

# Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV)

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**In news-** Andhra Pradesh Government recently launched a Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV) drive.

## **About Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV)-**

- The PCV is a “safe and effective” vaccine administered in **three doses at the age of 6 weeks, 14 weeks, and 40 weeks**.
- It is given against a group of diseases caused by a **bacterium called Streptococcus Pneumoniae** (also known as pneumococcus).
- PCV contains purified capsular polysaccharide of pneumococcal serotypes conjugated to a carrier protein to improve antibody response.
- The diseases are:
  - **Pneumonia:** It is a form of acute respiratory infection that causes inflammation or fluid in the lungs. It makes breathing difficult and limits oxygen intake. Viruses, bacteria, and fungi can all cause pneumonia.
  - **Bacteremia/sepsis:** bloodstream infection, with or without infection of secondary sites, e.g., meningitis
  - **Bacterial meningitis:** infection of the membranes that cover and protect the spinal cord and brain
  - **Otitis media:** Middle ear infection
- Antibiotics can treat many forms of pneumonia.
- Pneumonia accounts for nearly 1 million deaths worldwide and is the single largest infectious cause of death among children under five years of age.
- PCV was introduced in India’s **Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP)** in a phased manner from June 2017 onwards.
- PCV has been shown to protect very young children

starting at 6 weeks of age when infants are most at risk of infection.