AIR FORCE WIVES WELFARE ASSOCIATION



वायु शक्ति संगिनी

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Disclaimer

The contents of this magazine are only for information of Sanginis. The benefits listed therein are subject to change from time to time. Neither this magazine nor any part thereof constitutes any authority for any claim whatsover.

अफवा गान

अफवा के संग पायें हम समृद्धि व स्वाभिमान (02)
वायु शक्ति संगिनी संस्था बने महान्। (02)

सुख संग्रह का यत्न हो
संघर्षमय जब जीवन हो (02)
भाग्य का आडम्बर
राह का न कुछ पता हो।

नव दिशा, नव जीवन, नव ज्ञान की करें आन।
वायु शक्ति संगिनी संस्था बने महान्। (02)

वायुसेना के आँगन में
उन्नत बने हर तन–मन (02)
विद्या की कामना हो
सबला बने कल्याणम्।

नवशक्ति, निर्वाणरूपा, शान्ति का करें आह्वान
वायु शक्ति संगिनी संस्था बने महान्। (02)

कश्मीर से कन्याकुमारी तक
अफवा संस्थाओं की माला (02)
पूर्व से लेकर पश्चिम तक
स्वयम् इन्हें संवारा।

हम एक हैं सिखाया, भारतीयता महान्।
वायु शक्ति संगिनी संस्था बने महान्।

अफवा के संग पायें हम समृद्धि व स्वाभिमान
वायु शक्ति संगिनी संस्था बने महान्।

संस्था बने महान्। (03)

श्रीमती विजय प्रभा नाडकर्णी
पत्नी एयर मार्शल डी आर नाडकर्णी
प वि से मे अ वि से मे वा मे (सेवा निवृत्त)

MESSAGE FROM CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF



Air Chief Marshal Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria PVSM AVSM VM ADC

It gives me immense pleasure to compliment Air Force Wives Welfare Association (AFWWA) on completion of 50 years of welfare activities towards the families of service personnel. I am equally pleased on the release of the 26th edition of the 'Sangini Magazine' on the occasion.

Over the past five decades, AFWWA has charted a unique path for itself starting with a humble mission and growing into the vibrant association that it is today. The Sanginis have come together on numerous occasions not only to support each other but also to contribute towards nation building. The air warriors that have served and those who are currently serving in the IAF have done so with the unstinted support provided by Sanginis at every step. The immense contribution by Sanginis, as members of AFWWA, has been instrumental in strengthening our social fabric and adding tremendous value to the Indian Air Force way of life.

Even as COVID-19 pandemic adversely affected nearly all aspects of our world as we know it, the Sanginis demonstrated grit, determination and initiative in carrying out welfare initiatives across our residential areas. Maintaining all safety precautions, members of AFWWA worked hand in hand with respective stations' administration to provide door to door delivery of grocery, facemasks, sanitisers and other essential items not just to IAF personnel but also outside our residential complexes to the needy and homeless labourers. It is to their credit that the AFWWA thrift shops functioned without any dearth of essential items. This helped IAF personnel and their families to adapt to the new norms of social interaction during the COVID-19 pandemic and continue discharging their duties.

I also commend AFWWA for functioning by adopting modern techniques such as webinars to conduct numerous activities for the benefit of IAF personnel. Board of Management meetings, conduct of declamation contests for children, interactive discussions on social issues and Cyber Crime Intervention Officer courses were some of the initiatives conducted on webinar which have benefited Sanginis and their families. The role of AFWWA in providing moral and much needed financial support to its members is also praiseworthy.

This edition of 'Sangini Magazine' has very thoughtfully included all information on the medical, social, vocational and financial amenities or assistance that the service provides for the welfare of the families of IAF personnel. These facilities have been provided to assist them in nurturing their families while the service personnel are preoccupied with their duties or long outstation deployments.

My appreciation to the editorial team for their efforts in publishing this commemorative edition and providing a complimentary copy to every member of AFWWA. I also extend my warm greetings to all Sanginis of IAF and wish them success in all their future endeavours.

Jai Hind !

Air Chief Marshal
Chief of the Air Staff

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT AFWWA



Mrs Asha Bhadauria

My felicitations to each Sangini for the golden jubilee year of AFWWA. From 1970 to 2020, this organization has seen countless women transform from young spouses to confident strong individuals who are the bedrock of their own families and the larger Indian Air Force fraternity they come to adopt as their own.

From its inception 50 years back till today the raison d'être of AFWWA has been to provide a support system to its members who represent the diversity of our country. Towards this, very aptly, the first two ventures that took root were of providing financial support to widows and a scholarship scheme for wards of IAF personnel. Over the decades the organization branched out and set up essentials - Play Schools, Thrift shops, Hostels, Schools for Special children- that have now became ubiquitous and synonymous to the civic-social infrastructure across various Air Force Stations. The AFWWA song, logo and magazine came along as significant milestones in the organisation's journey in providing a unique identity to all 'Sanginis'. AFWWA today aims to keep pace with developments of the society at large and towards this it strives to bring in incremental and evolutionary changes in its 'ventures' and set-up. We wish to plan our roadmap in consonance with the growth of the Indian Air Force towards the next decade with its members bringing in fresh ideas as independent contributors.

My message would be incomplete if I do not acknowledge the admirable conduct of our 'Sangini' in these testing times with COVID-19 pandemic. The year that we are living in has seen the world battle a pandemic which none of us had foreseen. From our lifestyles to our priorities- everything has changed and it is with a feeling of great pride that I note here that our 'Sangini' has effortlessly re-oriented her goals to help meet the larger aim of keeping our Air Force Stations safe and COVID free. From helping in community kitchens for the needy, being there for her family and children as they struggled through a completely altered format of online learning and home quarantine, our Sangini has managed to bring smiles behind the face masks that we all don today. Inspite of the challenging times, the Sanginis continue to work with dedication and innovation to accomplish the AFWWA tasks. My special compliments to all Sanginis for great work done in this year gone by.

With these thoughts in mind, I very lovingly dedicate the Golden Jubilee edition of the Sangini magazine to our very own 'Sangini'. The 26th edition has been conceived as a handbook with an endeavour to cover topics of relevance and provide important information. I do hope that as she traverses her life goals with us in the Indian Air Force, this handbook serves as a worthy companion and adds to her happiness.

Last but definitely not the least, my compliments to an efficient editorial team for having accomplished the task in compressed timelines and a difficult environment.

Jai Hind !

Mrs. Asha Bhadauria
President AFWWA



Mrs Baljeet Arora

MESSAGE FROM VICE PRESIDENT AFWWA

My greetings to all Sanginis on the occasion of release of 'Sangini' magazine. The annual release of this magazine has become a much awaited event in our calendars.

AFWWA has successfully brought together the aspirations and potential of the Sanginis. The fact that AFWWA is celebrating Golden Jubilee Year fills our heart with an immense sense of pride and satisfaction. The journey of five decades has successfully overcome many challenges in supporting families of our air warriors during their ever demanding and onerous call of duty.

'Sangini' is a wonderful compilation of creativity and thoughtfulness showcasing the versatility of our Sanginis. I am delighted to review the latest edition of this magazine. My compliments to all those who have contributed valuable articles for the magazine as well as to the editorial team of 'Sangini' for conceptualising and putting together yet another splendid edition.

My best wishes to the Sanginis and their families in all their endeavours for a better future.

Stay Safe, Stay Strong!!!

Jai Hind !

MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY AFWWA



Mrs Bhagyashri Vidhate

It is my privilege to pen down my thoughts in this 26th edition of 'Sangini Magazine' which also happens to be the 'Golden Jubilee' of AFWWA! A big congratulations to all of us!

As a team we have attempted to compile and lay down the guidelines for a Sangini. With the dedicated and concerted effort of the editorial team, the magazine has taken the shape of a Handbook that will be an effective platform between AFWWA and Sanginis, in disseminating useful information about aspects of Indian Air Force that affect their lives and other topics that touch facets of all stages of their lives, like right from the time she enters this wonderful family.

The handbook is painstakingly compiled as one stop reference to make the Sangini's journey in Air Force life smooth and comfortable. It is also time to convey our heartfelt gartitude and congratulations to the pioneer's of AFWWA!

Congratulations to the team that has worked hard to make this idea of 'Handbook 2020' conceived by our President AFWWA a reality.

Preserve this treasure and it will guide you in the wonderful journey of IAF's Sangini.

Jai Hind !

KNOW YOUR PRESIDENT AFWWA REGIONALS



Mrs Jaya Kumar

PRESIDENT AFWWA(R) CAC

Mrs Jaya Kumar W/o Air Marshal Rajesh Kumar AVSM VM has been an active member of AFWWA since 02 May 88. She has contributed towards achievement of its objectives as President AFWWA (L) at AFS Pathankot, She has been Vice President AFWWA (R) EAC prior to taking over as President AFWWA (R) CAC w.e.f 01 Jan 19.

PRESIDENT AFWWA(R) TC

Mrs Shipra Mathur W/o Air Mshl RD Mathur PVSM AVSM VSM has been an active member of AFWWA since 26 Oct 89. She has been President AFWWA (L) at AFS Bhuj and Secretary AFWWA (R) WAC. She has been Vice President AFWWA (R) SWAC and President AFWWA (R) EAC prior to taking over as President AFWWA (R) TC w.e.f 01 Oct 20.



Mrs Shipra Mathur



Mrs Simmar Dhillon

PRESIDENT TWWA SFC

Mrs Simmar Dhillon W/o Air Marshal NJS Dhillon AVSM ADC has been an active member of AFWWA since 24 Jan 88. She has been President AFWWA (L) at AFS Bhuj, Co-opted Member of AFWWA, Vice President AFWWA (R) WAC prior to taking over as President TWWA w.e.f 01 Apr 19.

PRESIDENT AFWWA (R) SWAC

Mrs Nirmala Ghotia W/o Air Marshal SK Ghotia PVSM VSM has been an active member of AFWWA since 22 Feb 86. She has been President AFWWA (L) at AFS Bhuj. She has been Vice President and President AFWWA (R) TC prior to taking over as President AFWWA (R) SWAC w.e.f 01 Oct 19.



Mrs Nirmala Ghotia

KNOW YOUR PRESIDENT AFWWA REGIONALS



Mrs Poonam Tiwari

PRESIDENT AFWWA (R) SAC

Mrs Poonam Tiwari W/o Air Mshl Amit Tiwari AVSM VM has been an active member of AFWWA since 09 May 06. She has been President AFWWA (L) at AF Station Bakshi-ka-Talab and Air Force Academy. She served as Co-opted Member AFWWA prior to taking over as President AFWWA (R) SAC w.e.f 01 Nov 19.

PRESIDENT AFWWA (R) MC

Mrs Anita Choudhary W/o Air Mshl S Choudhary AVSM VSM has been an active member of AFWWA since 25 Dec 87. She has contributed towards achievement of its objectives as President AFWWA (L) Sulur. She has been Executive Committee Member in AFWWA (R) SAC and AFWWA prior to taking over as President AFWWA (R) MC w.e.f 01 Jan 20.



Mrs Anita Choudhary



Mrs Neeta Chaudhari

PRESIDENT AFWWA (R) WAC

Mrs Neeta Chaudhari W/o Air Mshl VR Chaudhari AVSM VM has been an active member of AFWWA since 23 Feb 89. She has had rich experience from being President AFWWA (L) at Awantipur, Pune and Air Force Academy, Dundigal. She has been Executive Committee Member of AFWWA and Vice President AFWWA (R) EAC prior to taking over as President AFWWA (R) WAC w.e.f 14 Aug 20.

PRESIDENT AFWWA (R) EAC

Mrs Seema Dev W/o Air Mshl Amit Dev AVSM VSM has been an active member of AFWWA since 22 Jan 89. She has contributed towards achievement of its objectives as President AFWWA (L) at Samana, Chabua and Advance HQ SWAC. She has been Executive Committee Member of AFWWA prior to taking over as President AFWWA (R) EAC w.e.f 01 Oct 20.



Mrs Seema Dev

AFWWA
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
(As on Sep 2020)



Mrs Asha Bhadauria, President AFWWA
W/o Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria PVSM AVSM VM ADC
(Chief of the Air Staff)

Mrs Baljeet Arora, Vice President AFWWA
W/o Air Mshl HS Arora PVSM AVSM ADC
(VCAS)

Mrs Seema Dev, EC Member
W/o Air Mshl Amit Dev AVSM VSM
(AOP)

Mrs Ambika Singh, EC Member
W/o Air Mshl M Singh AVSM VrC VSM
(DG I&S)

Mrs Ruchira Pande, EC Member
W/o Air Mshl Vibhas Pande VSM
(AOM)

Mrs Anjali Chauhan, Elected Member
W/o Air Cmde George Thomas AVSM VM
(AA to CAS)

वायु शक्ति संगिनी

Wg Cdr N Gayathri,
Honorary Joint Secretary AFWWA

Mrs Lakshmi Menon, EC Member
W/o Air Mshl MSG Menon VSM
(AOA)

Mrs Kamini Singh, EC Member
W/o Air Mshl S Singh AVSM VM
(DCAS)

Mrs Bhagyashri Vidhate, AFWWA Secretary
W/o AVM SK Vidhate AVSM YSM VM
(ACAS Training)

Mrs Minakshi Bedi, Ex-offcio Member
W/o Air Cmde Sartaj Bedi VM VSM
(AOC, AFND)

EDITORIAL TEAM



Mrs Asha Bhadauria
President AFWWA



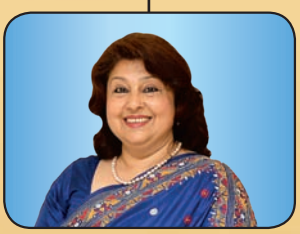
Mrs Bhagyashri Vidhate
Secretary AFWWA



Wg Cdr N Gayathri
Hony Jt Secy AFWWA



Mrs Lakshmi Menon



Mrs Ambika Singh



Mrs Ruchira Pande







(Left to Right): Mrs Anjana Rana, Mrs Shashwati Ghosh, Mrs Neelam Bhadauria, Mrs Richa Nimesh, Mrs Ravdeep Walia, Mrs Mamta Kale, Mrs Manisha Kshirsagar, Mrs Preeti Singh, Mrs Ritu Garg

THE MAKING OF AN AIR WARRIOR'S WIFE

The good Lord was creating a model for Air Warrior's wife and was into his sixth day of overtime when an angel appeared.

She said, " Lord, you seem to be having a lot of trouble with this one. What's wrong with the standard model?"

The Lord replied, " Have you seen the specs on this order? She has to be completely independent, possess the qualities of both father and mother, be perfect hostess to four or forty with an hour's notice, run on black coffee, handle every imaginable emergency without a manual, be able to carry on cheerfully, even if she is pregnant or has the flu, and she must be willing to move to a new location 10 times in 17 years. And, oh yes, she must have six pairs of hands."

The angel shook her head. "Six pairs of hands? No way."

The Lord continued, "Don't worry, we will make other Air Warriors' wives to help her. And we will give her an unusually strong heart so it can swell with pride in her husband's achievements, sustain the pain of separations beat soundly when it is overworked and tired, and be large enough to say, 'I understand' when she doesn't and say 'I love you' regardless."

"Lord", said the angel touching his arm gently, "Go to bed and get some rest. You can finish this tomorrow."

"I can't stop now," said Lord. "I am close to creating something unique. Already this model heals herself when she is sick, can put up six unexpected guests for the weekend, wave goodbye to her husband from a pier, a runway or a depot and understand why it's important that he leaves"

The angel circled the model of the Air Warrior's wife, looked at it closely and sighed, "It looks fine, but it's too soft."

"She might look soft," replied the Lord, "but she has the strength of a lion. You would not believe what she can endure".

Finally, the angel bent over and ran her finger across the cheek of the Lord's creation. "There's a leak," she announced. "Something is wrong with the construction. I am not surprised that it has cracked. You are trying to put too much into this model."

The Lord appeared offended at the angel's lack of confidence. "What you see is not a leak," he said, "It's a tear."

"A tear? What is it there for?" asked the angel.

The Lord replied, "It's for joy, sadness, pain, disappointment, loneliness, pride and dedication to all the values she and her husband hold dear." "You are a genius!" exclaimed the angel.

The Lord looked puzzled and replied, "I didn't put it there".

Adapted from Ann Lander's Column
The Orlando Sentinel

SANGINI- THE WIND BENEATH THE WINGS

"A girl.....
darling to her parents...
dear to her friends....
married to her man in blue...
to become his soul mate....and to share a life long journey....
beneath the wings of Airforce.....
She is ****Sangini**** *"*



Welcome aboard dear lady!!

This is a flight of a lifetime. You have married a special person - "The man in blue", and adorned the co-pilot seat for life. To enable him manoeuvre this flight of life with ease - here is an insight of the organisation under whose fold you have come by the virtue of nuptial knot.

When you marry an Air Warrior you become a part of this one big family - The Indian Air Force. This chapter introduces you to the organisation, facilities and traditions to make your transition into an Air Warrior's wife smooth and comfortable.

Read through and know about "The blue Bulwark - **The Indian Air Force"**

A Sneak Peek into the Organisation

History

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is the air arm of the Indian Armed Forces. It's complement of personnel and aircraft assets ranks fourth amongst the Air Forces of the world. It's primary mission is to secure Indian air space and to conduct aerial warfare during armed conflict. It was officially established on 8th October 1932 as an auxiliary Air Force of the British Empire which honoured India's aviation service during World War II with the prefix Royal. After India gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1947, the name Royal Indian Air Force was kept and served in the name of Dominion of India. With the government's transition to a Republic in 1950, the prefix Royal was removed.

IAF Motto

'नभः स्पृशं दीप्तम्'

The Motto of Indian Air Force has been taken from eleventh chapter of the Gita, the discourse given by Lord Krishna to Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra during the Great War of Mahabharata. The Lord is showing His Supreme Divine form to Arjuna and the great form of the Lord is reaching the sky with glory. The Indian Air Force, similarly, aims to overwhelm the adversaries with application of aerospace power in defence of the nation.

नभः स्पृशं दीप्तमनेकवर्णं व्यात्ताननं दीप्तविशालनेत्रम् ।
दृष्ट्वा हि त्वां प्रव्यथितान्तरात्मा धृतिं न विन्दामि शमं च विष्णो ॥

Lord, seeing your form touching the sky with glory, effulgent, multi-coloured, having its mouth wide open and possessing large flaming eyes, I, with my innermost self-frightened, have lost self-control and find no peace.

-Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Chapter XI, Verse 24

Indian Air Force Crest



The crest of the Indian Air Force is a Himalayan Eagle, within a roundel placed directly below the State Emblem of India. The words "Satyameva Jayate" meaning "Truth alone Triumphs" are inscribed below the abacus in Devanagari script. The Himalayan Eagle symbolises the fighting qualities of the Indian Air Force. The two circles below the Ashoka Capital enclose the words "Bhartiya Vayu Sena" in Devanagari script. The scroll placed below has the inscribed words in Sanskrit "Nabha Spursham Deeptam" translating into "Touching the sky with glory". The crest is a symbol and source of Inspiration, Motivation and Encouragement.

Indian Air Force Ensign



The Indian Air Force ensign, different from the Air Force Colours, is blue in colour, containing the National Flag in the first quadrant and a roundel consisting of the colours of the National Flag i.e. saffron, white and green in the centre. This ensign was adopted in 1951 .

Types of Aircraft Flown

Aircraft Flown	
Fighter	Rafale, Tejas, Su-30MKI, Mig-29, Mirage-2000, Jaguar, MIG-21 BISON.
Helicopter	Chinook, Apache AH-64E, MI-17 V5, MI25U/35, ALH, MI-26, MI-17 IV, MI-17, Chetak, Cheetah, Cheetal.
Transport	Boeing 777-300ER, C-17 Globemaster, C-130J, Boeing 737-200, Embraer-145, IL-78 MKI, DO-228, IL-76, AN-32, AVRO, Embraer-135BJ, BBJ
Trainer	Hawk MK 132, Pilatus C-7 MK II, HJT-16 Kiran.
UAV	Searcher II, Heron

IAF also has many other systems in its inventory like Radars, Missiles-Air to Air, Air to Ground and Surface to Air, Airborne Warning, Advanced Communication Systems etc.

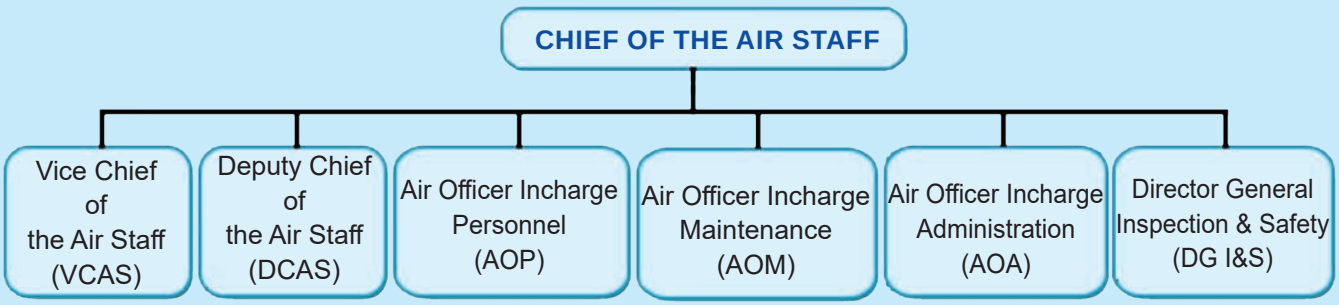


The newly inducted Aircraft-Rafale

Structure of Indian Air Force

The President of India is the Supreme Commander of all Indian Armed Forces. The Chief of the Air Staff of the rank of Air Chief Marshal is the Commander of the IAF. In January 2002, the government had conferred the rank of Marshal of the Air Force on Arjan Singh making him the first and only Five-star officer with the Indian Air Force and ceremonial Chief of the Air Force.

