular glass of water. But if you are having multiple vitamins at one time, you may require anywhere between 350-400 ml of water to absorb them effectively." According to the nutritionist, water-soluble vitamins such as B-complex and Vitamin C require water for optimal absorption into the intestine. She then cites the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition and shares, "A study showed that when you drink less water, it affects the rate of absorption and also may call oesophageal irritation." Another study published



in the Nutrition Research Review found that taking iron and calcium or taking vitamins with less water irritates the stomach and may also cause constipation. In Pooja Makhija's words: "Now, while fat-soluble vitamins do require a fatty diet to be absorbed, they also require water to transport to the digestive system. When you drink less water, it causes gastrointestinal discomfort and fishy burps—remember that!"

She suggests, "So, next time you take your vitamins, don't take them with just a sip of water. Drink ample water, and don't skimp on the quantity." "Taking vitamins without enough water can lead to poor absorption, stomach irritation, or worse—completely wasted benefits. Remember: Hydration isn't just about quenching thirst—it's about helping your body work smarter, not harder," she writes in the video's caption.

JP Nadda launches vigilance week, urges citizens to make it institutional habit



Vigilance is an institutional habit, said Health Minister JP Nadda on Monday, while launching the 'Vigilance Awareness Week 2025'. The 'Vigilance Awareness Week' is being observed across the country from October 27 to November 2 with the theme -- 'Vigilance: Our Shared Responsibility'. The observance aims to promote integrity, transparency, and accountability in public life, as well as fight corruption and unethical practices collectively as a society. The awareness campaign is in accordance with the directives of the Central

Vigilance Commission (CVC). The Health Minister emphasised the importance of institutionalising ethical practices and building a culture of vigilance at every level of governance. He also administered and took the Integrity Pledge along with senior officers and staff of the Ministry. "A checklist of do's and don'ts should be prepared in simple, layman's terms so that people do not end up doing anything wrong in good faith or under compassionate consideration," Nadda said. "Training and capacity building

should be a regular exercise so that everyone remains aware and alert," he added. Celebrated annually in the last week of October to commemorate the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (October 31), the initiative aims to foster greater public awareness about the importance of integrity, accountability, and ethical conduct in public life. As a prelude to 'Vigilance Awareness Week 2025', the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) had earlier in the month of August this year issued a circular advising all organisations to undertake a three-month campaign on Preventive Vigilance from August 18 to November 17. The campaign focused on five key areas namely, (i) Disposal of pending complaints (ii) Disposal of pending cases (iii) Capacity building programs (iv) Asset Management, and (v) Digital initiatives. Officials at the Ministry participated in the pledge ceremony and reaffirmed their commitment to upholding ethical values, transparency, and accountability in public service.

How Sweet Potatoes Support Heart Health and Anti-Cancer Properties

How Sweet Potatoes Support Heart Health and Anti-Cancer Properties Sweet potatoes are a heart-healthy and cancer-protective food due to their nutrient-rich profile. Sweet potatoes are highly nutritious and beneficial for regular consumption due to their rich nutrient profile. They are an excellent source of dietary fibre, vitamins (notably vitamin A in the form of beta-carotene), potassium, and antioxidants, while being low in fat and calories. Regular consumption supports

various health benefits, such as improved digestion, enhanced immune function, and better blood sugar regulation due to their low glycemic index. Along with these benefits, they have also seen to show benefits to heart health and have anti-cancer properties. Read on as we discuss these benefits. How can sweet potatoes support heart health? Sweet potatoes are a heart-friendly food due to their rich nutrient profile that promotes cardiovascular well-being. One of their standout compo-

nents is potassium, a mineral essential for maintaining healthy blood pressure levels. Potassium works by balancing sodium levels in the body, reducing water retention, and relaxing blood vessel walls. This mechanism helps lower the risk of hypertension, a significant factor in heart disease. By replacing high-sodium foods with potassium-rich sweet potatoes, individuals can improve their cardiovascular health naturally. Additionally, sweet potatoes are an excellent

source of dietary fibre, which plays a crucial role in reducing levels of LDL cholesterol (often referred to as "bad cholesterol"). High LDL levels can lead to plaque buildup in the arteries, increasing the risk of atherosclerosis and heart attacks. Fibre also improves overall lipid profiles, contributing to better heart health. How Sweet Potatoes Support Heart Health and Anti-Cancer Properties Sweet potatoes are a heart-healthy and cancer-protective food due to

their nutrient-rich profile Sweet potatoes are highly nutritious and beneficial for regular consumption due to their rich nutrient profile.

They are an excellent source of dietary fibre, vitamins (notably vitamin A in the form of beta-carotene), potassium, and antioxidants, while being low in fat and calories. Regular consumption supports various health benefits, such as improved digestion, enhanced immune function, and better blood sugar regulation due to their low glycemic index. Along with these benefits, they have also seen to show benefits to heart health and have anti-cancer properties. Read on as

we discuss these benefits. How can sweet potatoes support heart health? Sweet potatoes are a heart-friendly food due to their rich nutrient profile that promotes cardiovascular well-being. One of their standout components is potassium, a mineral essential for maintaining healthy blood pressure levels. Potassium works by balancing sodium levels in the body, reducing water retention, and relaxing blood vessel walls. This mechanism helps lower the risk of hypertension, a significant factor in heart disease. By replacing high-sodium foods with potassium-rich sweet potatoes, individuals can improve their cardiovascular health naturally.