



Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

## “No data to show children will be seriously infected in subsequent COVID-19 waves”

### To avoid future waves, aggressively follow COVID Appropriate Behaviour: Dr. Guleria

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“It is a piece of misinformation that subsequent waves of the COVID-19 pandemic are going to cause severe illness in children. There is no data - either from India or globally - to show that children will be seriously infected in subsequent waves.” This was informed by Director, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Delhi, Dr. Randeep Guleria, during a media briefing on COVID-19, held at National Media Centre, PIB Delhi today.

Dr. Guleria cited that 60% to 70% of the children who got infected and got admitted in hospitals during the second wave in India, had either comorbidities or low immunity; healthy children recovered with mild illness without need for hospitalization.

There's no evidence to prove that children will be affected in the #Covid third wave. According to the second wave data, Out of all the kids admitted in hospitals, 60-70% had co-morbidities or low immunity: @MoHFW\_INDIA #Unite2FightCorona pic.twitter.com/pVkstNCH9L

— PIB India (@PIB\_India) June 8, 2021

#### **COVID Appropriate Behaviour is Key to Preventing Future Waves**

Director AIIMS explained why waves occur in any pandemic. Waves normally occur in pandemics caused due to respiratory viruses; the 1918 Spanish Flu, H1N1 (swine) flu are examples, said Dr. Guleria. “The second wave of 1918 Spanish Flu was the biggest, after which there was a smaller third wave.”



#COVID19 is a respiratory virus and it is well-known that a pandemic respiratory virus occurs in waves.

After multiple waves, the virus becomes like an endemic and the infection develops a seasonality.

- Dr. Randeep Guleria, Director, AIIMS [pic.twitter.com/zyjJVaq20C](https://twitter.com/zyjJVaq20C)

— PIB India (@PIB\_India) June 8, 2021

And as we know, SARS-Cov-2 is a respiratory virus.

1. Multiple waves occur when there is a susceptible population

When a large part of the population acquires immunity against the infection, the virus becomes endemic and infection becomes seasonal – like that of H1N1 that commonly spreads during monsoon or winters.

2. Waves can occur due to change in the virus (such as new variants)

Since new mutations become more infectious, there is a higher chance for the virus to spread.

3. One of the reasons behind a wave can be human behaviour

Dr. Guleria cautions: "Whenever cases increase, there is a fear in people and human behaviour changes. People strictly follow COVID Appropriate behaviours and non-pharmaceutical interventions help break the chain of transmission. But when unlocking resumes, people tend to think that not much infection will happen and tend to not follow COVID appropriate behaviour. Due to this, the virus again starts spreading in the community, leading potentially to another wave."

The Director said that if we have to stop subsequent waves, we need to aggressively follow COVID appropriate behaviour until we can say that a significant number of our population is vaccinated or has acquired natural immunity. "When enough people are vaccinated or when we acquire natural immunity against the infection, then these waves will stop. The only way out is to strictly follow COVID appropriate behaviour".

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