Organisation Set Up Indian Air Force is headquartered in New Delhi. The organisation at Air HQ is as follows:



What is Air Force and how does it work?

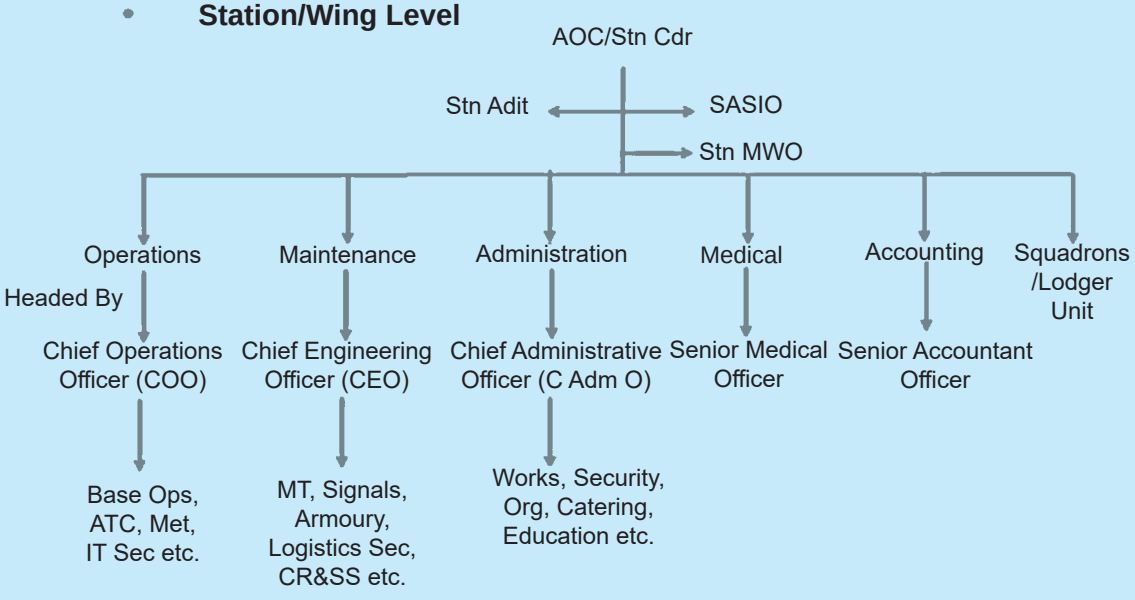
This is the first and basic question that would come to anyone's mind who wants to know about the Air Force. We shall try to explain this as simply as possible for better comprehension of our Sanginis. The primary role of the Air Force is to guard our skies from the enemy in peace as well as wartime. To attain this objective IAF has sensors, weapons platform and our Air Warriors train on every day basis. All aircraft, missiles, radars and other equipment are maintained in very good condition at all time. In addition, IAF helps in transportation of men and material by air in support of Army, Navy, National Disaster Response Team and any other assistance requisitioned by civil administration for relief activities during natural calamities. To undertake all its tasks, the Air Force operates from Air Headquarters at New Delhi, Command Headquarters at various regional locations, Stations spread all over the country and the number of Squadrons/ Units in these Stations. These Stations and Units are placed under five Operational Commands to undertake assigned task and operational training. The role, task and organisation of Air HQ, Command HQs and Stations are given in following paragraphs for easy assimilation.

For effective command and control, the IAF has seven Commands, under which there are different Stations and Units located at various places throughout the country. The organisation's chart shows the establishment of the Indian Air Force at a glance**.** Each Command is headed by an Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the rank of Air Marshal. The Commands of IAF are as follows:

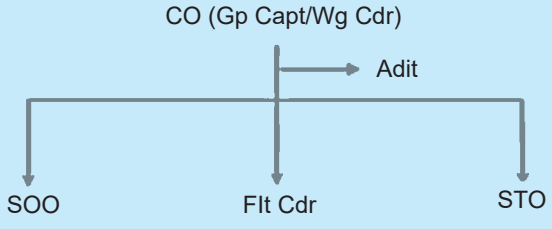
- Headquarter Western Air Command is located at New Delhi
- Headquarter Eastern Air Command is located at Shillong
- Headquarter Central Air Command is located at Prayagraj
- Headquarter South Western Air Command is located at Gandhinagar
- Headquarter Southern Air Command is located at Thiruvananthapuram
- Headquarter Training Command is located at Bengaluru
- Headquarter Maintenance Command is located at Nagpur

Wings/Stations Every Command has certain number of Wings or Stations under them. Indian Air Force Bases can be categorised into various types - Operational Units like Wings, Forward Base Support Units and Care & Maintenance Units. Non-Operational Units consist of Air Force Stations, Base Repair Depots (BRDs) etc. Each Wing/ Station/ BRD is generally commanded by an Air Commodore and would have two to three Squadrons, Units and various Sections. Each Squadron is commanded by an Officer of the rank of Group Captain/ Wing Commander. Organisation Chart of typical Station/ Wing is as follows:

- **Station/Wing Level**



- **At Unit Level**



Categories of Personnel

The IAF is staffed by four categories of personnel, namely Officers, Airmen, NCs(E) and civilians. Amongst them officers and airmen of all branches and trades play a combatant role. The other two categories are not combatant. NC(E) stands for Non-Combatant Enrolled meaning those personnel employed in non-combatant roles of cooks, waiters, safaiwala, lascar etc.

Selection of Officers

There are four major ways to join the Indian Air Force as an Officer as tabulated below:

Types of Entry	Educational Qualification*	Age limit**
National Defence Academy (NDA) **(For Flying & Ground Duty branches)** PC for Men only	10+2 with Physics & Maths. The entry is open for Flying branch, Ground Duty (Technical) & Ground duty (Non-Technical) branches. All candidates of Flying & Ground Duty (Tech) would be awarded B Tech degree at NDA and Ground duty (Non-Tech) would be offered B.Sc degree.	16 ½ yrs to 19 ½ yrs
Combined Defence Services Examination (CDSE) **(For Flying Branch)** PC for Men only	Any graduate degree or BE/B Tech degree having passed Physics & Maths at 10+2.	20 yrs to 24 yrs (Relaxed upto 26 yrs for CPL holders)
NCC Special Entry **(For Flying Branch)** PC for Men SSC for Men & Women **(No written Exam)**	Minimum 60% marks each in Physics and Maths in 10+2 level and any Graduation degree with min 60% marks or BE/B Tech degree in any discipline with min 60% marks. NCC Air Wing Senior Division 'C' certificate is mandatory.	20 yrs to 24 yrs
AFCAT Entry **(For Flying Branch)** (SSC for Men & Women)	Minimum 60 % marks each in Physics and Maths at 10+2 level and should be a graduate with minimum three years degree course in any discipline from a recognised University. **OR** BE/B Tech degree (Four years course) from a recognised University with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent. **OR** Candidates who have cleared Section A & B examination of Associate membership of The Institution of Engineers (India) or Aeronautical Society of India from a recognised University with minimum of 60% marks or equivalent.	20 yrs to 24 yrs (Upper age relaxed upto 26 yrs for holders of valid and current Commercial Pilots' licence (CPL) issued by DGCA (India)

AFCAT Entry for GROUND DUTY (NON-TECHNICAL) BRANCHES (PC/SSC for Men and SSC for Women)		
Administration/ Logistics	Graduation degree (Minimum three years degree course) in any discipline from a recognised University with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent or cleared section A & B examination of associate Membership of Institution of Engineers (India) or Aeronautical Society of India from a recognised university with a **minimum** of 60 % marks or equivalent.	20 yrs to 26 yrs
Accounts	B Com Degree (Minimum three years degree course) from a recognised University with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent.	20 yrs to 26 yrs
Education	MBA/MCA or MA/MSc degree in English/ Physics/ Mathematics/ Chemistry/ Statistics/ International Relations/ International Studies/ Defence Studies / Psychology/ Computer Science/IT/Management/Mass Communication/ Journalism/ Public relation with a minimum of 50% marks in aggregate all papers put together in Post-Graduation (Minimum two years programme). The duration may be lesser for integrated courses and minimum 60% marks in graduation.	20 yrs to 26 yrs
Meteorology	Post-Graduation Degree in streams specified in the advertisement with minimum of 50% marks in aggregate of all papers put together (Provided Maths and Physics were studied at graduation level with a minimum of 55% marks in each).	20 yrs to 26 yrs

AFCAT Entry for GROUND DUTY (TECHNICAL) BRANCHES (PC/SSC for Men and SSC for Women)		
Aeronautical Engineer (Electronics) {AE(L)} Aeronautical Engineer (Mechanical) {AE(M)}	Minimum 50 % marks each in Physics and Mathematics at 10+2 level and a minimum of four years degree graduation/ integrated post-graduation qualification in Engineering/ Technology from recognised university. **OR** Cleared Section A and B examination of Associate Membership of Institution of Engineers (India) or Aeronautical Society of India or Graduate membership examination of the Institution of Electronics and Telecommunication Engineers by actual studies with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent in the subjects mentioned in the notification.	20 yrs to 26 yrs

- *Appearing/Final Semester/ Year Students with no current backlog can also apply
- **Age as on first day of the month in which training commences
- PC - Permanent Commission
- SSC - Short Service Commission
- Marital status- Unmarried for all types of entry
- Nationality – Indian for all types of entry
- Advertisement Schedule: Jun/ Dec by IAF, AFCAT Exam
- More details on Educational qualification visit http://careerindianairforce.cdac.in or refer advertisement and notification in Employment News

Training After Selection Through the Above Methods

After successful completion of SSB and making it in the merit based on the vacancies every year, call letters are issued for candidates to join AFA for training. Candidates who had applied for ground duty branches undergo training for a period of one year. Out of these the Technical/ Met undergo training for six months of basic training at AFA and next year/ six months of training is conducted at Air Force Technical College (AFTC), Bengaluru and Air Force Administrative College (AFAC), Coimbatore respectively. On successful completion of training technical candidates are commissioned into the technical branch of IAF from AFTC from the date of their joining the academy (AFA) and other Ground duty branches including Met get commissioned at the Combined Graduation Parade (CGP) at AFA along with Flying Branch. After commissioning all officers get posted to their nominated Wings/Stations/Units/Squadrons. However, flying branch officers go to their respective Stage III flying training squadron as per the fleet they are nominated for. Similarly, officers of certain other branches like Adm (Fighter Controllers), Adm(ATC), Met etc go for their specialised training before their deployment in the field Stations.





Selection of Medical Officers

The process of entry of medical officers is different, thus needs a separate mention. As the process is elaborate, we have put forth a general outline which is tabulated below:

Medical (AFMC Cadet Entry)	10+2 with PCB securing not less than 60% of aggregate marks together and not less than 50% in any of these subjects. **OR** B.Sc. MBBS course after which the commission is granted in AMC. Selection through written exam and followed by an interview at AFMC, Pune.	17-22 yrs 24 yrs
Medical (PC)	Applicants must possess a medical qualification of an Indian University or a foreign medical qualification recognised by the Medical Council of India (MCI). They must also be registered with any of the State councils or equivalent registering authority. An antedate of 3 years seniority for post graduates and 2 years for post graduate diploma recognised by MCI and 6 months for a house job, done at a recognised hospital is given to fresh entrants. A doctor who has done a house surgeon and also a post graduate qualification will be eligible for a maximum antedate seniority of 42 months.	45 yrs
Medical (Dental)	BDS with minimum 60% marks in final year **OR** MDS from a recognised Dental College of University. Should have completed one-year rotatory internship recognised by the Dental Council of India (DCI). Should be in possession of Permanent Dental Registration Certificate.	28 yrs 30 yrs

(For further details https://indianairforce.nic.in/content/medical-officers)

The Types of Commission in Indian Air Force

Permanent Commission (PC) Permanent Commission means that the officer will serve till the age of superannuation. Men can join Permanent Commission directly. However, for women the entry is through Short Service Commission and will be considered for grant of PC on completion of 10+4 years term and fulfilling all necessary eligibility criteria.

Short Service Commission (SSC) Short Service Commission means officers will get to serve for a limited period in the Air Force. It could be 10/14 years depending on the branch selected by them.

Branches of IAF Officers

Flying Branch	Technical Branch	Ground Duty Branch
Flying Pilot	Aeronautical Engr (Mech)	Administration
Flying Navigator	Aeronautical Engr (Elec)	Logistics
		Accounts
		Education
		Meteorological
		Medical & Dental

Rank structure of Officers The Indian Air Force officers ranks and their equivalent in other two Services are as given below:

Indian Air Force	Indian Army	Indian Navy
Marshal of the Air Force*	Field Marshal*	Fleet Admiral*
Air Chief Marshal	General	Admiral
Air Marshal	Lieutenant General	Vice Admiral
Air Vice Marshal	Major General	Rear Admiral
Air Commodore	Brigadier	Commodore
Group Captain	Colonel	Captain
Wing Commander	Lieutenant Colonel	Commander
Squadron Leader	Major	Lieutenant Commander
Flight Lieutenant	Captain	Lieutenant
Flying Officer	Lieutenant	Sub-Lieutenant
* These are ceremonial and war time ranks awarded by Government of India.		

Visual Identification of Ranks: Officer

Officer Ranks	
Marshal of the Air Force	
Air Chief Marshal	
Air Marshal	
Air Vice Marshal	
Air Commodore	
Group Captain	
Wing Commander	
Squadron Leader	
Flight Lieutenant	
Flying Officer	

Badges worn by Officers

Description	Worn at	Badges
IAF Pilot's Badge	Worn on the left side of chest above the ribbons.	
AF Navigator's Badge	Worn on the left side of chest above the ribbons.	
IAF Flight Engineers Badge	Worn on the left side of chest above the ribbons.	
IAF Controllers Badge	Worn on the right side of chest above the name tab.	
IAF FC (Aircrew) Badge	Worn on the left side of chest above the ribbons.	
IAF Electronic System Operators (Aircrew) Badge	Worn on the left side of chest above the ribbons.	
IAF Parachute Jump Instructors Badge	Worn on the left side of chest above the ribbons.	
IAF SAGW Badge	Worn on the right side of chest above the name tab.	
Paratrooper Qualified Wing	Worn on the right sleeve two inches below the shoulder seam.	
IAF Garud badge	Worn on the left side of chest above the ribbons.	
Collar badge Caduceus (Medical)	Worn in the collar.	
Collar badge Caduceus(Dental)	Worn in the collar.	

Selection of Airmen

There are two major ways to join the Indian Air Force as an Airman**.** These are:

- Selection through recruitment rallies conducted by Airmen Selection Centres (ASC) located at various places across India.
- All India selection test (**STARS**) conducted at various location for which public notice is published in employment news as well as national newspapers.
- Trade wise educational qualification with age criteria are enumerated below:

Group/ Trade	Educational Qualification	Age (As on date of Enrolment)
Group **'X'** trades (Except Education Instructor)	Passed Intermediate/ 10+2/ equivalent examination with Mathematics, Physics and English with minimum 50% marks in aggregate **OR** Passed three years Diploma course in Engineering (Mechanical/ Electrical/ Electronics/ Automobile/ Computer Science/ Instrumentation Technology/ Information Technology) from a government recognised Polytechnic Institute with minimum 50% marks in aggregate. 50% marks in English is compulsory.	17-21 Years
Group **'X'**: Education instructor Trade	For graduates-BA (with English as one of the subjects) or BSc (with Physics/Psychology/ Chemistry/Mathematics/IT/Computer Science/ Statistics as one of the subjects) or BCA with minimum 50% marks.	20-25 Years
	For Post Graduates - MA in English/Psychology or MSc in mathematics/Physics/Statistics/Computer Science/IT or MCA with 50% marks. B.Ed degree with minimum 50% marks from Government recognised institutes. All degrees should be recognised by UGC/NCTE/ Competent Accreditation Authority.	20-28 Years

Group/ Trade	Educational Qualification	Age (As on date of Enrolment)
Group **'Y'** trades (Except Med Asst and Musicians)	Passed Intermediate/ 10+2 /Equivalent examination in any stream/ Subjects approved by Central/ State Education Boards with minimum 50% marks in aggregate and 50% marks in English. **Or** Passed two years vocational course from Education Board listed as COBSE member with minimum 50% marks in aggregate and 50% marks in English in Vocational course or in Intermediate/Matriculation if English is not a subject in Vocational Course.	17-21 Years
Group **'Y'** Med Asst Trade	Passed 10+2/ Intermediate/ equivalent exam with Physics, Chemistry, Biology and English with minimum 50% marks in aggregate and 50% marks in English.	17-21 Years
Group **'Y'** Musician Trade	Passed Matriculation/ 10th class or equivalent with minimum pass marks from any Government recognised School/ Boards and should be proficient in playing at least one of the following musical instruments: Trumpet/Bass/ Violin/ Saxophone/ Clarinet/ Euphonium/ Jazz-Drum/ Piccolo/ Bass Trombone/ Key Board/ Guitar/ Sarod/ Viola/ Cello/ Contra Bass (String Bass).	17-25 Years

(Details of the eligibility criteria and supplementary information is available on the website. https://airmenselection.cdac.in/CASB/index.html).



Training Institutes for Airmen

After clearing all the stages of the selection procedure and medical, the candidates are given call letters to join various training institutes depending on the educational qualification and stream they have been selected for. The training institutes are as enumerated below:

Place	Training Institution	Trades
Belgaum	Basic Training Institute (BTI)	Joint Basic Phase Training for all trades (JBPT)
	Non-Technical Training Institute (NTTI)	Education Instructor Adm Assistant Accts Assistant Non Combatants (Enrolled) (NCs(E))
	Air Force School of Physical Fitness (AFSPF)	Ground Training Instructor
Avadi	Mechanical Transport Training Institute (MTTI)	Automobile Fitter Auto Technician
	Air Force Police & Security Training Institute (AFP&STI)	Indian Air Force (Police)
Tambaram	Workshop Training Institute (WTI)	Workshop Fitter (Mechanical) Workshop Fitter (Smith) Mechanical System Fitter Meteorological Assistant Environmental Support Services Assistant (ESSA)
	Mechanical Training Institute (MTI)	Propulsion Fitter Structure Fitter Weapon Fitter
Jalahalli East Bengaluru	Electronic Training Institute (ETI)	Electronics Fitter Ops Assistant
	Electrical & Instrument Training Institute (E&ITI)	Electrical Fitter
Jalahalli West Bengaluru	Communication Training Institute (CTI)	Communication Technician Logistics Assistant Musician
	Administrative Assistant Training School (AATS)	Administrative Assistant
	Accounts Training School (ATS)	Accounts Assistant
Bengaluru	Medical Training Centre (MTC)	Medical Assistant
Chandinagar	Garud Regimental Training Centre (GRTC)	Indian Air Force (Security)

Various Trades The candidates who apply for selection as Airmen, depending on their educational qualification and fulfillment of their eligibility criteria are divided into various trades, namely Technical and Non-Technical trades. These are:

Group X		Group Y	
Technical	**Non-Technical**	**Technical**	**Non-Technical**
• Automobile Fitter • Electronics Fitter • Electrical Fitter • Mechanical System Fitter • Structures Fitter • Propulsion Fitter • Workshop Fitter (Smith) • Workshop Fitter (Mechanical) • Weapon Fitter	• Education Instructor	• Communication Technician • Automobile Technician	• Admin Assistant • Accts Assistant • Medical Assistant • Environment Support Services Assistant (ESSA) • Ops Assistant • Meteorological Assistant • Ground Training Instructor • Indian Air Force (Police) • Indian Air Force (Security) • Musician

Career Progression The initial engagement is for a period of 20 years extendable till 57 years of age.

Promotions

- **Promotion Policies in Vogue** Promotion of Leading Aircraftsman to the rank of Corporal and Sergeant is based on passing the promotion examinations and completion of minimum length of service. Policy for further promotions to the rank of Junior Warrant Officer, Warrant Officer and Master Warrant Officer is on merit-cum-seniority.
- **Minimum Length of Service for Promotions** A Promotion Board is constituted in the month of May each year at Air Force Record Office to consider Airmen for promotion. The minimum length of service presently in vogue is as follows:

Rank Minimum	Length of Service
LAC to Cpl	5 Yrs of service or 03 Yrs as LAC
Cpl to Sgt	13 Yrs
Sgt to JWO	19 Yrs onwards
JWO to WO	25 Yrs onwards
WO to MWO	30 Yrs onwards

Courses

- The IAF is one of the best operational Air Forces in the world. This requires constant updation of equipment, technology and trained human resource. Therefore, airmen are considered for regular training / courses conducted within the country and abroad on the basis of service requirements. The selection process is on merit and individual qualifications.

Remustering

- Remustering is a process of change of trade during the career of airmen. The individual can opt for remustering as a means of career progression or due to medical problems.

Commissioning

- Airmen of the rank of Sergeant & above with 10 years of minimum service and within the age limit of 32 to 42 years get the opportunity to become a Commissioned Officer in the IAF through **Service Entry Commission.**
- **Honorary Commission** To recognise the service rendered by an airman, a Warrant Officer when he superannuates, is granted Honorary Commission on merit.

