

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF AYUSH**

**RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2411  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10<sup>th</sup> AUGUST, 2021**

**PROMOTION OF IMMUNITY BOOSTERS DURING PANDEMIC**

**2411 DR. L. HANUMANTHAIAH:**

Will the Minister of **AYUSH** be pleased to state :

- a) whether Government has promoted various formulations and drugs as 'Immunity Boosters' since the COVID-19 pandemic began;
- b) if so, the empirical evidence supporting such claims of boosting immunity, especially against COVID-19;
- c) the scientific meaning/definition of the term 'Immunity Booster';
- d) whether Government is aware that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has taken action against firms fraudulently claiming that their products boost immunity against COVID19, and that advertising rules in the United Kingdom prohibit such misleading claims altogether; and
- e) if so, whether Government is considering similar restrictions on such claims and will initiate punitive action against those making them?

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF AYUSH  
(SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL)**

(a): The Ministry of AYUSH issued guidelines and advisories to improve immunity and advised simple home remedies easily accessible to the general public. The Ministry also recommended a set of self-care guidelines for preventive health measures, with special emphasis on respiratory health and improving general immunity. Ayush Preventive Measures for self-care during COVID-19 Pandemic has also been revised as per the need of the current scenario. Further, the Ministry has issued National Clinical Management Protocol based on Ayurveda and Yoga for management of COVID-19 which incorporates guidelines

for prophylaxis from COVID-19. These guidelines and protocol are available on the website of Ministry of AYUSH.

Ministry of AYUSH has formed an Inter-disciplinary AYUSH R&D Task Force having representation from Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) and AYUSH Institutions. The Inter-disciplinary AYUSH R&D Task Force has formulated and designed clinical research protocols for prophylactic studies and add-on interventions in COVID-19 positive cases for studying four different interventions viz. Ashwagandha, Yashtimadhu, Guduchi + Pippali and a poly herbal formulation (AYUSH-64). Under various research organizations and National Research Institutes 126 studies have been initiated in 152 centers in the country to identify effective medicine for managing the patients with symptoms of COVID-19. It includes 42 prophylactic studies.

Ministry of AYUSH has also released Home care guidelines for children and Advisory for AYUSH Practitioners about prophylactic care in Children during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

(b): The self-care guidelines issued by the Ministry have been duly vetted by eminent Ayurveda experts. The National Clinical Management Protocol was developed based on the recommendations of the Interdisciplinary Committee for Integration of Ayurveda and Yoga Interventions in the 'National Clinical Management Protocol: COVID-19' constituted by the Ministry. These recommendations are based on the interim trends of ongoing and completed AYUSH studies on COVID-19 and experimental and clinical published data indicating potential benefits and safety of AYUSH interventions.

Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), have undertaken 12 prophylactic studies on COVID-19 wherein Ayurveda interventions have been administered to assess their efficacy in improving the immunity. These prophylactic studies have shown promising outcomes in reducing the incidence of COVID-19, less episodes of non-COVID illness and significant improvement in generalized immunity observed by Immune Status Questionnaire.

Ministry of Ayush has developed Ayush Sanjivani mobile app and has documented the impact assessment of effectiveness, acceptance and usage of Ayush advisories & measures in the prevention of COVID-19 through the Mobile app base population study in around 1.5 crores respondents. 85.1% of the respondents reported use of Ayush measures for prevention of COVID-19, among which 89.8% respondents agreed to have benefitted from the practice of Ayush advisory.

(c): In Ayurveda, immunity is referred to as *vyadhikshamatva*. Ayurveda has a comprehensive approach of immunity. Those measures which influence the host defense responses are generally considered as immunity boosters. Significantly, various modifiable factors have been enlisted in Ayurveda that influence the host defense responses (*Bala/Vyadhikshamatva*). These factors include a healthy diet (*Pathyaahara*), condition of

biological humors (*dosha*) and the state of physical and mental health (*Sareera*). The previous Covid 19 related advisories issued by the Ministry of AYUSH are based on this host defense mechanism or salutogenesis and also on various empirical evidences available from peer reviewed and indexed publications.

(d): Four instances of Unapproved, Misbranded Products related to Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) was reported by US-FDA and brought to notice of this Ministry by USFDA India Office. Such instances were further addressed from this Ministry to concerned State Licensing Authorities to take legal action. On this account compliance is also reported from all the manufacturers or contravening doctors.

(e): An order dated 1.4.2020 and further dated 5.4.2021 was issued from Ministry of Ayush to stop and prevent publicity and advertisement of AYUSH-related claims for COVID-19 treatment in print, TV and electronic media to All State Principal Secretaries/Secretaries Health and AYUSH, State Licensing Authorities AYUSH (SLA), Pharmacovigilance centres, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Press Council of India and Advertising Standards Council of India.

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