

## **Bridging the gap regarding awareness of vaccination among parents is important: Shaina NC**

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**She encourages mothers to be the torchbearers for the Swasth Immunised India campaign**



Shaina NC, known for her charitable work and prominent position as a BJP spokesperson recently participated in a panel discussion at a media house along with other dignitaries such as Chandrashekhar Chiplunkar, Assistant Health Officer, BMC and Dr. Nitin Shah, Consultant, Pediatric, Haemato- Oncologist, Hinduja Hospital. The panel discussion held by the Network18 group focused on Swasth Immunised India and the health of our future generations. It specifically highlighted the importance of immunization and discussed the various myths that are associated with it. Lending her voice towards the campaign, she highlighted that for a Swasth India, it is imperative that preventive measures are taken and that is possible only when people are made aware of the available preventive measures both via the government and private institutions.

During the conversation, Shaina said, "A Swasth India can only materialize if we have a Swasth Immunized India. The government has undertaken initiatives such as running campaigns for measles, typhoid, and polio and will continue to do that under the health ministry. Most important is the pricing of vaccination and raising awareness for mothers, thereby encouraging them to seek these preventive measures; as a mother, I would want every parent to understand the significance of timely and proper vaccination and how it helps in providing a healthier life to children."

Further delving into the topic, the other panellists; Chandrashekhar Chiplunkar and Dr. Nitin Shah, raised their concerns about the ignorance of parents for vaccination. In one of his conversation, Dr. Nitin Shah mentioned, "There are two aspects as to why people are opposed to vaccination; one due to their lack of awareness and secondly, there are willingly not taking vaccines due to the influence of anti-vaccine groups. This knowledge gap has to be bridged by both private companies and government officials, while also addressing myths such that the anti-vaccine groups' influence on people is reduced."

He further added, "We have increased our completely immunized children chart from 65% to 82%, but we want more doctors, media, health authorities and parents to come together and form a lobby against anti-vaccine lobbies so as to see further increase in the number of immunized children in India."

Engaging the audience with this conversation and encouraging them to consider their child's health as priority, the panelists highlighted the recent outbreak of measles (India and abroad) which was considered to be eradicated. As per the WHO and Government of India guidelines, every child should be given 2 doses of vaccination (In 9 months and 16 months) against measles. Stating a real situation, Chandrashekhar Chiplunkar mentioned that Maharashtra has successfully implemented MR vaccine to over 90% population) and the government has conducted 42000 Immunization sessions for parents.

Concluding this engaging and topical conversation, the panelists mentioned to the audience, especially the mothers, that the side effects of vaccinations are short-lived, and urged the audience and viewers to share the knowledge they have received as well as encourage other members of their respective communities to participate in immunizations drives to help prevent their children from contracting fatal diseases.