Deputations

- Air Warriors who are meritorious and fulfill the selection criteria as laid down by Air HQs are sent on deputation to various countries where IAF has office in the embassy or is participating in the UN peacekeeping mission.

Rank Structure of Airmen and Their Equivalent in Indian Army & Navy

Indian Air Force	Indian Army	Indian Navy
Master Warrant Officer	Subedar Major	Master Chief Petty Officer (First Class)
Warrant Officer	Subedar	Master Chief Petty Officer (Second Class)
Junior Warrant Officer	Naib Subedar	Chief Petty Officer
Sergeant	Havaldar	Petty Officer
Corporal	Naik	Able Seaman
Leading Aircraftsman	Lance Naik	Leading Seaman
Aircraftsman	Sepoy	Seaman

Visual Identification of Ranks : Airmen

Honorary Flight Lieutenant*	
Honorary Flying Officer*	
Master Warrant Officer (MWO)	
Warrant Officer (WO)	
Junior Warrant Officer (JWO)	
Sergeant (Sgt)	
Corporal (Cpl)	
Leading Aircraftsman (LAC)	
Aircraftsman (AC)	
Note:* Honorary ranks worn by Warrant Officers (Refer para on Commissioning page no. 30).	

Badges Worn by Airmen

IAF Flight Gunners Badge	Worn on the left side of chest above the ribbons.	
IAF Signaler (Air) Badge	Worn on the left side of chest above the ribbons.	
IAF Police Arm Badge	Worn on the right sleeve touching the shoulder seam.	
IAF Parachute Jump Instructors Badge	Worn on the left side of chest above the ribbons.	
IAF SAGW Badge	Worn on the right side of chest above the name tab.	
Paratrooper Qualified Wing	Worn on the right sleeve two inches below the shoulder seam.	
IAF Garud badge	Worn on the left side of chest above the ribbons.	
Collar badge Caduceus(Medical)	Worn in the collar	
Collar badge Caduceus(Dental)	Worn in the collar	

Selection of NCs(E)

The selection of NCs(E) is carried out at one nominated ASC which conducts their medical post recommendation by board duly constituted at Air HQ.

Eligibility Criteria

Educational Qualification - Minimum Class X or equivalent

Age- Up to 28 years

Physical standards and visual criteria are placed on the website (https://airmenselection.cdac.in/CASB/eligibilityCriteria.html) in details for reference.

What is the Role of NCs(E) in IAF? NCs(E) are an integral part of IAF who perform many important tasks. The field of their work spreads from providing various types of services such as catering, sanitation & hygiene, up keep of offices etc. NCs(E) extend an essential support in providing basic necessity of running the messes, maintaining offices and work places, assist in maintenance services and miscellaneous tasks like handling of stores etc. NCs(E) are the silent workers who contribute immensely in enhancing the IAF operational efficiency.

Career Progression

Category They are mainly categorized as lascar, safaiwala, dhobi, water carrier, cook, watchmen, mess waiter, barber, washer-up, mochi, tailor, etc.

- **Tindal Promotions** Based on the available vacancies, NCs(E) are promoted to the post of NC(E) Tindal on completion of 15 years of service.

Assured Career Progression (ACP) Scheme Under the said scheme the eligible NCs(E) on completion of 10 years & 20 years of qualifying service are given financial upgradation.

Visual identification of Rank : NC(E)

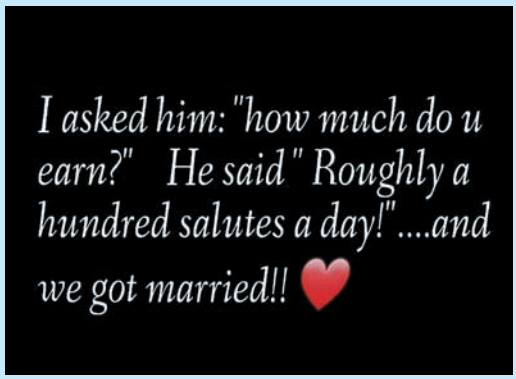
NC(E) Rank	
NC(E) Tindal Rank	

The above comprehensive overview of the organisation is given to enable you to have a smooth transition into this family of Air Warriors and make your journey ahead more fulfilling**……..**

A Journey Well Begun……..

Marriages are made in heaven and solemnised on earth as most say but becoming the “better half of blue” is truly a blessing which you will realise over a period of time. Getting married to a “Man in blue – Air Warrior” is not only a commitment to him but also to the organisation – as this is a one big family. Always remember:

*“You are not in chain of command, orders you do not get, but your husband is the one who does, and this you cannot forget. You love the man you married, soldiering his life but you stand amongst the silent ranks known as the “**Air Warrior’s wife**”.*



The family of Indian Air Force is truly an amalgamation of people from every nook and corner of India - a vivid example of our diverse country. This diversity rubs onto you just with ease as you develop acquaintances and friends in the fraternity. Gradually, as your journey progresses, you will find all your innate qualities, which even you were not aware of blossoming. In other words, this journey will have its share of adventure, hardship, happiness and the list is endless. Each experience will have its share of lessons which will enrich and evolve you as a lady known as the ***“Air Warrior’s wife”***.

First Things First- Official Documentation As you join your husband in his current place of posting you are welcomed with open arms and everyone tries to make you comfortable in the best possible way. Amidst all this bonhomie and parties, you get to bond and see the glimpses of our traditions, mannerisms and etiquette that are followed. In continual to this there are certain official documents that need to be addressed simultaneously which are as follows:

- Now that you are married it’s not enough..... your marriage has to be formalised the Air Force way- yes, there is a need for POR (Personal Occurrence Report). It is this very document, which will formally endorse you as a legally wedded wife and based on this POR entry, your marriage will be formally endorsed in your husband’s personal documents. Also ensure that your maiden name and name after marriage are correctly endorsed.
- Do you know your man in shining armour had to take prior permission to marry you? If yours was a sudden alliance or otherwise, necessary permission of the Commanding Officer is to be taken immediately after marriage. This is called **ex-post facto permission.**
- **Change of Nomination and Will** Marriage entails change in status in one’s life and certain legal rights and privileges come tagged along with marriage. Service mandates its Air Warriors to immediately change their will/ nomination held in their service documents post marriage.

- **Dependant Card** Once you are in the Air Force Station with your spouse you need to get a Dependant Identity Card made. Since our residential areas are gated communities therefore to enter the premises, one needs to have an ID proof. This ID proof is required even to avail the medical and dental facilities provided in the campus. This ID proof helps you to avail the concessions provided by the airlines and the railways. To be more precise this ID proof should be kept with care and informed to the concerned authorities if misplaced.
- **Canteen Stores Department Card** Get your husbands CSD card updated with the joint/ single photograph so that you are able to avail the facility**.** Provisions do exist for making an independent card for the dependant family members for utilising the services of canteen at the time when the dependant family members are staying separate from the head of the family.
- **AFWWA Membership** You have to get registered to this elite association (details about this is mentioned subsequently) immediately after marriage and have your AFWWA membership card in your personal capacity.
- **Update KYC** Update your new address and mobile number in bank account, credit card etc. by filling necessary form of KYC along with necessary documents as stipulated therein.
- Get your PAN, Aadhar, Voter ID Card and, if required, passport also updated. It is advisable to keep your original date of birth certificate, 10+2 certificate etc. with their photocopies with you.
- **Property** It is advisable that any property that you have purchased or any real estate investment you have made or any property which your spouse is in possession prior to your marriage be either jointly registered or the same is duly endorsed in the will.
- **POR for Child Birth** Ensure that similar to marriage, POR is taken on the occasion of child birth/adoption.



Beautiful Abode ….. The Air Force Campus

As you approach the Air Force Campus, the fortified walls and huge guarded gates by uniformed personnel doing thorough checks immediately make you feel that you are entering a secure domain. Our setups are always well kept with lush greens on roadsides, neat footpaths, well-marked roads and signage. Everything shows a sense of disciplined way of life yet comfortable in every way. The Indian Air Force knows that its personnel work best when their families are well cared. Their nature of duties may require them to be away from home for a long duration, therefore to ensure a secure and comfortable life for the families, our fraternity provides numerous facilities and amenities. These facilities are equally available for one and all in order to provide a strong bond within the fraternity. **The facilities available in a Camp are commensurate with the size of the Station, location and distance from the nearest city/ town**. A general overview of the facilities/ amenities is as follows:



- **Accommodation** Living-in (Bachelor/Single) and Living-out (Married) accommodation is provided based on certain authorisation. While the respective Messes take care of the living-in populace, Married accommodation is generally allotted by the Station administration. Accommodation is authorised based on rank, registration seniority and availability. Out of turn allotment of quarters can also be made in exceptional circumstances. Wherever there is shortage of married accommodation, personnel on posting can rent a suitable accommodation in civil area and claim House Rent

Allowance (HRA). This will be applicable till the time married accommodation is not allotted.

- **MES (Military Engineering service) Complaint Cell** They provide the service of maintaining the service accommodation that is allotted to us. All issues pertaining to electricity, maintenance, breakage and repair should be registered in this cell for rectification.
- **CSD (Canteen Stores Department)** It's a facility which you will be utilising very frequently. The Canteen has both grocery & miscellaneous sections. All items like grocery, toiletries other daily needs and costly items including electronic gadgets to vehicles are available in the canteens at subsidised rates. It's a one stop facility which addresses most of your requirements.
- **SMC (Station Medicare Centre)** All Air Warriors and their dependants are authorised for free medical treatment. SMC as we commonly say and Dental Centre are available in a Station. There is provision of making certain specialists also available in SMC on certain days with specific timings. If certain test or treatment is beyond the capability of the SMC then the patients are referred to the closest Service Hospital.
- **Schooling Facilities** Depending upon the size and location of the Station schooling facility like Air Force Schools and Kendriya Vidyalaya is available. Priority admission is given to the wards of service personnel on transfer, anytime of the year. These schools follow the CBSE curriculum, with the aim of all-round development of our children. Air Force Schools are amongst the best schools in every city where they are situated. School buses are available for commuting students to and from the school.
- **Messes for Air Warriors** The Indian Air Force follows deep-rooted customs and traditions. These have emanated over the years and are a happy mix of ancient, medieval and contemporary influences. Being very much part of the Indian societal fabric, Air Warriors take great pride in identifying themselves with these customs and traditions. The Messes are the places where Air Warriors eat, drink and live together to nurture the spirit of togetherness which ultimately pays great dividends when they have to fight shoulder to shoulder to ward off the enemy. This helps in maintaining harmony and cohesiveness within the Air Force. There are different Messes for Officers' (OFFICERS' MESS), SNCOs' (SNCOs' MESS) and NCOs' (AIRMEN MESS).

The Officers' Mess and SNCOs' Mess have dining and non-dining members. The dining members include unmarried Officers and SNCOs or those whose families are not in the Station, while the non-dining comprises officers and SNCOs of the Station living with their families. The Mess caters not only for meals but also entertainment and certain welfare activities. Both these Messes have properly equipped & furnished dining hall, bar, an Ante Room where official and unofficial get together with or without families are organised and a Ladies Room for ladies to have ladies club meets and other such events. Recreational facilities in the form of library, gymnasium, TV room and sports facilities both indoor as well as outdoor are available for the members and their families. There are also a few guest rooms in these Messes which are well furnished and are used for accommodating members arriving on posting with family for a few days to enable the Air Warrior and his family settle down at the new Station. It's extremely important to maintain good decorum and discipline in the Mess. One must be properly dressed as prescribed in mess rules while availing Mess facilities.

- **Security Section (Guard Room)** The security section which is part of the administrative section is responsible for security and discipline of the Station. The security / gate passes are issued from here. Any complaints of theft, breach of discipline, accident etc. are to be reported here.

- **Community Hall** Each Station has a Community Hall with seating arrangements and a small stage for social functions.

- **Sports Facilities** The Air Force provides you with good sporting facilities at no cost. There are numerous grounds, play fields, gymnasia, swimming pools and gardens in all Air Force Bases for use by the residents. Experienced coaches and instructors for training of personnel and their families are made available wherever feasible.





Synthetic Basket ball court and Volley ball court.




International standard swimming pool and running track.

- **Bank/ATM/Post Office/Fire Station** All these are in close vicinity of the residential area.

- **Travel and Transportation** Leave Travel Concessions (LTC) for officers, airmen and civilians are governed by various travel regulations. Air Warriors are authorised for free travel in entitled class/ mode, to their home town or any place in India once a year and certain number of rail concession vouchers are also authorised every year. Most of the airlines also provide concessional fare for Air travel within India to Air Warriors and their dependants.

- **AFWWA Complex** AFWWA Complex is located in all Air Force Stations for benefit of the families. Various classes such as tailoring, computer education, yoga classes, tuition for children, hobby classes etc. are organised at the AFWWA Complex. In addition, facilities such as beauty parlours, internet cafe etc. are also available. There is a **Thrift shop** run by the AFWWA which caters to the needs of all families, bringing the best possible quality of food items, clothing, linen, jewellery, utensils, and stationery, all under one roof. As some of our Stations are away from cities, it is a blessing for the residents.

- **Service Institute (SI)** SI is responsible for conduct of welfare activities at Station/ Wing particularly providing comforts and amenities to all personnel and their families. SI's arena encompasses undertaking welfare activities such as providing school transport, SI bus, benevolent loans, regimental shops, supper bars etc.

Our Air Force Stations are a self-sustaining mini world on its own which is a matter of pride for us. Our lifestyle and community living are highly admired by the civilians. Therefore, it should be our endeavour to contribute positively towards its upkeep and betterment.

Postings - A Way of Life……

Posting is a common term used in our Armed Forces parlance…what does it mean? Well it means TRANSFER…Transfers are an integral part of the Air Force, therefore, one should always be prepared to move at short notice. This is a way of our life and you should accept it. ***Movements are service requirement and we should be mentally prepared for it.*** We should not be attached to any one place/ city and should be ready to go wherever the Air Force sends us. The number of boxes keeps adding with memoirs of each place you stay. Every place as you look back adds on some friends, some experiences, and some unforgettable moments. It's believed that when you get to know the lanes and bylanes of the place and are absolutely comfortable, that's the indication that posting is just around the corner. If you plan carefully and have a positive attitude, then movement and transfers can be an enjoyable experience, as you get to see new places and meet new people.

An important aspect which one must adhere to while vacating an accommodation on posting It is said that kindness is a two-way approach and we should remember that it should be expressed in our behaviour, especially in our fraternity, where living with a sense of community is an integral part of our existence. As we expect a clean house to be allotted to us, similarly, we should hand over the house clean and intact to others. While shifting, multiple tasks confront us and we feel weighed down by them. But, it is our duty to get the house cleaned before we move ahead.

Some Added Information Regarding Our Postings Posting policy of the IAF covers various HR aspects related to planning of movement of Air Warriors. A posting can be authorised to meet exigency of the service, tenure rotation, compassionate/medical ground, promotions and other service and admin requirements. Tenures are normally governed by a category of Station and area it falls under.

The service also provides an opportunity to request a posting for self on children education grounds, superannuation, medical issues such as differently abled children and infertility, co- location in case spouse is employed in central/ state government etc. Places which are either very remote or have difficult living condition due to weather, security or lack of certain basic amenities, frequent deployment, Advanced Landing Ground (ALG), Mobile Observation Flight (MOF) are generally restricted in tenure and are also eligible for choice posting on completion of tenure.

Posting allowance/ claim is authorised for such move of family and household goods on posting which is to be preferred within 60 days from the date of completion of journey. In case the move of the head of the family is independent then the Composite Transfer Grant (CTG) must be claimed within this time limit irrespective of the completion of the move of the family.

The Service Welfare Agencies and Facilities

Two very important Air Headquarter welfare organisations, in addition to AFWWA, which play a very vital role in everyone's life are as follows:

Air Force Group Insurance Society (AFGIS) AFGIS provides substantial amount of death insurance and disability cover to all Air Warriors. It provides loans at subsidised interest rate to the Air Warriors to meet their aspirations.

- **GIS - 20 Scheme** The current GIS -20 Scheme was introduced on 01 Apr 20. The details of insurance cover under GIS-20 Scheme are as tabulated below:

Category	Death Cover
All Officers & Flight Cadets (incl Airmen Flt Cdts)	**1 Cr**
Airmen & AC(U/T)s	**50 Lakh**
NCs(E)	**25 Lakh**



Note. In case of invalidment of Air Warrior on account of disability by the Invalid Medical Board (IMB) and not RMB (Release Medical Board), the Air Warrior is provided with the disability claim which is equivalent to 50% of the insurance cover in case of 100% disability. The claim is proportionately reduced based on the disability percentage as approved by IMB up to minimum of 20% disability. No claim is paid for a disability less than 20%.

- **Flying Pay Linked Insurance Scheme (FPLI-14)** FPLI was introduced in Oct 81 and same has been periodically revised. With effect from 01 Oct 18 the insurance cover has been revised to Rs 12 Lakhs for Officers and Rs 6 Lakhs for airmen aircrew. The disability cover is also provided to the invalidated Air Warriors on similar lines, as being provided under GIS 20 Scheme.

- **AFGIS Loans to Air Warriors.** The different loan schemes of AFGIS are as given below:

Type of Loan	Officers [Max Amt (Rs)]	Airmen [Max Amt (Rs)]	NCs(E) [Max Amt (Rs)]	Rate of Interest/ Remarks
House Building Loan (HBL) Max No. of EMIs 300	75 lakhs (Subject to the individual repaying capacity)			(a) Officers & Airmen Up to Rs 75 lakhs: 6.25% pa (b) NCs(E) Up to Rs 75 lakhs: 6 % pa
MHIL (Modern Home Installations Loan) Max No. of EMIs 120	15 lakhs	10 lakhs	5 lakh	8% pa
Motor Conveyance Loan (MCL) Motor Car (New) Max No. of EMIs 180	25,00,000	10,00,000* 5,00,000 **	N/A	7.75% pa
Motor Car (Old) Max No. of EMIs 120	8,00,000	5,00,000 * 3,00,000 **	N/A	
Motor Cycle/ Scooter Max No. of EMIs 96	4,00,000	2,00,000	1,50,000#	
Personal Computer Loan (PCL) Max No. of EMIs 96	2,00,000	2,00,000	2,00,000	8% pa
Note: *For SNCOS ** For Cpls with 5 years of service. # For service 2 years and above.				

- **Final Withdrawal from Survival Benefit (SB)** The facility of making final withdrawal from their accumulated balance of Survival Benefit is available subject to the conditions enumerated below:

Service Completed	Maximum Permissible Withdrawal
After 10 years of service: First withdrawal will be permitted	50% of the balance outstanding to the credit of the member
After completion of 5 years from the last withdrawal availed	50% of the balance outstanding to the credit of the member
After 25 years of service	90% of the balance outstanding to the credit of the member

Indian Air Force Benevolent Fund Association (IAFBA) The other society is IAFBA which provides a number of welfare schemes and scholarships.

Mechanical Aid				
Grant is available for purchase of mechanical aid/ artificial limb etc. for self, spouse and children (max two). Grant will be provided only if the same is not available from service source				
Rate of Payment (in Rs)				
Officers	**Airmen**	**NCs(E)**		
Up to Rs 25000				
Scholarship				
Subroto Memorial Scholarship Scheme is merit based scholarship scheme, which provides incentive and encouragement to meritorious children of AF personnel.				
Rate of Payment (in Rs)				
Class/Course	**Sub category**	**Officers**	**Airmen**	**NCs(E)**
School	VI to X	NA	NA	4000/-pa
	IX to XII	7500/- pa		
Under Graduate	-	15000/- pa		
Under Graduate (professional)	-	20000/- pa		
Post Graduate	-	25000/- pa		
Post Graduate (Professional)	-	35000/- pa		
Special Children/ Differently abled	Disability less than 70 %	15000/-pa		

Sports Scholarship (For children of serving AF personnel) International Level National Level Other level Best footballer Junior (age less than 17 years) Sub Junior (age less than 14 years)		 10000/- pa 6000/-pa 3000/-pa 10000/- 5000/-

Wheel Chair		
Grant from IAFBA is awarded for wheel chair, if the same is not available through service sources.		
Rate of Payment (in Rs)		
Officers	**Airmen**	**NCs(E)**
Amount will be decided by the Executive Committee.		

Medical Grant			
Grant from IAFBA on medical grounds			
Category	**Rate of Payment (in Rs)**		
	Officers	**Airmen**	**NCs(E)**
Re-imbursement of medical bills when such medical treatment is not available through service hospital.	Max up to 1,00,000/-		
Monthly grant for nourishment while undergoing medical treatment available once in-service career. Initially for six months and can be extended for further six months.	Nil	1000/- per month	

Vishesh		
Vishesh- A monthly maintenance Grant is paid to special children having 70% or above disability. The grant is paid to children up to the age group of 30 years, irrespective of child attending any institute or not.		
Rate of Payment (in Rs)		
Officers	**Airmen**	**NCs(E)**
3000/- pm		

Platinum Jubilee Natural Calamity & Disaster Relief Scheme			
The aim of this scheme is to provide financial assistance to serving Air Warrior affected due to natural calamities. Under the scheme, subsidised loan @ 3% pa is admissible towards repair of house or loss of property (both self-owned and ancestral) damaged during disaster declared as 'Level-3 Disaster' by the government.			
Rate of Payment (in Rs)			
Categories	**Officer**	**Airmen**	**NCs(E)**
Admissible Amount	3 Lakh		

- **IAFBA Loans.** This Association also provides a variety of welfare loans.

Welfare Loan					
Loan Type	**Officers**	**SSC Officers**	**Warrant Ranks**	**Sgt & Below**	**NCs(E)**
Welfare Loan @ 8.50%	25,00,000/-	20,00,000/-	15,00,000/-	10,00,000/-	10,00,000/-
Interest Free Loan					
Loan Type	**Officers**	**SSC Officers**	**Airmen**		**NCs(E)**
Interest free loan	1,00,000/-				
Education Loan (Rate of Interest- Officers & Airmen 7% pa and NCs(E) 5% pa)					
PG Course / Integrated PG Course / Courses having minimum 4 years duration					30,00,000/-
All other Courses for Higher Education (not falling under the above mentioned category)					15,00,000/-

Details of various benevolent and welfare schemes are also available on their websites https://www.iafpensioners.gov.in/afgis/ and https://indianairforce.nic.in/content/iafba/ Details of other schemes are referred in subsequent chapters.

AFWWA

Air Force Wives Welfare Association is a registered body formed by volunteer ladies married to Air Warriors and NCs(E). It provides assistance to the families of deceased / disabled/ retired / serving personnel of the Indian Air Force. AFWWA also extends its helping hand to poor and needy people of the society. Its willing contribution to the senior citizens, special children, orphans etc. is praiseworthy and worth emulating. Apart from serving as a welfare organisation, it also serves as an excellent forum for its Sanginis for meaningful interaction and self-development.

Role

Light at the end of a tunnel when all seem lost, a ray of hope in the darkness of despair, a shoulder to weep on, a sympathetic ear to listen to problems, a helping hand held out in times of need. Air Force Wives Welfare Association(AFWWA) is all of this and more, an organisation run by the wives of serving personnel of the Indian Air Force. The Indian Air Force operates from various Air Bases located across the entire length and breadth of our country. With its headquarter in New Delhi, the Association functions through seven Regional Branches co-located with Command Headquarters, who have local Branches at Air Force Stations and Units spread across Bases at freezing altitudes of 15,000 ft and above in the Himalayas to hot and sandy deserts of Rajasthan, the tropical forests of Assam and Islands of Andamans and Nicobar in the Bay of Bengal. The exposure that the Air Force personnel and their families receive with such diverse culture, weather, vegetation, land forms etc. can be rivalled by few Air Forces of the world. The challenges and hardships of these locales make life for Air Force personnel and their families challenging and AFWWA - is always around to render assistance to circumvent these challenges.

Objectives

The objectives of the Association are:-

- To promote welfare of the families of Officers, Airmen and NCs(E) of the IAF, whether deceased, retired or serving.
- To take steps to secure the welfare of all patients in Air Force Hospitals and of IAF patients in other hospitals, i.e. Army and Civil.
- To affiliate, amalgamate with and support any other society, association or trust having similar aims and objective.
- To carry out charitable, social, philanthropic, cultural, educational and other activities for the benefits of the members and their families.
- To establish and manage alone or in co-operation with other Association/ Organisation; hostels, schools and such other ventures/establishments; primarily for the benefit of the members and their dependants.
- To create trusts or other similar institutions to award scholarships, stipends and financial assistance for promotion of welfare activities.

- To raise funds by subscriptions, donations, collection, fees etc. for any project consistent with the objectives of the Association whether unconditional or subject to conditions of the trust.
- To invest funds of the Association not immediately required for its purpose.
- To purchase, take on lease, hire or otherwise acquire and hold immovable or movable property for the Association and sell or otherwise dispose of the same.
- To erect, maintain, repair or improve any building for the purpose of the Association.
- To maintain educational institutions, vocational training institutes etc. for those entitled to benefit from the funds of the Association.
- To do all such other things as are incidental with or conducive to the above objectives.
- To utilise income of the Association towards promotion of aims and objectives of the Association.

What is the Role of AFWWA in a Station?

Air Force Wives Welfare Association (AFWWA) is a welfare organisation which provides the voice to all Sanginis, lends ear to listen to all problems and difficulties and provides a platform for the overall development of Sanginis. **It is headed by the spouse of the senior most officer of the Station / Unit**. AFWWA has an office in each Station/Unit for any assistance and addressing grievances. During the periodical AFWWA meetings and other events, many informative and interactive sessions related to health, family welfare, child care, house-hold finance management, cleanliness and hygiene, cyber security assistance, measures to control crime against women etc. are discussed and are indeed of great help in maintaining appropriate awareness and help in keeping pace with the fast-changing modern world. It is important that all Sanginis take time off and participate in these activities. Through AFWWA the Sanginis can get timely help on any of the issue related to their welfare and can also render assistance to needy members. It is important for the Sanginis to know the hierarchy of the Station in terms of the section and Unit of their spouse to rightly address their issues. Equally important is to know about the kind of assistance provided by AFWWA. This information is easily available in AFWWA office. It is also good idea to ask your respective spouse to provide all important details regarding AFWWA. AFWWA is one of the strong pillars in supporting the harmony, happiness and healthy environment among Sanginis.

AFWWA Organisational Hierarchy

It is organised in three tiers, namely:-

- AFWWA at Air HQ level
- AFWWA (Regional) at each Command HQ level
- AFWWA (Local) at Station/ Unit level

Schools for Under Privileged Under Aegis of AFWWA

AFWWA not only promotes skill development of sanginis but also works towards shaping the future of our country by contributing towards providing basic education facility to under privileged children.

These schools are being run under the name of Umeed Vidya Kiran by AFWWA. List of these schools are mentioned below:-

AFWWA (R)	Locations of UVKS
WAC	Arjangarh, Delhi, Halwara, Jammu, Pathankot
SWAC	Jamnagar, Jodhpur, Utarlai
CAC	Agra, Prayagraj, Bareilly, Bakshi Ka Talab, Gorakhpur, Gwalior
EAC	Chabua, Jorhat, Kalaikunda, Shillong, Tezpur
MC	Amla, Chandigarh, Kanpur, Nagpur, Ojhar, Sulur, Tughlakabad



AFWWA being a welfare organisation awards grants to widows, scholarships to wards of Air Force personnel and also runs play schools for toddlers and hostels for college going students. (these are covered in detail in chapter 4 and 6).

Privileges Come with Responsibilities…… Be a Responsible SANGINI

- **Be a Supportive Spouse**

This is very important and must be always kept in mind that you have to stand firm alongside your man through all thick and thin. You have to take care of your family when he is away from home on temporary detachment, which is part and parcel of an Air Warrior's life which you will learn over a period of time. The most important aspect of being supportive is being a loving presence in your spouse's life and understanding his work commitments which is "Service before self." This has a direct bearing on operational safety of IAF and national security.

- **Proactive Contribution Towards Social Activities**

The Indian Air Force is an elite Organisation, comprising officers, airmen, non-combatant and Air Force civilians employees who together make the family of Air Warriors. Armed Forces are highly revered for their rich tradition and culture and the best way to know them is to be a part of it. It's just like family values which get passed on, from one generation to the next. Now a days most ladies are working professionals but then it's always a good practice to attend once in a while, if not always, the periodic/ planned events such as AFWWA Meets, Ladies Club, Workshops and Medical camps on health, Unit picnics or get together, Bara Khana, Unit Farewells to name a few. All these experiences will help you to connect well and come in good stead down the years, therefore participate proactively.

The following points could be kept in mind about the service ethos and value system:

- Always walk, stand or sit on the husband's left side. Leave his right side free to salute.
- A smile and a pleasing disposition always raises the morale... Its a wonderful habit.
- Always dress and behave appropriately for the occasion. Since we are spouses of men in uniform, we need to take pride in ourselves and maintain high standards of behaviour.
- Avoid topics related to politics, matters of the bedroom and religion at defence functions, parties and events.
- If you are near the raising of National or IAF Flag and colour lowering, please stop and face the flag until it's done.
- For events there should be willing participation from wives of officers, airmen and NCs(E) together. All should mingle as this promotes bonhomie, bonding and sends a good message that we are one big family.

- We come from diverse backgrounds and from differing social environments. Those husbands who are reluctant to allow their wives to participate must be gently coaxed to do so after pointing out the various benefits of greater exposure. The willingness to volunteer is a skill that needs to be nurtured. This is a fact that should be cultivated by pushing pro-sisterhood programs that initiate meets and develops a spirit of sharing, kindness and affection.
- Many ladies from this generation are extremely talented and qualified. They need to be guided to become entrepreneurs in their own space. It is a great feeling to appreciate how far the ladies have come in getting sound education and skill-based jobs, mostly online. The lady has to explore how to strike a good balance between her personal and professional life.

Information Security- Guard yourself

It is true that due to the advancement in the field of technology and communication, distances have been reduced. Everything just happens at the click of a button but, it has also made us more vulnerable. Though internet is a powerful tool, we need to guard ourselves against theft of information, whether personal or professional. To ensure this, Sanginis should be more judicious in their approach while using the social media platform. There are times when we unknowingly disclose some information which might sound casual and personal but is actually sensitive and confidential in nature.

- Do not upload photographs of aircraft/ other assets / photos in uniform on social networking sites.
- Do not post pictures or videos of any functions, especially official functions on any type of social media. It is simply NOT ALLOWED.
- Do not discuss your husband's job/duties/temporary detachments etc. on **social networking sites.**
- Care should be taken not to divulge your place of posting on social media groups.
- Avoid making friends with unknown people on **social networking sites such as facebook, whatsApp etc**. Do not invite new friends about whom you don't know properly (especially Facebook/ WhatsApp friends) to your home/ residential areas.
- Never post any confidential or personal information (date of birth, identity proof, service particulars, address, bank details, credit/debit card account numbers etc). Do not register on any networking site that asks for such information.

- Most of the sites have an option of privacy. Check your settings regularly so that unknown people cannot access your profile.
- Avoid downloading unknown applications. Some of them are created to access and penetrate into your profile or account.

A Vigilant Community Dweller

The IAF comprises personnel from different parts of the country and different walks of life, who come together to form a single community, representing 'Unity in Diversity'. When they get married, their young brides too become a part of this community and it becomes important for them to integrate into this family and contribute in maintaining its rich traditions. While their husbands are away, sanginis have to shoulder the responsibility of managing their household, looking after their children and other tasks. Security of our Nation cannot be left solely in the hands of Government and security personnel. As an Air Warrior's wife, it is equally our responsibility to educate our children and other dependants about the same. Some of the guidelines are:

- Do not discuss about your husband's nature of work and Air Force matters in public places.
- Since all of us are equally responsible to ensure security, we must
    - Encourage the security guards to check your Identity Card at the gates.
    - Co-operate in security exercises.
    - Inform Guard Room about suspicious people and strangers in residential area.
- If you come to know any official information, do not discuss it with others.
- Do not spread rumours and do not pay attention to them.
- Do not invite foreigners without prior permission. It is mandatory to obtain permission from higher authorities for visiting friends or relatives who are foreign nationals.
- Your civilian friends visiting your house should also follow these security instructions.

Community Living Can Be Fun If We Do Our Bit

It is our duty to make our community and surroundings a better place to live, by keeping it neat and clean and well maintained.

- Throw garbage only in the dustbins.
- Keep surroundings clean, as you keep your house tidy.
- Throw biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste in separate bins.
- Follow road etiquettes while driving as well as walking. Walk on footpaths only.
- Do not make noise/ light fire crackers on road or common areas.
- Do not get involved in children's fights.
- When staying on the upper floor, be considerate towards those staying on the ground floor.
- Do not throw garbage or water in their house / in common areas.
- Do not damage plants/ trees and do not pluck flowers / leaves.
- It is always best to use natural resources judiciously. If there is a scarcity of water, learn to conserve and use it economically.
- If your neighbour is out on duty, you should help his family members.
- Behave in a dignified manner when you are at public places like hospitals, cinema halls, canteen and ration stands. Always stand in a queue and give priority to elderly and differently abled.
- Do not litter in lifts, gardens and other public places.
- Neighbours belonging to different regions, speaking different languages should have cordial relations. Interact with your neighbours and understand each other's customs and festivals and respect them.
- If any problem arises, do inform superior authorities/ Guard room.
- Give respect to other members of society, especially elders and superiors of your husband.

A Journey well begun is half done. The transformation from innocent childhood to nuptial life is full of adventure, excitement, fun & frolic as well as responsibilities. Don't be deterred by the initial challenges, be rest assured that a beautiful and secure life lies ahead of you and with passing years you will be able to correlate to these lines beautifully.

"Marriages are made in heaven...
I sure do believe...
But then God chooses a handful to be...
Military wives I think...
Women whom He embodies with a little something more...

Once you come under its fold..
You discover a whole new you...
All your innate qualities starts to emerge..
Which were hidden within you...
You become the wind under his wings..
Enabling him to soar up high...
You become the jack of all trades..
And a master when he is away at work....

You learn to smile with tears in your eyes...
You hold a bold face even when odds are high...
You learn to understand. No news is good news...
And with passage of time you become a soldier in a way no one knew...

You learn to make a twin rooms' set-.a home full of warmth...
With trunks and boxes some classic furniture for decor and that's not all..

You learn to cook for tens at a go...
A full course meal with dessert in a go...
You don't follow fashion yet you are a Fashionista..
As the confidence oozes in every stride.

Mannerisms and etiquette just adds on to you..
That's the beauty of military life. It just grows on to you...
You become a complete woman and respected even more..
As you are the better half of a chivalrous man in blue..."

A perfect marriage is just two imperfect people who refuse to give up on each other....
caring for each other...
supporting each other....
and making the bonding stronger and stronger.....

COMMITMENT OF A LIFETIME

'Air Force Wife'

'It's not my status... It's my lifelong promise to him'.



"Karyeshudasi, Karaneshumantri, Bhojyeshumaata, Sayaneshu Rambha, Roopeshu Laxmi, Kshmaya Dharitre"

(The six virtues of an ideal wife as defined in our ancient scriptures are dedication, intelligence, caretaking, love and affection, beauty, and forgiveness)

An All-Too-Familiar Tale

(All names are imaginary, however the story is not!)

"I have to be on the night duty tonight."

"But Joe, the baby has fever. I have not had much sleep for the last two nights."

"I know, babes. I will try to check in on you around the middle of the night once, if possible."

"I want to take him to the SMC once again. I don't know why the fever won't go down. I am worried sick, Joe. Please."

At this point, I start crying earnestly. As my young husband looks on with utter helplessness, I control myself and try to rearrange my expressions in a parody of a smile. Which fails, I think.

Nevertheless, I pat my back mentally and tell myself, "It's ok, just one more night, you can do it".

I have the upcoming vacation to look forward to, at least. Acche din aayenge...

One week down, my youthful hormones make me forget last week's bitterness and I'm excited for the vacation that will start the next evening with my husband's birthday celebrations. I have planned for this in great detail.

It's 4 in the evening. I am done decorating the house, and in the middle of getting ready for the love of my life. I dream of all the pampering I am going to get. The service phone rings. It is my dear husband.

"When are you reaching home? I have a surprise for you, you know..." I go off excitedly.

But he cuts in his most apologetic tone, "Listen, listen baby, listen. I am not coming home tonight".

I focus on not screaming and try to ask him as calmly as possible, "When then? What happened?"

"Can't tell you right now. Don't worry if I don't call for the next few days."

I am stunned, to put it politely. I carefully replace the receiver and sit down to think.

It has been two weeks now since I last spoke to my husband. In that period, I have seen my first ever snowfall, handled a few domestic emergencies, tried to convince both sets of parents that my husband is not really ignoring them.

Two weeks down, vacation is still ever elusive. Duty calls, and life goes on as usual.

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*"Sheesh.. ****..." I try to open an eye. It is still dark. And too early in the day to hear cursing. My husband is trying to make way through the minefield of toys spread around the bed. He has an early briefing. I know the next I see him will be in the dark of next night. So, I give up on sleep and venture to ask the question that has been on my mind for some time now.*

"Dash and Sheelu are going on vacation tomorrow."

He does not hear, of course. He has a selective hearing. I still prod on, even at the risk of an early morning fight scene.

"Why can't you take leave? Isn't it planned?"

He mumbles something. I am fully awake now.

"Everyone has been on vacation, except us", I add.

He changes tactics and counterattacks. "I am really getting late. You want to start this now?"

He stomps off. I hear the door bang. Two seconds later, he comes back.

"You won't say bye? I have to go now."

That's the signal for end of conversation. I relent and perform the 'bye-bye' ritual.

On a fine weekend he sits me down and proceeds to explain. "Vacations should never be compared. Everybody is doing their bit. Did you know that Dash did not even get leave for his honeymoon?" I feel properly ashamed.

A few months later, I see him diligently going through vacation spots across the country. He's marked all the great places along the coastal line - which is what I like. The vacation happens in all its long-awaited glory. And its sheer bliss.



That's what it is – living life in the Forces. Being the spouse of a warrior.

Demanding Duties





You have to accept the fact that though you are a part of your husband's life, he does not belong to you, alone. Though the spouses of your friends are his colleagues, your friendship is something more than a normal friendship. You are far away from your family, and yet, surrounded by family. You are all in the same boat, but different footings. And although you don't wear ranks, you have a definite responsibility in this world.

It is better to teach yourself that your husband belongs to his duty. It's not just his job. It is a consciously made choice. It is his way of life. You will have to respect that and give him his space. He will do his duty and come back to you.

Meanwhile, grow, blossom, and flourish. Make your own space. Do what you're good at, and learn what you don't know. Just because you are good at taking care of the house doesn't mean you cannot participate in an intelligent conversation. Just because you are on your own, you are not helpless or lonely...

"*Marriages are like finger prints, each one is different and each one is beautiful*."

-Maggie Reyes

Marriage is hard work. It is a mosaic you build with your spouse with millions of tiny moments that create your story. Marriage doesn't make you happy, you make your marriage happy: two imperfect people who have learnt the value of forgiveness and grace. Add in the military lifestyle, and it's a whole different ball game. Loving an Air Warrior is not difficult. The distance is difficult. The worry is difficult. The sacrifices are difficult. That doesn't mean it's impossible to nurture a beautiful, love-filled, healthy bond.

It doesn't get easier. Instead, it is you who becomes stronger. ***'Behind every soldier, there is an even stronger woman who supports him and loves him with all her heart.***'

Being open and honest is important in any relationship. Building trust opens communication paths for the toughest of discussions. Being a good listener is key to a good dialogue. It is imperative as a fauji wife to understand the difficulties in your husband's personal and professional life, and try to support him. Embrace the fact that plans will always have a touch of uncertainty. If you develop a sense of humour, it makes it easier to get through moments that are beyond your control. Regular communication, mutual respect, friendship, humour, forgiveness and compassion are all needed for a good bond.

When eyes tell stories...
And silence makes the roar,
When the lamps of joy...
embrace the dark adore,
Strength lies with those ...
of the "Waves and the Shore"
Where two plus two,
equals more than just four.

Settling into the Air Force Lifestyle

Initial phase as a newlywed wife of defence personnel can be a roller coaster ride. This is a challenge which can be easily overcome by understanding that you and your husband are a team – without your cooperation, the battle cannot be won.



'Indian Air Force' – *these three words come with a lot of glamour for a girl.*

You enter this world all starry-eyed and awestruck. The train journey, the entry into a picturesque Air Force Station, the view of men and women marching in blue – it all makes you swell with pride. You are a part of them now. Your fairy tale life has taken off in that moment.

The welcome into the large Indian Air Force family comes with a drastic shift. There are welcome parties by colleagues & their wives give you tips for your life ahead. You gradually settle into the family.

You move in, move out; shift, settle into and pack out of countless quarters. Despite their shortcomings, these quarters are no less than any Queen's palace. Friends play numerous pranks for 'familiarisation'; and it is like living in a dream you have subconsciously forever yearned for.

But dreams don't last a lifetime. You wake up to leaky roofs, perennial transfers, constant moving, trunk to carton survival, from pigeon-holes to status accommodations

to cooping back in the same holes! You get your fair-share of sleepless nights when your husband is away; his return a burning worry in your mind and the only wish in your prayers. Yet despite the odds, the evens are far too many. Even though you may whine about the long TDs and separations, cry at separating from friends, and wail about the constant change of place - the Air Force family is together through it all. This is your life. This is what you signed up for.

Today, when the whole world writhes in pain and anguish at the lockdown, scared and paranoid at the consequences of the pandemic, it is the wings of the Indian Air Force that keeps us under their cover - safe and secure. You cosily nestle in the all too familiar queen's palace - albeit with an eye on the leaky roof - and smile with the assurance that all will be well with us.

Thanks to the Air Force, we have a home we can proudly call our own, even as it provides us an opportunity to see and explore so many places, cultures and cuisines. We have learnt that 'Family' is not just everyone inside your home but everyone around you at the Air Force Station. It is here that it takes a single phone call for people to come and help you out, where people send you food cooked with love every time you move to a new house, where friendships and bonds are formed for a lifetime. We realise over time that our husbands' jobs are not just regular 9 to 5s, but a way of life, full of dedication and service where things are not calculated for self-gain.



These Air Warriors truly believe in oft said "Duty is Divine".

It is their passion, which makes them the mensch they are, a breed apart.

Life smiles at me every day
with you by my side I'm
blessed to call you my husband,
and the father of my children.

My husband is one of the greatest
decisions in my life if I could,
have anyone in the world, it
would still be him.

My husband has made me laugh,
wiped my tears, Hugged me tight,
watched me succeed, Seen me fail,
kept me strong.

My husband is a promise,
that I will have a best friend forever,
so, finally marriage is
meant to keep people

Together, not just when
things are good, but
particularly when they
are not. That's why
we make marriage vows
not wishes.

Building a Strong Relationship



"A successful marriage requires falling in love many times, always with the same person and at the same time keeping the newness in the relationship alive."

Good relationships take effort and attention, especially military marital relationships, and require the following from both the partners:-

Contribution

A relationship as a couple is like being the wheels of a two-wheeler. Your efforts have to be identical and responsible. Relationship is not a one-man job. Any lack of whole hearted contribution in the magnitude or quantum may lead to failure or underperformance of whole healthy mechanism on which our foundation is cemented. "Who takes the lead?" may depend on the prevailing obligation, but you have to work together.

Communication

Communication is a two-way street. You need to **talk** and you need to **listen**.

- **Talk** Take some time to talk to one another. Share your day's highlight. I am sure we all can find some time. If not, then put it on the calendar until it becomes a natural part of your day.
- **Listen** When your husband is talking, give your full attention. Turn off the TV, put down your cell phone. If needed, to show you're listening, repeat back the gist of what was said. Everyone wants to be heard.

Remember, communication is key to connecting.

- **Share** Make an extra effort to share your thoughts and feelings with your husband. This can be tough for some. But sharing boosts your trust, and hence, your connection with each other.
- **Think** Show your husband that you think of him. Send a message or text during the day, telling him that you love him or something similarly caring. If he has something important in his work schedule (like a presentation), just wish him 'good luck'.
- **Dine Together** The family that dines together, stays together. Meals are an excellent time to bond. Keep phones away, turn the TV off and be present in the moment. Talk about your day and ask about theirs. Most problems can be solved by discussing.
- **Have Couple Time** Create a routine. Have an night stroll after dinner. Hug or kiss before leaving for work. Set a regular date night. Go dancing. Take up a sport or activity together, whether it's tennis, playing cards or walking. Have some couple goals. The time you spend together having fun strengthens your relationship.
- **Give Space** Give space to your husband to connect with friends or pursue an interest or hobby. It will be reciprocated, enabling you to have your own space and pursue your own hobbies and interests. You are a couple, but you are an individual too. A happy relationship is made of happy people. Allowing space for individuality, friends and interests will strengthen your relationship as well.
- **Appreciate and Support** Studies show that couples who stay together have far more positive interactions and make fewer negative comments to one another. Appreciate the efforts put in by your husband. Let him know how important he is to you and how he makes your life more colourful. This will give him more confidence in the relationship.
- **Discuss your Finances** Talk about your financial goals and discuss budget together. Take major decisions mutually. Plan together for moves beforehand. It reduces stress and also makes you both understand each other better.
- **Delicacies** They say that the way to a man's heart is through his tummy. Prepare his favourite foods. Give him surprises and try out new dishes that are healthy and nutritious. Make him feel special and wanted by you.
- **Work as a Team** Never hesitate to offer or ask for help if required. Working together is fun and makes everything easier and lighter. You may feel bogged down at times and that's ok. You too are human. Work on keeping the atmosphere at home positive.



- **Complement One Another** Dr James Pawelski and his wife Suzanne Pileggi Pawelski's book "HappyTogether" brings out that if you rely on your spouse to fulfil you, it can lead to an over-dependant relationship where you are not growing as individuals. Instead, couples in healthy relationships should "complement" and not "complete" each other.
- **Enjoy the Little Things** Remember the lines: "The best laid schemes o' mice an' men". You can't control everything. Things will go wrong sometimes. Plans may get cancelled. Life gets in the way. Don't obsess over the details, instead find joy in the simple things. Enjoy the togetherness.

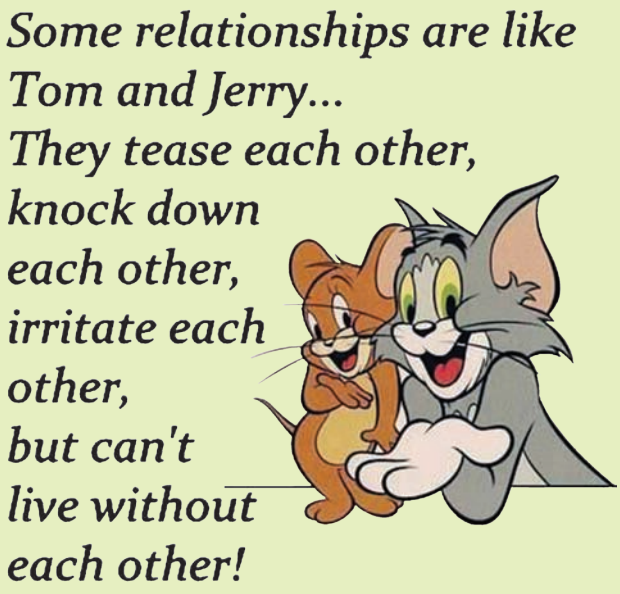
Your husband's work is very important for the nation. His home environment being peaceful and stress-free goes a long way in helping him work better and more efficiently. As Sanginis, it is our duty to be flexible and understanding towards the nature of duties of our 'Man In Blue'.

There is an old saying ***"Not all best friends can be a good couple, but all good couples can be best friends"***. A happy bond is based on trust and understanding.

Even the best of relationships have its ups and downs, as shown in this recipe for a happy bond:

- 2 cups of support
- 1/2 cup of fights
- 1 cup of apologies
- 1 tablespoon of surprises

Mix all of them with unlimited love and bake it all your life to have a bond that weathers through everything that life throws your way. From romantic stage of your life to the challenging stage of raising a child or working a demanding job, your bond will evolve through all the stages of your life.



This amusing quote describes the bond between husband and wife perfectly.

Accept your husband as he is. We all at some point of time may have had fantasies how 'he' should be. Re-examine your expectations to see how realistic they are.

Weathering Storms Together

Your husband's work profile has its special demands. There will be times when he'll not be available for a considerable period of time owing to Temporary Duties (TD) or

detachments. He could be posted to remote areas or you could have a career where you can't be co-located with him.

In this age of communication and connectivity this should not be a deterrent to nurture a good married life and set goals for you two to share conjugal bliss. Non-family station postings are also something we face, at one point or another. It is without doubt a huge challenge to carry the burden of the family by yourself, but this is where your self-reliance plays a huge part. Your ability to adapt will carry you through these tough times - the wind beneath your wings – so that your husband can give his best to the task at hand.

While these moves can at times be a cause of stress or strain to a relationship, you and your husband can take steps to prevent or minimise it and even work on nourishing your relationship through these brief periods of separation.

- **Talk About Feelings** Discuss your upcoming separation. Make time to talk about your feelings, listen to your partner and make plans to manage your time when you are apart. Make this time special. Even after you have children, spend a few hours alone with your spouse in honest conversation.
- **Communication** Your relationship is the connection between the home front and the mission. Discuss beforehand how you'll communicate. Will it be a phone call, video chat (Skype/ WhatsApp)? Which ones would be the best way to connect? Be realistic. Your husband may be in an area with limited mail, email service or even cellular networks. He may be unable to respond right away. Remember that sporadic communication may be his constraint. It does not mean that he doesn't care. While setting up expectation for communication, you'll also have to act responsibly and understand his predicament.
- **Share Daily Happenings** Keep busy and stay active. If you have children, keep them occupied and on track. When you communicate, fill each other in on your daily lives. Talk to him about how the kids behaved, the evening activities, work, friends and family. Send him the pictures of your daily rituals. This builds the connection, while keeping your spouse updated on home front activities. You can share songs that remind you of each other.
- **Gift Packages** Everybody enjoys receiving gift packages. Sending them can be fun too! Deliver a little piece of home to your husband on T/D. Be creative. Include treats, funny notes, your old photographs and items of special meaning for both of you. Include homemade coupons reminding your spouse of the special things you'll do when he returns.

When your husband's duty requires him to stay away from home, your responsibilities increase manifold. You must always take this as a challenge. Utilise any extra time at hand in rediscovering your old hobbies or indulging in new ones. Personal growth is always a plus – and it is better to keep your mind occupied.



You can avail any of the courses, like cooking classes, tailoring classes, beautician course, calligraphy classes, computer classes (how to use email, MS Office, internet), personal grooming classes, communication classes, interview preparation classes for such opportunities. The healthy social environment and cohesiveness within the station keeps you together and makes the times bearable. This environment of togetherness and love starts from us. The unconditional love, the unshakable faith, impeccable commitment to stand by each other in good days and closer together on bad days is the crux of the beautiful bond between two bodies, and one soul.

Taking Care of in-Laws

"To care for those who once cared for us is one of the highest honours"

The relation between a husband and wife goes beyond just the two of them. An important responsibility shouldered by us is nurturing and attending to the needs of our family – our kids, our parents and our in-laws.

Strengthening ties with the In-laws needs to be undertaken with great compassion. But we live in a very different environment in the Indian Air Force. Sometimes due to the call of duty you move from place to place or into far flung areas, and it is not always possible to fulfil these responsibilities. You should work together to handle the affairs of the ageing in-laws. Small gestures like talking to them every day, taking interest in





resolving issues like appointment with doctors, maintaining their health records etc. show that you are care giving and help keep the relations harmonious.

Since the time the concept of nuclear families emerged in India, couples are no more used to having in-laws as part of their

daily lives. With urbanisation, most couples stay alone, with parents and in-laws only visiting once in a while. But when parents-in-law move into a nuclear household, it is always assumed that it will cause trouble in paradise for the couple.

Basic understanding, acknowledgement and appreciation of what your partner is doing for your parents, can go a long way in changing the equation between the partners. Following points are to be kept in mind by both the husband and wife while dealing with their in-laws:

- **Positive Attitude** Just like being a son-in-law/daughter-in-law is new to you taking up the role of a father-in-law/mother-in-law is new to them too. Always try and convey a positive attitude towards them. The older couple is probably just trying their best to fit into their role as 'in-laws'.
- **Equality** Try to treat your in-laws and your parents equally. For example, if you give your mother/father a birthday gift, then give your mother-in-law/father-in-law a gift for their birthday too. Visit your parents and your parents-in-laws with similar frequency.
- **Sensitivity** Acknowledge and respect the fact that your mother-in-law has spent a significant part of her life raising her son. It is only natural if she feels a little sensitive when another person becomes the centre of attention of her son's life.
- **Respect** Treat your in-laws with respect. Consider they are older and wiser. They may have been through a lot of hardships in their life. In fact, talk to them and ask them about their childhood, growing up, raising kids, and life experiences. When they share their life with you, they will develop a liking for you and that can lead to a strong bond between them and you.
- **Expectations** Getting to know the family you have married into may take time. Though most daughters-in-law are welcomed into the family with open arms, do not get disheartened if it does not happen. Give them time to know you better.
- **Be Attentive** Making your parents-in-law feel involved in your household and being attentive to their needs during their stay with you goes a long way in nurturing your relationship with them.
- **Information** Try to keep mother-in-law / father-in-law informed; call and let them know about important events. Keep them in the loop. If you have children, send pictures to your parents-in-law. Grandparents love getting pictures of their grandchildren.
- **Seeking Advice** Your parents-in-law have years of experience. Don't hesitate to take their advice. You may disagree with them and decide not to follow any of their suggestions, but be open to different ideas; at least listen, show respect, and do not take any advice as a personal attack.

- **Share Responsibility** Allow your parents-in-law to take care of your children. They may even enjoy house-sitting. They may like the opportunity to contribute in some way to family events. Involve them in your household, wherever possible.
- **Communication** Always believe that most people are well-intended. That is why it is so important to communicate rather than to make assumptions about your in-law's motivation. If something that someone said hurt you, do not keep it bottled up inside you. Discuss with your husband and your parents-in-law any slights or snubs and how it makes you feel.
- **Don't Blame** Above all else, do not blame your partner for his/her parents' behaviour. It is sure that your partner is already in pain and aware of his/her parents' shortcomings. There is no reason to cause further shame, embarrassment or humiliation.
- **Don't Escalate** When you are disappointed by your in-laws, try as hard as you can not to escalate the situation. Becoming "extra" volatile or excessively emotional never does anyone or any situation any good. Remember words are more dangerous than sword.
- **Devote Quality Time** Consider how much time together is the right amount and try to find the sweet spot. An entire week together may be too much but a weekend may be just right. Try to maintain the high ground. Your kids are watching you.

Elders need to be cared, loved and provided for. You can do it all by yourselves; you can make your husband participate in this work. Even your children can help you. If it's not possible for you to manage their care, you should let them live with dignity in a safe, senior citizen friendly and familiar environment at a comfortable place like old age home or housing for senior citizens.

Marital Discord

Even the best of machineries need maintenance. Similarly, every relationship needs care and attention. The unfortunate reality is that, sometimes, people get caught up in the demands and the fast pace of the modern world. The relationship may get neglected, leading to marital discords. These discords should be addressed and sorted out before it becomes too late.



The first step is to analyse the root cause. It could be monetary/materialistic, infidelity, incompatibility etc.

Sometimes, even the older couples could have trouble in their respective marriages. In these cases, the ideal way to go about is to talk to the couples – first separately, then with both of them together. If that does not help, then they should seek professional help/ counselling.

Reasons for Marital Discord

Marital conflict is not the result of one aspect of marriage, but due to a variety of factors:

- **Cultural Elements** Societal processes contribute to conflicts owing to differences in caste, religion, culture and traditions, expectations etc.
- **Career Consciousness** Placing large importance to your own respective careers is another reason for marital discords.
- **Influence of Western Culture** Comparison of marriages in Indian context with those of Western (developed) countries. It is human nature to fantasise that which is not available to you. It's natural to compare and complain when your life doesn't match up to the life in the movies.



- **Financial Independence** In middle-class and lower middle-class families, most women are dependent on their spouses financially. Ours being a patriarchal society, at times, men do take advantage in such matters - dominating the women physically and psychologically/ emotionally. Various studies have reported that money is one of the most frequent sources of marital conflicts. It is also found that such conflicts are long-lasting, problematic and recurrent. At times, they do not even have a resolution. It was also found that couples are more likely to divorce when women earned more than their husbands. The general understanding is that men expect greater control over financial matters and so cause more disagreements than women.
- **Sharing of Household Chores/ Work** Women in our country assume the traditional role of caregiver and many times, manage their homes as career women. However educated the men might be, till date, it is assumed that the household chores are women's job. Recent studies show that at least 27% of couples have arguments on a daily basis over who will do the household work. Daily arguments tend to be repetitive, stressful and in the long run, significantly frustrating for the couple. It is important to note that a good number of husbands have no qualms in accepting that doing household chores is not the wife's job alone.
- **Habits/Addictions** Increasing dependence on behaviours like alcohol consumption, gambling, smoking, excessive religious prayers/eating/exercise/work/internet/cell phone usage etc. come under the concept of addiction/habits that hamper the peace and happiness of a home.

- **Lack of Proper Counselling Agencies** A major concern in today's world for marital happiness is the lack of genuine counselling agencies/centres. Except in big cities, such facilities are usually unavailable. It doesn't help that there's general lack of awareness around the concept of counselling, and its contribution to quality of life. Counselling is known to be highly beneficial in such scenarios.

  "It's not just about tying the knot: it's also about keeping the knot tight"

How to Resolve Marital Discords

- **Do Not Break the Communication** We should try to resolve the issues by talking to each other. This is the best way of preserving and conserving a precious institution called marriage. As most of the differences arise due to communication gap so, we should not hesitate to talk to each other by keeping 'I' aside and bringing 'we' inside and by giving respect to each other's opinion, compulsions, priorities and way of seeing the life and it's problems. This will resolve most of the differences. Ups and downs are inevitable. Do not allow the differences to become a habit, it could be dangerous.
- **Personal Space** Another important ladder to achieve heights is to give space to each other. Have you ever thought as to why everything looks rosy in the initial days of marriage? It is for us to focus on the strengths and the better side and ignore the weaknesses of our life partner. Why can't we continue this further throughout life?
- **Respect for All** Another key factor of success in any marriage is to give respect to the family members of the spouse, as there is an emotional attachment with them and any kind of disrespect can create major problems in the relationship. Make them friends and not the villain of your life.
- **Counselling** In today's nuclear families, it is becoming more and more necessary to have counselling centres for couples trying to seek professional help to maintain happy married lives.
- **Transparency in Relationship** Decide that you will not hide anything from each other and keep communication open to enable that.



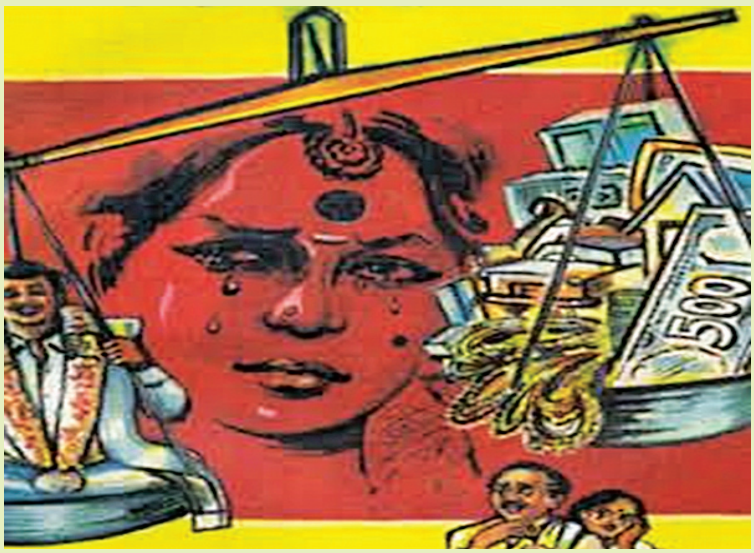
- **Love and Trust** Love and trust are the backbone of this relationship. You should work on maintaining the relationship, and not let the bond develop any strains.

In spite of new strains on the marriage and increasing number of divorces, the faith in the institution of marriage remains unshaken in our society as a whole and will continue to remain so in the near future as well. Small, regular investments in your marriage will ensure steady, high returns in the future, as well.

"Through ups and downs, with tears and laughter
Through tiffs and love we lived happily ever after"

Marital Discord Due to Dowry

Dowry is termed as financial or material demands by husband or kin of husband. Though prohibited under the law, there are still cases of such demands being made in our society. While, serving personnel in defence are groomed to abide by law of the land, at times kin of husband still make such demands, and if demands are not met, they end up torturing or harassing the bride. At this juncture, if psychological support is not extended by the husband or if husband too joins his kin in tending harassment, fissures naturally start developing in the relationship. At times, this harassment also involves verbal abuse and physical violence. Many a times, ill treatment is also meted to parents of bride. Obviously, in modern society, such behaviour is unacceptable and no self-respecting person would tolerate it beyond a point. Gradually, this results in discord and if not resolved well in time may even lead to separation.



How to Resolve?

Society needs to change its mindset to understand the scourge of dowry. Parent of grooms should put themselves in place of bride's parents. Grooms have to take a stand to say a firm '**NO**', even if their kin are pressing for it.

- Girls should be well educated to make them financially independent. A well-educated girl is also able to make her own decision and stand against any harassment.
- Strict enforcement of anti-dowry law by government.
- Refusal to marry a greedy groom and public shaming of such families.

Seeking Help and Next Steps

AFWWA and Marriage Counselling

Arguments are unavoidable in any relationship. However, it is the management and resolution of such conflicts which may hold the key to satisfying relationships.



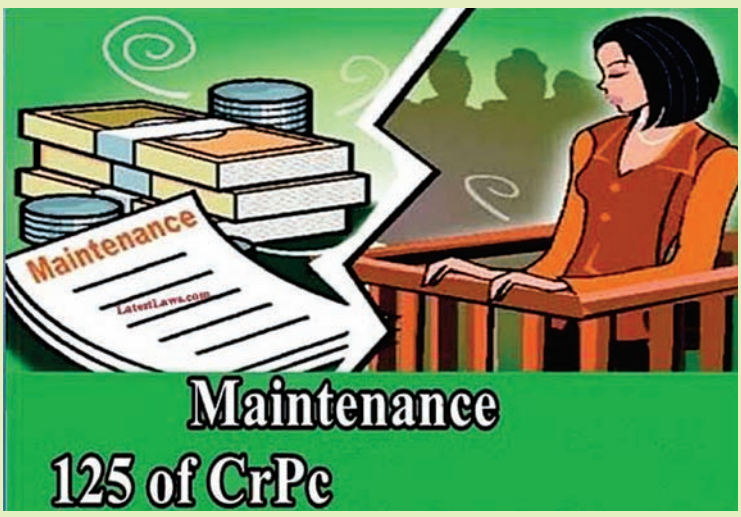
If a situation arises where the couple is unable to handle the dispute, they must not hesitate in taking the help from AFWWA counsellors. Marriage counsellors are provided by AFWWA at all Air Force Stations. They will help you in identifying the problems in the relationship, offer solutions to minimise the discords and help balance out your married life. AFWWA cares for its Sanginis and anyone in distress can always seek help. ***There is always light at the end of the tunnel.*** Every problem has a solution. So stay cheerful and learn to keep faith. Keep a positive attitude and a healthy disposition at all times.

"There is no challenge strong enough to destroy your marriage as long as you are both willing to stop fighting against each other and start fighting for each other".

Dave Willis. Ovg

Separation: Divorce and Maintenance Allowance

Despite the best efforts, however, sometimes the bond cracks to the point of no fix. If you get to a point where you are no longer able to get along with your husband due to his behaviour, character or misconduct, there is always the option of filing for separation or divorce.



In case decision for separation is final, there are Indian Air Force policies in place to provide financial assistance to the concerned Sangini in the form of 'Maintenance Allowance'. It is imperative for you to know that as per Section 125(4) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, no wife shall be entitled to receive an allowance for maintenance from her husband if they are living separately by mutual consent. It is sensible to seek legal advice and guidance from experts before going forward.

When can a Sangini Claim Maintenance Allowance from an Air Warrior?

Here are the rules and circumstances under which a Sangini can claim money for herself and her children:

- If Air Warrior neglects to maintain the Sangini, or without good reason refuses to let the Sangini stay with him.

  OR

- If the Sangini, with good reasons, is not willing to stay with the Air Warrior and does not have independent and adequate source of income for sustenance of herself and the children.

  OR

- The Sangini and Air Warrior do not mutually wish to stay together.

Amount of Maintenance Allowance

- One third of the 'Pay & Allowances' for wife & children.
- One fourth of the Pay & Allowance for wife or children when only either of them is to be granted maintenance allowance.

('Pay & Allowance' includes all sums payable to the Air Warrior after mandatory deductions on account of Income tax, Family Assistance schemes or other mandatory subscriptions and PF / DSOPF, PLI / GIS premium or any life Insurance premium).

Duration of Maintenance Allowance

- **For Wife** Allowance will be granted for FIVE years at time **or** till reunion/divorce/ grant of Maintenance allowance by civil court **or** discharge / retirement of Air Warrior **or** material changes in facts and circumstances *whichever is earlier*. Allowance can be reviewed after/before expiry of five years (on request from Sangini) or due to any reasons found to be genuine (Amount of allowance may be increased/ decreased or ceased by passing fresh orders to that effect).
- **For Daughter** Till she marries **or** remains out of custody of Air Warrior **or** is granted maintenance allowance by civil court **or** discharge / retirement of Air Warrior **or** material changes in facts and circumstances *whichever is earlier*.
- **For Son** Till he attains the age of 25 years **or** gets employment **or** remains out of custody of Air Warrior **or** is granted maintenance allowance by civil court **or** discharge / retirement of Air Warrior **or** material changes in facts and circumstances *whichever is earlier*.

- **For Widowed or Divorced Daughter** If widowed/divorced daughter does not have an adequate independent source of income, maintenance allowance may be granted till she gets re-married **or** gets employment **or** discharge / retirement of Air Warrior *whichever is earlier*.
- **For Special Children** In case of special children, who are unable to support themselves, maintenance allowance will be granted till discharge/retirement of Air Warrior.

Modifications in Maintenance Allowance

- **Enhancement of Allowance**

  Sangini / Children can subsequently apply for enhancement of allowance on the grounds such as increased pay of Air Warrior or growing age of children etc.

- **Continuation of Allowance**

  In case where after the expiry of first five years, the Sangini desires the maintenance allowance to continue, she will be required to apply for the same, giving detailed reasons for her request.

- **Cessation of Allowance**

  Request for cessation of allowance can be made by Air Warrior or Sangini in case any of the conditions in which it was granted cease to exist. Documentary evidence for the same is mandatory.

How can a Sangini register a Complaint?

Sangini needs to approach Station Commander with her written Complaint in a prescribed format. This format is provided to her by Station Authorities. On receipt of application by Sangini, Air Warrior will be issued a Show Cause Notice and efforts will be made by Stn/Unit authorities to conduct a joint counselling, wherever feasible. Sangini can be heard telephonically, if she is not able to visit the station for counselling. Air Warrior will be counselled about his social, moral and legal responsibility to maintain his wife and children.

Timeline for Processing Application

Application for Maintenance Allowance will be processed by the Indian Air Force as per the timelines mentioned below:

- Process at Unit - Within 20 working days (Forwarding of application with remarks of Station Commander to respective Command Headquarter)

- Remarks of Command HQ - Within 7 working days and forwarding to Air HQ
- Processing at Air HQ - Within 7 working days
- P&S(U) report completion - Within 7 working days (if requested)

Facilities Provided to Sangini

Medical and CSD Facilities to Sangini/ Children will be provided as per the following:

- **Medical Facility** Concerned Station HQ of the affected Air Warrior will issue a temporary authorisation letter (With Photograph) to the estranged Sangini/ Children, entitling them for treatment at SMC/Air Force Hospitals only. It is to be renewed in every Three Months.

- **CSD Facility** Concerned Stn HQ of the affected Air Warrior will issue a temporary authorisation letter (With Photograph) to the estranged Sangini / Children that will entitle them for issue of CSD items up to 50% of the Grocery entitlement of the Air Warrior. The authority letter will be renewed annually.

Remember, marriage is not just between the individuals, it is between families. Divorce is an extreme step. The pros and cons of separation and divorce should also be properly understood before you make the decision to follow through on it. If the relationship requires a bit of work, it's best to put in that effort and to keep going together.





I wear no uniforms, no blues or army greens
But I am in the Air Force in the ranks rarely seen
I have no rank upon my shoulders - salutes I do not give
But IAF is the place where I live
I'm not in the chain of command, orders I do not get
But my husband is the one who does, this I cannot forget
I'm not the one who fires the weapon, who puts my life on the line
But my job is just as tough. I'm the one that's left behind
My husband is a patriot, a brave and prideful man
And the call to serve his country not all can understand
Behind the lines I see the things needed to keep this country free
My husband makes the sacrifice, but so do our kid and me
I love the man I married, Flying is his life
But I stand among the silent ranks known as the ***Air Force Wife!***

Marriages are made in heaven....but families make heaven on earth.... And the heaven on earth is lit up by the beam of sun light....which is called a *child* ..

NURTURING THE SEED OF LIFE

‘Of all the rights of a woman, the greatest is to be a mother’.

-Lin Yutang



A strong family is built on a strong foundation. Your bonding with your husband is the foundation on which your new family will begin. Even if both of you are eager to start a family, give yourself a couple of years to work on understanding each other better and working on your communication.

Meanwhile, also discuss your expectations and plan for your family. You may need to plan for your finances, or your leaves (if both of you work, this will be crucial), or even for preconception counselling. As a woman, the biological clock is forever ticking. If you plan your next big step well in advance you will both be ready when it’s time. In all of this, it will become apparent how well you both bond and communicate. Hence, it is important to give some exclusive time to the bonding process.

Pregnancy is the period in which a foetus develops inside the mother’s womb. Human pregnancy lasts about 40 weeks, which can be divided into three trimesters. During this time, a woman undergoes a whole world of changes – physical, mental and physiological. Having a safe, healthy and happy pregnancy begins well before the joyous and tearful moment of a positive result on your pregnancy test.

The moment those two pink lines appear, the entire world transforms. On one hand, you are filled with the wonder of a life growing inside you and on the other hand, emotional challenges stretch your limits to the core.

Pregnancy is a '**metamorphic and fulfilling'** experience. And who better to express that than a woman herself.

Preconception Counselling

As the name suggests, this counselling is done well before conception. An appointment with a doctor at least 3 months before you start trying to conceive is recommended. It is important to pre-empt any potential complications further down the road as well as mitigate any risks. Preconception counselling helps create an ideal environment for conception and growth of the baby.

What Happens During Preconception Counselling?

Your doctor will discuss the following aspects with you:-

- **Family History** Your family history and your partner's family history provide an insight into any conditions or genetic disorders that may be passed on to your child.
- **Genetic Counselling** You should also go through genetic counselling before conception, especially in case of family history of certain genetic conditions.
- **Your Medical Condition** Any medical condition that you may have including allergies as well as any ongoing medications for conditions like thyroid, diabetes etc should be brought to the notice of the doctor.
- **Reproductive Health** History related to your menstrual cycle, previous pregnancy, gynaecological infections and contraception will be noted.
- **Lifestyle** This includes diet and exercise as well as any drinking and/ or smoking habit, or exposure to any hazards.
- **Vaccination** Your vaccination history including Rubella, Human Papilloma Virus (HPV).
- **Supplements** You may be given a prenatal vitamin with 400-800 mcg Folic Acid.

Lab Tests Before Conception

It is ideal to get screened for better planning and to check for certain diseases before trying to conceive. These include getting tested for Rubella, Hepatitis, Diabetes, Thyroid disorder and HIV; Complete Blood Count (CBC) to understand your current condition; as well as Pap smear if the doctor deems it necessary.

Pregnancy and Prenatal Care

Prenatal care is the medical care you receive during pregnancy. Regular prenatal care will reduce the chance of complications during pregnancy and can protect both your health and your infant's health.

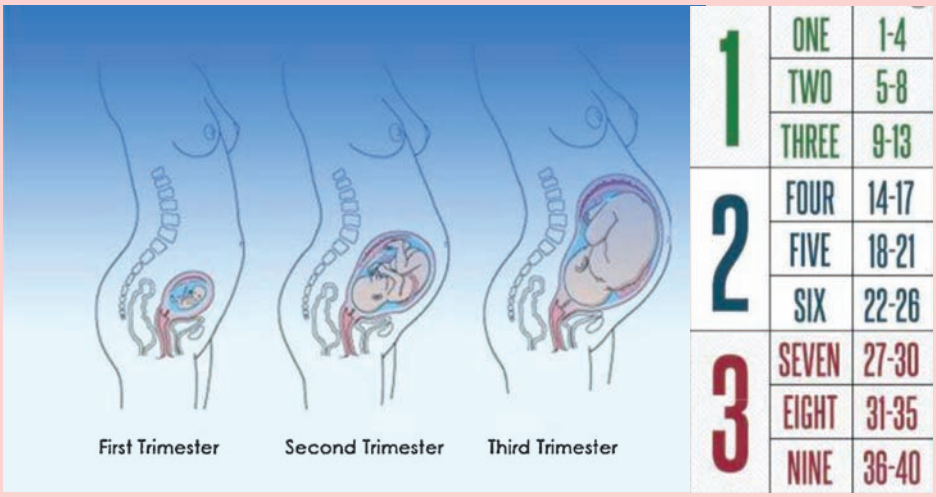
You should schedule your first visit as soon as you know you are pregnant.

Doctor Visits and Follow Ups

Good prenatal care will ensure a positive pregnancy experience. At least 8 visits are recommended to the doctor during your pregnancy, the first one ideally being as soon as you know of the pregnancy. These are timed at 12, 20, 24, 28, 32, 36, 38 and 40 weeks of gestation. Also, do visit the doctor anytime you feel something is wrong during your pregnancy.

The Three Stages of Pregnancy - 1st, 2nd and 3rd Trimester

Conception to about the 12th week of pregnancy marks the first trimester. The second trimester is weeks 13 to 27, and the third trimester starts about 28 weeks and lasts until birth.



Immunisation



Vaccines during pregnancy are designed to ensure that you and your unborn baby are protected against certain infectious diseases.

Booster vaccine of Tdap is recommended even if women have been fully vaccinated.

- 2 doses of Tetanus toxoid are given 4 weeks apart.
- Influenza vaccine is strongly recommended.
- Hepatitis B vaccine can be safely used if indicated.

Caution Vaccines for Mumps, Measles, Rubella and Varicella **should not** be given during pregnancy.



Vaccine	Before pregnancy	During pregnancy	After pregnancy	Type of Vaccine
Hepatitis A	Yes, if indicated	Yes, if indicated	Yes, if indicated	Inactivated
Hepatitis B	Yes, if indicated	Yes, if indicated	Yes, if indicated	Inactivated
Human Papillomavirus (HPV)	Yes, if indicated, through 26 years of age	No, under study	Yes, if indicated, through 26 years of age	Inactivated
Influenza IIV	Yes	Yes	Yes	Inactivated
Influenza LAIV	Yes, if less than 50 years of age and healthy; avoid conception for 4 weeks	No	Yes, if less than 50 years of age and healthy; avoid conception for 4 weeks	Live
MMR	Yes, if indicated, avoid conception for 4 weeks	No	Yes, if indicated, give immediately postpartum if susceptible to rubella	Live
Meningococcal: • polysaccharide • conjugate	If indicated	If indicated	If indicated	Inactivated Inactivated
Pneumococcal Polysaccharide	If indicated	If indicated	If indicated	Inactivated
Tdap	Yes, if indicated	Yes, vaccinate during each pregnancy ideally between 27 and 36 weeks of gestation	Yes, immediately postpartum, if not received previously	Toxoid/ inactivated
Tetanus/Diphtheria Td	Yes, if indicated	Yes, if indicated, Tdap preferred	Yes, if indicated	Toxoid
Varicella	Yes, if indicated, avoid conception for 4 weeks	No	Yes, if indicated, give immediately postpartum if susceptible	Live

For information on all vaccines, including travel vaccines, use this table with www.cdc.gov/vaccines

Get an answer to your specific question by e-mailing cdcinfo@cdc.gov or calling 800-CDC-INFO (232-4636) • English or Spanish

National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases
Immunization Services Division

Travel and Pregnancy

There is no prohibition of travel during pregnancy. You can travel any time during your pregnancy. However, the safest time to travel is between 14 to 28 weeks. Travel is best avoided in the last trimester. The primary reason for this restriction is the risk of labour in an unsuitable environment. Some precautions you should keep in mind when travelling:

- Always wear a seat belt regardless of gestational age and type of vehicle.
- Do not hold in your urge to urinate as this will increase the risk of urinary tract infection.
- During any kind of travel, stretch your legs and ankles periodically to prevent venous stasis.

Modifiable Risk Factors

- Alcohol and tobacco or other intoxicating substance should be avoided during pregnancy. It is safe to avoid passive smoking (Second Hand Smoke).
- Exposure to chemicals, paint fumes and prolonged temperature elevation (hot tub/ Sauna) should be avoided.
- Direct handling of cat litter should be avoided due to the risk of Toxoplasmosis (a parasite infection that can cross over to the baby).
- Use of Drugs and vitamins should be discouraged unless medically indicated.

Medications During Pregnancy

Folic Acid is a crucial medication before and during pregnancy to prevent neurological abnormalities in the foetus. Other medications as prescribed depending upon the need:

- Iron & Calcium supplement
- Multivitamins & Omega 3 fatty acids
- Antacids & pills for vomiting
- Vitamin D

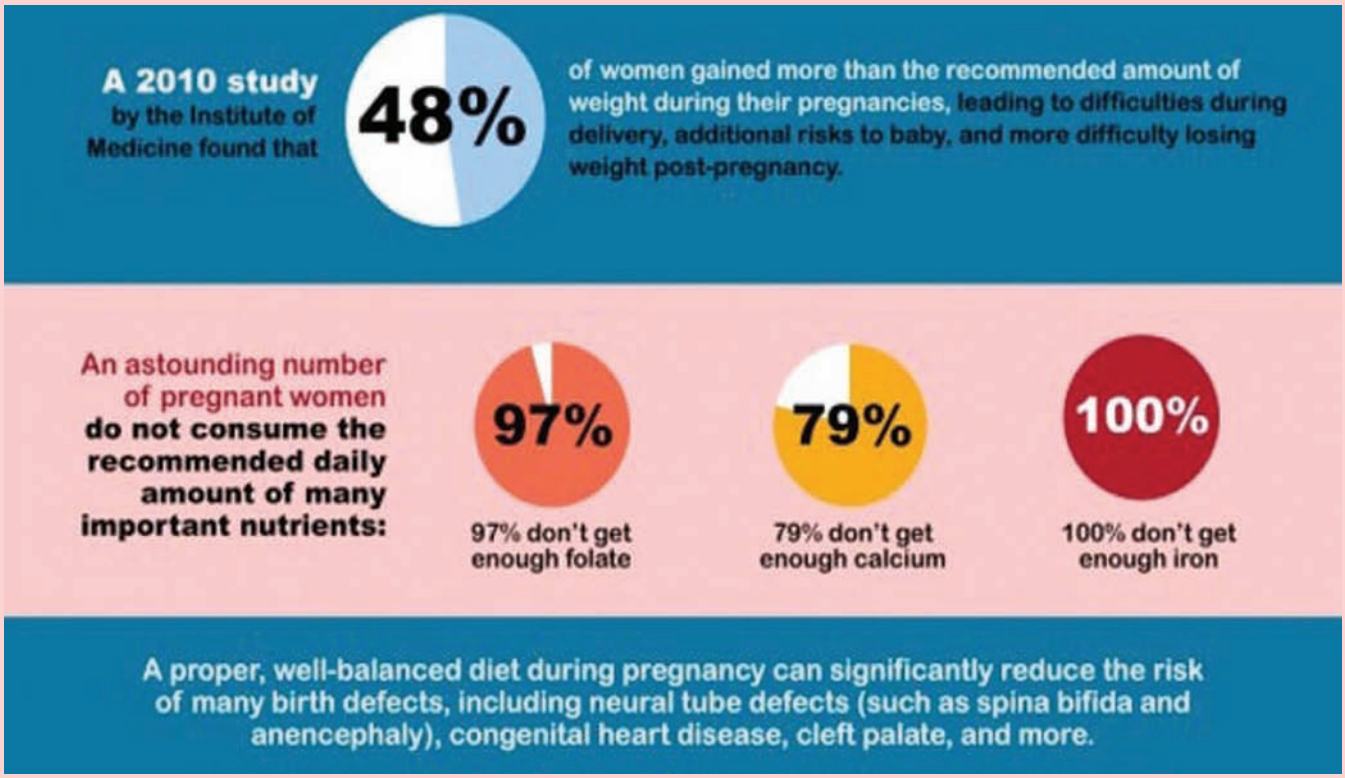
Any chronic medication should be continued with doctor’s advice.

Changes in Eating Habits

A healthy diet is paramount to a healthy pregnancy. But what does healthy diet mean? Contrary to the oft-quoted statement you do not have to "eat for two". Here’s a quick view of what optimal calorie requirements and weight gain during each trimester should look like:

BMI at Beginning of Pregnancy	Recommended Weight Gain During Pregnancy	Approximate Increase in Daily Calories
<18.5	28-40 lbs	1st trimester: Baseline + 100-200 2nd trimester: Baseline + 300-400 3rd trimester: Baseline + 400-500
18.5-25	25-35 lbs	1st trimester: Baseline + 0-100 2nd trimester: Baseline + 200-300 3rd trimester: Baseline + 350-450
25-30	15-25 lbs	1st trimester: Baseline 2nd trimester: Baseline + 150-200 3rd trimester: Baseline + 250-350
>30	11-20 lbs	1st trimester: Baseline 2nd trimester: Baseline + 100-200 3rd trimester: Baseline + 200-300

Pregnancy is known to bring with it the infamous, raging cravings for all sorts of things. And while it is acceptable to occasionally indulge and reach for that extra cheesy slice of pizza, do not give into unhealthy food habitually.



Make sure you get the majority of your calorie requirements from wholesome healthy foods. Throw in a good mix of complex carbohydrates, good fats and lean sources of protein.

Also, make sure to have your fill of fresh fruits and vegetables.



Dietary Fibres

Dietary fibre is well-known for its role in keeping the digestive system running smoothly. Fibre is an important part of a healthy pregnancy diet. Found in plant-based foods, fibre is the part of the plant that the body can't digest. And that is what makes it important for our body.

There are two types of fibres - soluble and insoluble. Soluble fibres dissolve in water and are responsible for making us 'feel full' when eating. They can also absorb water which makes stools softer and easier to pass. This will help prevent constipation. It has the added benefit of binding with cholesterol, lowering your levels and reducing your risk of heart problems.



Insoluble fibre doesn't dissolve in water. Instead, it helps move bulk through the intestines and prevents constipation and other associated problems. So, fibres are important because they perform the following functions:

- Keeping your bowel movements regular
- Preventing constipation
- Lowering blood pressure
- Reducing pregnancy risks such as preeclampsia

The recommended daily intake of dietary fibre for women of childbearing age is 28g daily.

Soluble Fibre

Your sources for soluble fibres would be food like oatmeal or oat bran, lentils, legumes, nuts, seeds, beans, dried peas, strawberries, apples, bananas, pears, and blueberries.

Insoluble Fibre

Your sources for insoluble fibres would be food like whole wheat bread, whole grain cereals, barley, couscous, brown rice, wheat bran, carrots, cucumbers, celery, and tomatoes.

Exercise During Pregnancy

Ideally, you can carry on with all your pre-pregnancy activities provided you have the thumbs-up from your doctor/gynaecologist.

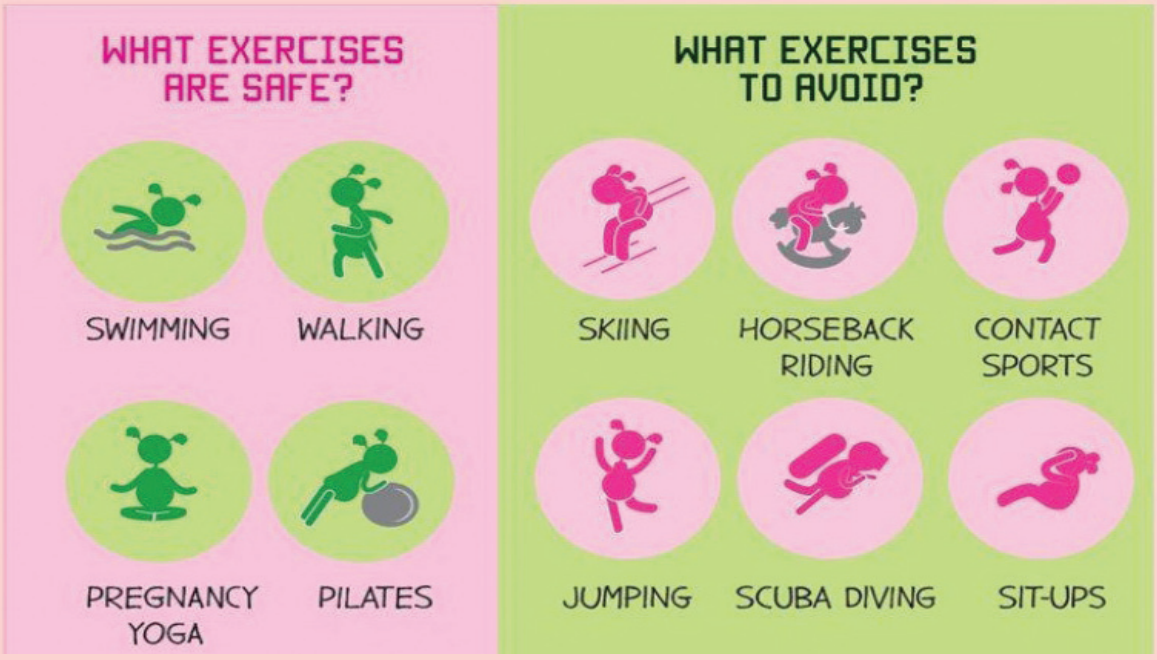
In fact, it is important to exercise during pregnancy as it has a number of benefits, including but not limited to:

- Healthy weight gain
- Reduced constipation

- Improved mood; and fewer mood swings
- Improved sense of well-being and body image

However, not all kinds of exercises are advised. Some exercises that you should and shouldn't do are listed below. It's best to always consult your doctor.





Mental Health During Pregnancy



An often-overlooked aspect of being pregnant is one's mental health. Everyone around you has a lot of expectations for you and your pregnancy.

You might feel ecstatic sometimes, but considering the mélange of weight gain, body changes and hormones, you might also find yourself experiencing a whole new range of emotions. You might find that you want nothing to do with the "enjoy your pregnancy" club!

But fret not, you are not alone. Mood swings and emotional roller-coaster are the norms during pregnancy. Few phases in your life will render you more vulnerable than your pregnancy - and the support of your family is paramount.

Most importantly, your partner's support becomes indispensable. Feel free to share your feelings and thoughts with those around you.

Do not beat yourself up for the way you feel. Instead, be kind to yourself. And remember – if your mood is affecting your life (work or relationships), talk to your doctor or gynaecologist and discuss the need for medication, support group or specialist services.

Sleep

Make sure you get adequate rest during your pregnancy. Finding a comfortable sleeping position may appear a herculean task but with a few simple tricks and tweaks, you can find a position that works for you. DO NOT lie on your back.

Smelling essential oils such as lavender oil can also help soothe your nerves, calm your mind and help you into a peaceful, restful sleep.



Nausea and Vomiting in Pregnancy

Nausea during pregnancy is common – 7 women out of 10 experience it during pregnancy. For most women, it improves by week 12. But for some women, it can last for the entirety of their pregnancy. This will usually be due to acidity or gall stone.

Tips to Manage Nausea and Vomiting



- Drink plenty of water, but little at a time.
- Ginger is a traditional remedy for nausea
- Get fresh air.
- Always rest after meals - get plenty of rest.
- Relax and avoid stress.
- If you're producing too much saliva, suck on a fresh lemon or drink lemonade.
- Low calorie and high protein diet can help reduce nausea and vomiting.
- Keep a light snack such as a savoury biscuit or cracker by your bed and eat it within 20 minutes of getting up in the morning - or even if you wake up any time during the night.

Keep Your Stomach Full 	Eat something in the morning as soon as you wake up.
Drinking Fluids 	You should take care throughout your pregnancy to stay hydrated at all times.
Meals Frequency 	Have small and frequent meals throughout the day. Avoid eating heavy meals.
Adequate Rest 	Your nausea can trigger when your body is very tired or overworked. Take enough rest.
Cooking 	Avoid foods items which you dislike from your diet. Avoid cooking if possible as strong smells can trigger nausea.
Avoid Fatty Foods 	It is best to avoid all kinds of fatty foods that contain either too much oil or too much spice or salt.
Go For Walks And Strolls 	It is a perfect remedy to reduce vomiting as walking is a safe exercise for pregnant women and helps in digesting the food faster.
Keep Rooms Well Ventilated 	Fresh air can do you a lot of good during your pregnancy. Make sure that you avoid stuffy rooms.
Practice Pranayama 	It is very vital for you to be completely relaxed through your pregnancy months. Pranayama is great way to relax.
Acupressure Bands 	Acupressure or acupuncture bands are easily available at health stores. These help fight vomiting sensation during pregnancy.

Additional Care

Pregnancy is a special time and requires you to take special care of your body. The changes happening in your body over the months make your body a little more vulnerable than usual. Sometimes changes occurring at this time come with their own discomfort. It's best to pay extra attention to your personal hygiene as well as keep an eye out for certain changes and/or signs and address them immediately to avoid prolonged discomfort or pain.

Please remember to consult your doctor without hesitation at the slightest of warning signs from your body!

Breast Care

Breast changes are normal during pregnancy and might continue until delivery, and beyond. Hormonal fluctuations, increased blood flow, and the production of colostrum could result in pain and discomfort in the breasts. To avoid discomfort there are a few general precautions you can take:

- Wash your breasts with clean, warm water every day.
- Check your breasts regularly for any changes, and if you happen to see any changes, let your doctor know about it.
- Do not keep your breasts damp as they may cause cracks in the nipples.
- Avoid scrubbing your breasts with rough cloth or towels; Just pat them dry after a shower.
- Maintain a healthy body weight by having a balanced diet. Also, avoid caffeine, alcohol and smoking as these items will exacerbate the pain.

Massage

Sometimes, your breasts may swell or become extremely sensitive, or your nipples can get dry, pigmented, cracked and really painful. In such cases you may have to resort to massaging.

Massaging for about 5 minutes will help with blocked ducts, stretch marks, and cracked nipples. Take some moisturiser or olive oil and rub around the nipples in a circular motion, using your fingertips. Pull the nipples gently outwards. Make sure you only use your fingertips, and don't use too much pressure. If it hurts to massage, you should stop. It's also advised not to massage your nipples in final stages of pregnancy.

In addition to gradual relief, massaging will also prepare you for improved breastfeeding by softening the breasts, boosting production of milk, and stimulating the nipples and areola for easier sucking.

Other Measures

To help relieve breast discomfort during pregnancy, there are a few additional precautions you can take:-

- Gentle stretching for upper body and arms that can alleviate pain by providing strength to supporting breast muscles.
- Using right fitting maternity bras made of comfortable material, preferably pure cotton. Avoid underwires during this time.
- Checking your nipples. If your nipples are inverted or flat, you may have to wear shells to draw them outward. Please consult your doctor in such cases.
- Following good hygiene practices. Your nipples may leak out small amounts of your first breast milk. You should use a disposable nursing pad, or use clean cotton cloth dipped in warm water to wipe the fluid. Do not use alcohol or soap-based cleaners as they will only cause more dryness.

Intimate Hygiene

Your vagina is the only part of your body with its own self-cleaning mechanism. It has a naturally low pH, which discourages growth of bacteria or any such organism and maintains a clean environment. You don't need to soap it. Water is more than enough. Make sure the visible, external anatomy of your genital area (the vulva) is cleaned – just like the rest of your body.

But, during pregnancy, mucous membranes in the genital area become much more sensitive than usual. This makes it extremely crucial for you to be cautious and pay extra care to intimate hygiene – including choosing hygiene products. Unsuitable products or carelessness in hygiene can cause discomfort and put you at increased risk of infections like UTI.

Always – ALWAYS – consult your gynaecologist before you decide to self-medicate or treat your symptoms. Given that, here are some basic hygiene tips:-

- Do not wash more than twice a day.
- Do not douche – no water, no soap, no products into your vagina.
- Use hygiene products containing soothing ingredients.
- Scented products – vaginal deodorants – are a strict no.
- Wear clean underwear every day.
- If you experience unusual discharge, do not use vaginal suppositories without first consulting a doctor.
- If you experience irritation, do not use creams without first consulting a doctor.

Extremely Important

If you notice vaginal bleeding in any capacity – very light blood spotting to heavy bleeding, immediately let your doctor know. It may be a sign of **Low-Lying Placenta** which can complicate your pregnancy and your health.

If accompanied with any of these other symptoms, you should seek **immediate** medical attention:

- Cramps.
- Bleeding that suddenly starts, stops and then recurs in a few days or weeks.
- Bleeding after intercourse.
- Bleeding in the second half term of your pregnancy.



The Last Lap

Congratulations! You've made it to the finish line! There is hardly any time now before you hold your tiny bundle of joy in your arms. This would also be the perfect time to prepare your to-go baggage for the hospital. It should contain all the essentials you may need during your stay at the hospital. Make sure it's readily accessible to grab-and-go in case of early labour.

Check-list is placed on page no. 90 for print and use. Additionally, don't forget to pack a few sanitary pads.

Labour and Childbirth

"The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest fear is **fear of the unknown**."

It is paramount to educate yourself regarding the process of childbirth. Be patient, go easy on yourself and practise living in the moment. Rely on your faith and beliefs to provide comfort during this stage. Read about positive birth experiences. Practise breathing techniques and mindful meditation as these will come in handy during the culmination of labour.

Talk to your doctor in advance about pain relief measures that you may need during labour.

Role of Indian Air Force and AFWWA

You must understand that the Air Force Station is your extended family. Be ready to be a part of it from the moment you marry into the family. Yes, your husband might not be around all the time, but his section/unit/squadron will always rise to the occasion and help you out. Obviously, you should know whom to call. You should have the telephone numbers of your husband's Section in-charge and Commanding Officer, and their wives. Remember, they are always available to help you out. So, don't forget to talk or be hesitant to reach out!

Though most Station Medicare Centres may not have a gynaecologist, a military hospital will be at a reasonable distance from you. Additionally, many stations have visiting civilian gynaecologist who will help you out with your regular check-ups. They also have a counsellor who'll help you sail through if you hit a rough patch. Again, don't forget to talk!

IAF has measures in place to ensure your health

- Women's health is an important prerequisite to a healthy, happy household. *'Prevention is better than cure'* and IAF follows it sincerely and diligently. IAF undertakes the responsibility to provide comprehensive i.e. physical, mental and social healthcare for all its personnel (serving and retired) and their dependants. Health promotion is the backbone of all welfare activities in the stations. As with every initiative, the promotion of health care also begins at home. All Sanginis and dependants of IAF personnel are encouraged to follow safe hygiene and sanitation practices.

- Implementation of health care programmes and improved patient care has considerably reduced mortality and morbidity in the IAF, rendering the force fighting fit. This includes girl child health care and protection, which are given immense importance in IAF. AFWWA supports the movement by advising on the ideal nutrition and hygiene practices.
- Health of the mother and the baby start right from the womb. The medical services in IAF provide well-timed medical advice from the time of conception till delivery. From early childhood, the team effort of gynaecologist, paediatrician, nursing staff and the AFWWA Sanginis support safe motherhood. Every mother receives good antenatal care and safe institutional delivery.
- Antenatal clinics are set up at all SMCs and MHs to conduct regular health check-ups of mothers. Timely antenatal visits, vaccinations and prenatal diagnosis of congenital abnormalities in baby aids in preventing infectious diseases and congenital malformations in babies.
- Facility for assisted reproductive therapy, namely IVF, is also available at specified MHs, CHs and R&R hospitals for couples struggling to conceive.
- The role of AFWWA in improving the overall health status of mother and child is noteworthy. The Sanginis organise various group events, health camps, home meetings for education of the ladies. The AFWWA acts as a surrogate family and provides strong social support for the families in their times of need.

Some Tips for Men When Their Wife is Pregnant



- **Be Patient**

  Pregnant women go through a lot of stress both physically and emotionally. Their hormones can cause extreme behavioural changes like mood swings, irritability,

persistent cravings, etc. These hormonal mood changes are difficult for men to grasp, but you need to be patient and understanding. The important thing to remember at such times is that it's really just the hormones talking, and not your partner.

- **Don't React, Just Listen**

  When your partner is telling you what upsets her, just listen without passing judgement or giving a solution. Put your phone away, look her in the eyes and be 100% present for her. Sometimes she just needs someone who will listen to her.

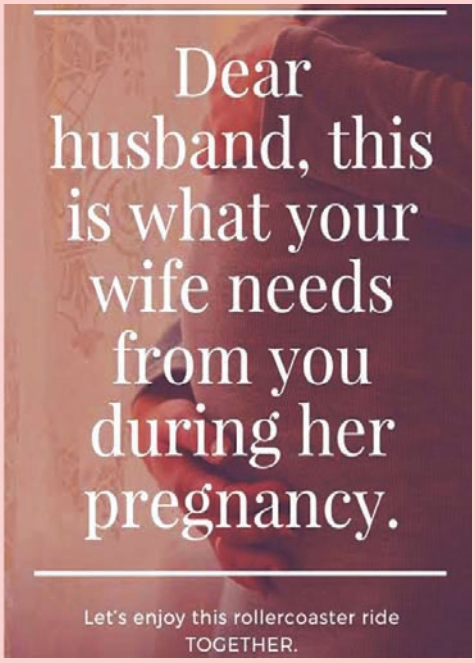
- **Satisfy Her Cravings**

  Pregnant women have crazy cravings. You should not be surprised if you are asked to provide for something as insane as a fruit & vinegar combination. Do not question the cravings, and just accept the oddest of concoctions as a part of pregnancy. Satisfying her cravings will make her feel loved.

  Men love their wives, but pregnant women don't love themselves sometimes.

- **Read Lots of Books and Blogs**

  There is so much information out there on pregnancy, babies and children. Gender equality has closed the debate on which parent should look after the baby. Modern men now help their partners at every step of the journey. During pregnancy, you need to read as many books and blogs about pregnancy and babies as possible. The information you come across will help you better understand your wife as well as what is going on at different stages of the baby's life.



- **Take Holidays Together**

  In the first trimester, couples should try to take a relaxing holiday. There is nothing better for pregnant women than vitamin D, nice food and some recuperation. Make sure you do this early into the pregnancy rather than later. It can be dangerous to fly after six months as the baby may come prematurely.

- **Compliment Her Regularly**

  There is nothing more radiant than the glow of a pregnant woman. When your wife is pregnant, she is going through a lot internally. Often, this will mean that she doesn't feel great about herself. You need to remind your partner how pretty and loved she is. Daily reminder that she is loved can go a long way. A simple compliment can boost her confidence.

- **Go to Every Appointment**

  You should try to make it to every one of your wife's appointment through her pregnancy. You need to be together every step of the day to be a good team. Even if it's a regular, non-consequential appointment, be there for her.

- **Put Your Social Life on Hold**

  This is one of the hardest things for any man to do. A pregnant woman needs her partner more than his mates need him at the bar. Your regular social life, excluding special occasions, will have to wait. Having support at home helps a pregnant woman rest easier and fret less.

- **Help Her Prepare**

  When a woman is pregnant, she plans for the baby's space – choosing clothes and toys, accessories for the baby and its room. You should give your input as well, and get involved in the process. Knowing that things are ready for the baby can be relieving for her.

  Pregnancy will need you to cater to your wife's whims and treat them exceptionally well. One of the best indications of how participating a father you would be is the extent to which you work together with your wife to make her pregnancy as stress-free as possible.

Ways to Bond with Your Baby During Pregnancy

The most important thing is to relax and take care of yourself. Evidence suggests that the more stress-free you are the better for the health of the baby. If you feel stressed, talk to your partner, or a friend, or reach out to your doctor or counsellor. Give yourself time to reflect. Go for walks. Have warm, relaxing baths.



Get an ultrasound done. Seeing your baby moving inside the womb can be a poignant experience for parents, and can help them to bond with the baby since it can suddenly seem 'real'. Some women like to keep a diary about their feelings and experiences throughout their pregnancy.

Remember that the baby can hear and feel you while in the belly. You can use this time to form an attachment with your baby even before the birth.

- Talk and sing to your baby.
- Gently touch and rub your belly, or massage it.
- Respond to your baby's kicks. In the last trimester, you can gently push against the baby or rub your belly where the baby kicked to see if there is a response.
- Play music to your baby. Music that mimics a heartbeat of around 60 beats per minute, like lullabies, is great for the baby. You'll find a plethora of relaxing and calming music online.

Preparing Older Siblings to Welcome the Baby

Older siblings can feel left out in your journey with your soon-to-be born baby. You can involve them by getting them to bond with the baby. This may include talking to them about the baby, reading stories about pregnancy and babies, and allowing them to touch your belly to feel the baby kicking.

You can even take them along while shopping for baby supplies or while setting up the baby's space. Listen to their suggestions, discuss with them – let them choose a few things for the baby, as well. Prepare a gift together. They might want to make a drawing or a piece of art. Encourage such actions.



**Mothers are Magicians. They turn Pain into hope,
Hardships into lessons, And tears into laughter**

Frequently Asked Questions

Answered by Dr Vimala Rajappa (MD, DGO)

- **What are the early signs of pregnancy?**

  If your menstrual cycle is regular and you miss a period, that is the first sign of your pregnancy. Some women also experience cramps and spotting – which may be mistaken for a very light period – a little before their due menstrual cycle. You may experience nausea as well.

- **Going for the first check, what do I expect?**

  You will be subjected to different tests, but they will depend entirely on how long into your pregnancy you go in for your first visit. For example, if you go after six to eight weeks of missing your last period, you might be asked to get an ultrasonogram. This would be to confirm the pregnancy as well as assure normal growth of the embryo according to the period of gestation. Additional tests you can expect in your first visit are blood tests to check your Hb levels, confirm your blood group and Rh; and urine test. Your immunisation schedule may also be set up and started immediately.

- **Is it safe to have sex during pregnancy?**

  It is advisable to totally avoid sex, in the first and last trimester. With high-risk pregnancies, it is important to be all the more careful.

- **Is it safe to exercise during pregnancy?**

  Exercises in pregnancy are essential, but not the intense kind. Walking two to three kilometres daily at a comfortable pace is ideal but you have to remember to take it slow and easy. For high-risk pregnancies, very mild static exercises are recommended. In some cases, you may be asked to take total rest throughout pregnancy. Always listen to your doctor's/counsellor's/gynaecologist's/obstetrician's advice. You may need to adjust your diet in accordance to your exercise to avoid undue weight gain.

- **Should I eat for two during pregnancy?**

  Eating for two is a myth. A normal, healthy diet will suffice. Ensure intake of all nutrients. Iron and folic acid supplements are a must. The nature of diet will vary according to your nutritional status.

- **Is it unsafe to sleep on my back during pregnancy?**

  It is advised not to sleep on your back during pregnancy, especially as the pregnancy advances. Sleeping on your back may put pressure on your spine, intestines and major blood vessels. This additional pressure could cause digestive problems,

haemorrhoids, shortness of breath, and lack of blood flow to the baby – in addition to making you dizzy and causing lower back pains.

- **Can I wear high heels during pregnancy?**

  High heels put strain on your Achilles tendon - the major tendon that helps your legs carry the body weight. With a protuberant abdomen, your body balance is thrown off a bit – drastically increasing the risk of tripping and falling with serious consequences to your pregnancy.

- **Can I travel during pregnancy?**

  You should avoid travelling in the first and third trimester, especially if it involves rough roads or jolting drives. High-risk cases should not travel at all.

- **What remedies do you recommend to ease morning sickness?**

  Morning sickness is a passing phenomenon and normally does not need any treatment. It is best to avoid taking any medication in the first twenty weeks of pregnancy as the growing foetus may be affected by an unknown drug. Sucking pieces of lime may help. Vitamin B6 tablets are known to help. Always consult your doctor, gynaecologist or obstetrician for any medication – even supplements.

- **Is it safe to take antibiotics during pregnancy?**

  It is best to avoid any antibiotics – or for that matter, any drug – during pregnancy unless otherwise prescribed by your obstetrician.

- **Will I have stretch marks after giving birth?**

  Stretch marks after pregnancy are inevitable. Despite various claims in the market, you'll see no product can completely eliminate these marks.

- **What is the normal amount of weight gain during pregnancy?**

  Normally, there is no weight gain in the first trimester. On the contrary, vomiting, nausea and inadequate food intake may cause loss of weight. The weight gain is gradual – ideal being at about two kg a month from the second trimester. Closer to term, this may decrease a bit. Any weight fluctuation besides this warrants investigation.

Children are like wet cement...
whatever falls on them makes an impression.....
We have to make right choices while rearing them.....

A GUIDING BEACON



"A child is a future father and mother, future worker and future citizen. Since they are the future of the country, they need special care. Protecting their rights and status are important since they are the responsible citizens of tomorrow"

Swami Vivekananda



Child-rearing is the intricate process of supporting a child's physical, social, emotional and intellectual development till they reach adulthood. It is most common for the caretakers to be the biological parents, but it is not restricted to them alone. Sometimes, it may be another family member - an older sibling, grandparents, aunt, uncle, a family friend or the child could even be in the care of foster or adoptive parents. Children need adults to help them through all the stages of their development.



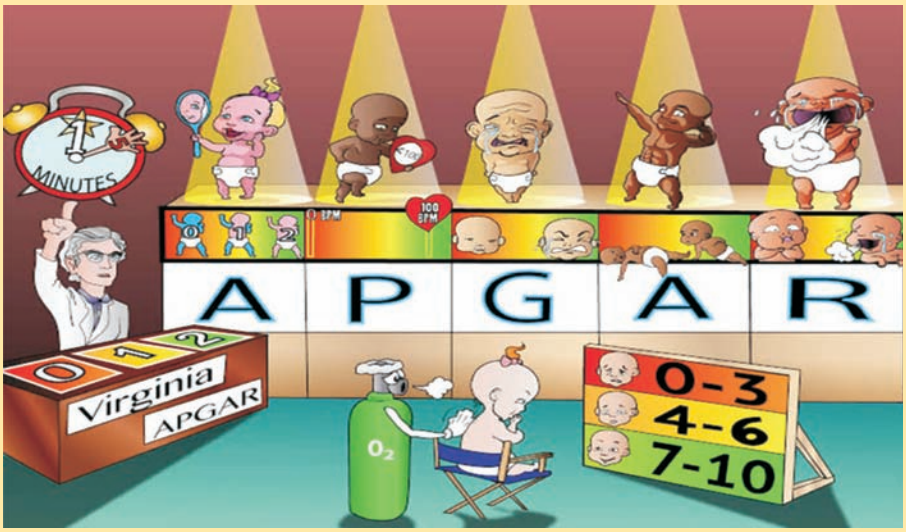
Bringing up a child is an extremely important and challenging responsibility to shoulder; and is equally rewarding.

A child's first connection to the world is through his/her parents. This relationship lays down the foundation of a child's

life. For a child to grow into a good, well-rounded person, good parenting is essential. They require love and affection, but they also eventually need to become independent enough to make their own life decisions and face the real world. It becomes the parents' responsibility to teach them to empathise; take responsibility; build strong, healthy, relationships; work in a team and collaborate effectively to ensure they adjust better in the world and lead happy, successful personal and professional lives.

Child's First Needs

Apgar Score



The Apgar score is a test given to newborns soon after birth. It is given at 1 minute after birth, and again at 5 minutes after birth. Sometimes, if there are concerns about the baby's condition, the test might be repeated. The test was designed to help health care providers tell a newborn's overall physical condition so that they could quickly decide whether the baby needed immediate medical care.

In the test, five things are used to check a baby's health. Each is scored on a scale of 0 to 2, with 2 being the best score:

Apgar Sign	2	1	0
Appearance (skin colour)	Normal colour all over (hands and feet are pink)	Normal colour (but hands and feet are bluish)	Bluish-grey or pale all over
Pulse (heart rate)	Normal (above 100 beats per minute)	Below 100 beats per minute	Absent (no pulse)
Grimace ("reflex irritability")	Pulls away, sneezes, coughs, or cries with stimulation	Facial movement only (grimace) with stimulation	Absent (no response to stimulation)

Apgar Sign	2	1	0
Activity (muscle tone)	Active, spontaneous movement	Arms and legs flexed with little movement	No movement, "floppy" tone
Respiration (breathing rate and effort)	Normal rate and effort, good cry	Slow or irregular breathing, weak cry	Absent (no breathing)

A baby who scores 7 or above on the test is considered in good health. If a baby's score was low at first and hasn't improved, or there are other concerns, the doctors and nurses will continue with necessary medical care. The baby will be monitored closely.

Mother's Milk

Breastfeeding has many benefits for both the mother and the baby. It is extremely essential for the babies as it provides all the energy and nutrients that the baby requires. Health professionals recommend beginning breastfeeding within the first hour of a baby's life and continuing as often and as much as the baby wants.

After birth, a mother's body needs to heal as well as make milk. This makes diet an important facet for the mother. She should eat nutrient-rich and energy-rich foods that are easy to digest. A nursing mother needs approximately 500 calories more than a non-pregnant, non-lactating woman.

Meal plans and foods that are allowed differ from region to region. What is acceptable for new moms to eat in a Gujarati household may be strictly off-limits for a family from Kerala. It is important to carefully keep all considerations in mind and eat a diet consisting of all the essential nutrients.

Proteins

The baby needs lots of proteins since this is a rapid growth phase. At the same time, mother's body needs to self-heal and requires protein as well. Therefore, mothers should eat a lot of protein foods: soybean, chicken, fish, egg, milk, curd, paneer, dals, cheese, almonds.

Whole Grains

Whole grains and whole-grain foods are highly nutritious and easily digestible. Whole-grain foods to include would be: whole wheat flour, oats and broken wheat (daliya), brown rice, quinoa, ragi, muesli etc.

Vitamins

Vitamins are essential for the proper growth of the baby and for normal functioning of the mother's body after delivery. Green leafy vegetables and fruits are a great source of vitamins and minerals.

Iron

The mother loses a lot of blood during delivery and needs to renew her iron stores. Sources of iron include pulses, sprouts, dry fruits, meat, fish, poultry, egg and green leafy vegetables.

Calcium

Calcium is an essential nutrient needed by both the mother and the baby. It enables better bone and teeth health in the baby and is required by the mother's body to make up for the loss of calcium post-delivery. Sources of calcium are milk and other dairy products, fish, dark green leafy vegetables, ragi, sesame.

Galactagogues

Galactagogues are foods that help increase the milk production and meet the growing needs of the baby. Some such foods that a lactating mother can include in her diet are shatavari, fenugreek and fennel seeds, milk, almonds, orange, masoor dal, spinach, garlic, sesame, poppy seeds and ragi.

Liquids

A lactating mother should drink ample liquids since it helps in milk production. Decrease in intake can lead to dehydration and decreased supply of milk. Daily water intake should be supplemented with some liquid foods as well, such as coconut water, vegetable-based soups, ragi kanji, buttermilk and milk, etc.

Foods to avoid

For a mother who is breastfeeding, the best thing to do is to stick with a healthy balanced meal plan, as the food she eats can pass to the baby through her milk. Some foods that she should avoid are cruciferous vegetables (e.g. cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage, asparagus) which are not only difficult to digest, but also cause infant colic and gas. And for the first 2-3 months, it is better to avoid legumes like rajma, chana and soya beans, as well.

The key is to remember that there is no predefined set of foods that can be excluded from diet for everyone. If the mother feels that her baby is particularly fussy one day, she should evaluate what different thing she ate and see if the baby feels better when she leaves that particular food out.

Given below is a sample ideal diet plan for a lactating mother:

Meal	Menu
Morning: 8:00 am	1 cup tea (1 tsp sugar) + 7-8 soaked almonds and 4-5 dates
Breakfast: 9:00 am	1 glass (200 ml) skimmed milk + 1/2 cup badam sheera + 1 Fruit OR 3 small methi or palak paratha + ½ cup curd/raita OR 3 slices of whole wheat bread and 2 eggs + 1 fruit or 1 cup of poha OR upma + 1 fruit + 1 sunth vadi
Mid Morning: 11:00 am	1 fruit + 1 methi ladoo
Lunch:: 1:00 pm	1 cup salad + 2 rotis or 2 small bajra rotis 1 cup rice + 1 cup vegetables + 1 cup moong curry/dal OR 1 cup salad + 2 rotis + 1 cup rice + 1 cup vegetables + 1 cup fish curry

Meal	Menu
Evening: 4:00 pm	1 glass milk (200ml) + 1 goand ladoo
Mid Eve: 6:00 pm	1 cup tea (1tsp sugar) with 2 small pan cakes (Puda/chila) or Sprout bhel or 1 cup vegetable upma
Dinner: 9:00 pm	1 cup salad + 2 rotis+ 1 cup rice + 1 cup leafy vegetable + 1 cup dal
Bed Time	1 glass milk (200ml)

*Fruits: any seasonal fruits such as apple pear, grapes, melons, banana etc.
**Salads: carrot, cucumber, tomato, cabbage, beetroot, lettuce, etc.

DISCLAIMER: The above is suggestive meal plan, please consult with your dietician before following this plan

Feeding Positions



You and your baby each have unique needs, so one nursing style may not fit all moms and babies. Some feeding positions are depicted in the picture.

Breast Pump

While we speak a lot about the advantages of breast milk and how convenient it is for the mother to breastfeed, we often forget that it has its limitations. A mother may get worried if she is unable to breastfeed her child due to various reasons which can include:

- She can't produce a healthy milk supply.
- She may have to take medications or undergo medical treatment which is not safe while breast feeding.
- There may be a few conditions not compatible with breast feeding.
- Her baby has a medical condition that inhibits his ability to drink directly from the breast.
- She may be a working mother and unavailable for the child when he needs to be fed.

A breast pump is a wonderful tool that can help you to overcome these problems. It is a device that helps in extracting milk from the breast of a lactating mother. It allows

you to pump and store milk beforehand, thereby enabling you to nurse to your baby as and when required.

Colic Pain in Babies

Colic is a special pattern of crying, even when the babies are healthy and are eating and growing well. The crying spells happen at the same time of the day. Most often the crying starts in the early evening. While no one is exactly sure what causes colic, some experts think it may be associated with intestinal discomfort stemming from, over or underfeeding, improper digestion and infrequent burping.

To relieve your baby from colic, try some of these strategies.

- **Burping**

  (a) Try burping your baby every 5 minutes during breastfeeding, if your baby tends to be gassy.

  (b) Burp the baby each time you switch breasts if you are breastfeeding, and also after each bottle feed.
- Walk, rock or take your baby for a ride. Many babies find motion relaxing.
- Use a pacifier or help your baby find his fist to suck on.
- Rub your baby's tummy or give an infant massage.

Soft Foods - Weaning Diet



Breastfeeding a baby is an incredibly sweet and important time for both the baby and the mother, developmentally and relationally. But as a baby gets older, it starts to need solid food so it can get enough iron and other essential nutrients for growth and development which breast milk alone cannot provide. For about the first six months of life, babies use iron stored in their bodies from when they were in the womb. They also get some iron from breast milk and/or infant formula. But babies' iron stores go down as they grow. And by around six months, they can't get the iron they need from breast milk or infant formula alone.

In India we have ritual (in all the religions) that marks the infant's first intake of food other than milk. It's called Annaprashana. Its held when the child is around six months and before he turns one, that's the time a child is ready to convert his diet from liquid to solid. Most of the time, babies will communicate they are ready to begin eating solid foods.

Signs your baby is ready for solids include when your baby.

- Has good head and neck control and can sit upright when supported.
- Shows an interest in food – for example, by looking at what's on your plate.

- Reaches out for your food.
- Opens their mouth when you offer them food on a spoon.
- Begins waking up in the middle of the night feeling hungry, even though they had been sleeping through the night for weeks or months.
- Continues to cry and to act hungry after feedings.

The Signs Happen at Different Times for Different Babies



Weaning is the gradual introduction of the nourishment other than milk to the infant. As the baby grows, the mother gradually shifts from providing breast milk to substituting it with nutritious, age-apt food. Ideally, weaning starts at 6 months, but some mothers may introduce some liquids at 4 months of age. This will depend on the baby's appetite and development. Lactation decreases after about 6 months and the breast milk is insufficient to fulfill appetite or support growth – and the growth is rapid until the age of two.

How to Introduce Weaning Foods?

It's the most common question for a new mom. How should she go about introducing weaning foods? Here's how to go about it. Remember! Consult the paediatrician for your weaning plan.

- Start with one-two teaspoons at a time. Allow the child to swallow and accept the new texture. Offer additional one-two teaspoons more of the same food every day till the end of the week when the child can have a small bowl at a time.
- Introduce a new ingredient every week and look out for acceptability, discomfort or allergies.
- It is best to introduce only one food item at a time. Avoid offering too many items at the same time.
- Avoid force-feeding or trying the clean-plate policy. Make feeding as stress-free as possible. Only then your little one will look ahead for his meals.
- Solid food can be introduced once the baby can sit with skill.

Age in Months	Quantity of Weaning Food
5 – 6 Months	Few spoons to 30ml at a time
6 – 7 months	50-75 ml/g at a time
7 – 8 months	75 -100 ml/g at a time
9 – 12 months	100 – 150 ml/g at a time

Month-Wise Distribution Plan of Weaning Foods

A quick guide to foods as the baby grows older. Remember to also adhere to quantities as per the table in the previous page.

Month	Food Items
5th	Juices – Orange, Apple, Carrot Soups – Carrot, Bottle Gourd, Tomato, Spinach, Beetroot
6th	Rice water, Barley water, Thinned Dals, Wheat/Rice based baby food Graduate to Khichadi and Boiled Mashed Potato
7th	Rawa and Ragi Porridge, Biscuits, Diced Carrots, Mashed pumpkin, Sweet Potato
8th - 9th	Daliya Porridge with a little jaggery with/without milk, Oats Porridge with Apple and milk, Rajgeera Porridge, Rawa Upma
10th	High fibre foods like Mango and Papaya Mashed Idli/Dhokla, Mashed Curd Rice, Banana Milkshake, Chikoo Milkshake
12th	If the baby has reacted well to above foods without any sign of indigestion or allergies, non-vegetarian foods can be introduced. Start with Clear Chicken Soup, Boiled Egg whites and yolks, Small Mashed Chicken pieces, Boiled Fish

Happy moms make happy babies! Keep a calm temperament, and ensure hygienic preparation and natural holistic cooking.

Vaccination



Babies are born with protection against some diseases because their mothers pass antibodies (proteins made by the body to fight disease) to them before birth. Breastfed babies continue to get more antibodies in breast milk. But in both cases, the protection is temporary. Immunisation (vaccination) is a way to create immunity against some diseases.

A vaccine is a dead or weakened part of the microbe that causes the disease in question. When children are exposed to a disease in vaccine form, their immune system can build up antibodies that protect them from contracting the disease if and when they are exposed to the actual disease.

Vaccinations not only protect your child from deadly diseases, such as polio, tetanus, and diphtheria, but they also keep other children safe by eliminating or greatly decreasing

dangerous diseases that spread from child to child. Most of your child's vaccinations are completed between birth and 6 years. Many vaccines are given more than once, at different ages, and in combinations. Vaccines are some of the safest and most effective medicines we have, and they have made many dangerous childhood diseases rare today.

Immunisation Schedule for Infants and Children

Immunisation is carried out in all SMCs and Hospitals in the Air Force. Usually one day in the week is fixed for immunisations in SMCs. Hospitals have either all days or fixed days of the week.

An Immunisation card is made at the time of birth of the baby at all Air Force hospitals. At SMC levels also these cards are given to the parents if they don't have one for any reason. The schedule for infants and children is as follows:-

Infants

Vaccine	When to give	Dose	Route	Site	Remarks
BCG	At birth or as early as possible till one year of age	0.1 ml (0.05 ml until 1 month of age)	Intradermal	Left upper arm	
OPV 0 DOSE	At birth or as early as possible within 24 hours	2 drops	Oral	Oral	
HEPATITIS- B	At birth or as early as possible within 24 hours	1 ml	Intramuscular	Antero-lateral aspect of mid thigh	To be given only when the mother is HBsAg positive or her HBsAg status is not known
OPV 1, 2, & 3	At 6 weeks, 10 weeks and 14 weeks	2 drops	Oral	Oral	

Vaccine	When to give	Dose	Route	Site	Remarks
PENTAVALENT VACCINE Diptheria Pertusis Tetanus Haemophilusl--nfluenza B (HiB) Hepatitis B	At 6 weeks, 10 weeks and 14 weeks	0.5 ml	Intramuscular	Antero – lateral aspect of thigh	
MEASLES	9 completed months to 12 months	0.5ml	Sub-cutaneous	Right upper arm	
VITAMIN A (first dose)	At 9 months with measles vaccine	1 ml (1 lakh IU)	Oral	Oral	

Children

Vaccine	When to Give	Dose	Route	Site	Remarks
Measles Rubella (MR)	16 months to 24 months	0.5 ml	Sub cutaneous	Right upper arm	
DPT Booster -1	16 months to 24 months	0.5 ml	Intramuscular	Antero-lateral aspect of thigh	
OPV Booster1	16 months to 24 months	2 drops	Oral	Oral cavity	
Japanese Encephalitis	16 months to 24 months	0.5 ml	Sub – cutaneous	Left upper arm	Only in Districts earmarked as threatened by Japanese Encephalitis by Govt of India

Vaccine	When to Give	Dose	Route	Site	Remarks
Vitamin 2nd to 9th dose	16 months to 24 months (Along with DPT/ OPV booster). Then one dose every six months till the age of 5 years	2 ml (2 lakh IU)	Oral	Oral	
Typhoid	2 years Booster dose every three years	0.5 ml	Intramuscular	Upper arm	
DPT Booster- 2	4 to 6 years	0.5 ml	Intramuscular	Upper arm	
Tetanus Toxoid	10 years to 16 years	0.5ml	Intramuscular	Upper arm	

Suggested Immunisation Under Special Circumstances for Infants and Children

Condition	Vaccine Recommended
Asplenia/ hypersplenia/ planned splenectomy at least two weeks prior to surgery	Pneumococcal, Meningococcal
HIV	Pneumococcal (PCV- 13 & PPV- 23), Meningococcal, Inactivated influenza, Hepatitis A, Varicella, HPV at 10 years
Complement deficiency	Pneumococcal, Meningococcal, most other vaccines are contraindicated
Haemopoietic Stem Cell Transplant recipients	Reimmunisation after 12 months of transplant IPV, HiB, Hep B, PCV 13 & PCV 23, Varicella, MMR (if immunocompetent)
Solid Organ Transplant	Influenza and Varicella for household contacts
Chronic Neurological, Renal, Hepatic, Gastroenteric, Cardiac, Pulmonary and Endocrine disorder	Pneumococcal, Hep A, Varicella, Influenza, Rotavirus
Preterm Baby	PCV-13, Rota virus, Influenza

WELL - BABY CLINIC: A well-baby clinic is conducted usually on the immunisation day where the babies are examined (after taking their height and weight) by the Medical officer/ Paediatrician and the mothers are advised about the growth and nutrition of the baby/ child. Any queries of the parents are also addressed.



Warning Signs of Baby Blues

After delivery, many women experience baby blues. The onset is usually within three to four days after delivery; symptoms typically subside within two weeks. These symptoms are believed to be caused by the sudden shift in hormones following delivery and the exhaustion and sleep deprivation that often accompanies the delivery and your role as a parent.

The symptoms of the baby blues may include, but are not limited to:-

- Mild depression.
- Sudden mood swings.
- Unpredictable crying spells.
- Irregular sleeping and eating patterns.
- Irritability, restlessness, or anxiety.
- Difficulty in concentrating.

Postpartum Depression (PPD)

Most moms experience postpartum "baby blues" after childbirth but some moms experience a severe, long-lasting form of depression known as postpartum depression (PPD).

Postpartum depression symptoms may be mistaken for baby blues at first - but the symptoms are more intense and last longer and may include: Depressed mood or severe mood swings; Intense irritability and anger; excessive crying; feelings of worthlessness, shame, guilt or inadequacy; difficulty bonding with your baby; fearing that you're not a good mother; withdrawing from family and friends; overwhelming fatigue or loss of energy; inability to sleep (insomnia) or sleeping too much; severe anxiety and panic attacks; thoughts of harming yourself or your baby; recurrent thoughts of death or suicide.

Causes

Physically, a dramatic drop in hormones (estrogen and progesterone) after childbirth may contribute to PPD. Other hormones produced by your thyroid gland also may drop sharply.

Emotionally you may be anxious about your ability to care for the new-born. You may feel less attractive, struggle with your sense of identity or feel that you've lost control over your life.

There's no single cause of postpartum depression, but these physical and emotional issues may play a role.

Here are Some of The Ways to Ease Out of PPD

- Be good to yourself
- Don't demand too much of yourself
- Ask for support
- Share your feelings
- Pamper yourself
- Get some rest
- Venture outdoors

Parenting Skills



Parenting for a Better World

Parenting is a skill. A parent doesn't have to be perfect – no one is. Successful parenting is not about achieving perfection, but that doesn't mean it shouldn't be tried. Good and effective parenting means engaging with children in a way that they develop the knowledge and emotional skills to become happy and productive adults and have well-adapted behaviour. Knowing how to be a good parent is intuitive. Trust and follow your instinct.

Parenting Tips by Age

Decisions you take and your parenting style will have to adapt with the child's age. As your child grows from being a baby to a toddler, from a schooler to a teenager, many things will change. The basic principles remain the same, but the needs and expectations of your child will change with age.



Remember that engagement with your child – whatever his or her age – is a critical component in their development. As a baby or toddler, this means physical contact and care. When your child grows older, communication about their experiences and emotions becomes like a light to guide them to confidence.

Parenting Tips for Infants

Infants have very basic needs. They require warmth, rest, safety, nourishment and time to establish a bond with their primary caretaker. Their main developmental tasks are to learn to eat, sleep, and become used to their bodies and interaction with others. Therefore, as a parent, you should:-

- Establish a routine of feeding, sleeping and caressing.
- Learn how best to comfort your baby.
- Look after yourself and get sleep and rest when you can.

Relax and enjoy with your baby and do not focus on small issues

Parenting Tips for Toddlers

Around the age of one to two years, toddlers start to learn to walk and talk. They try to discover more of their environment and the people around them, and cautiously test their independence. At this age, their language and physical skills develop quickly.

- Support their attempts to be more independent.
- Allow them to develop a sense of mastery.
- Encourage their curiosity, allow them to explore.
- Set limits to ensure their safety and your peace of mind.

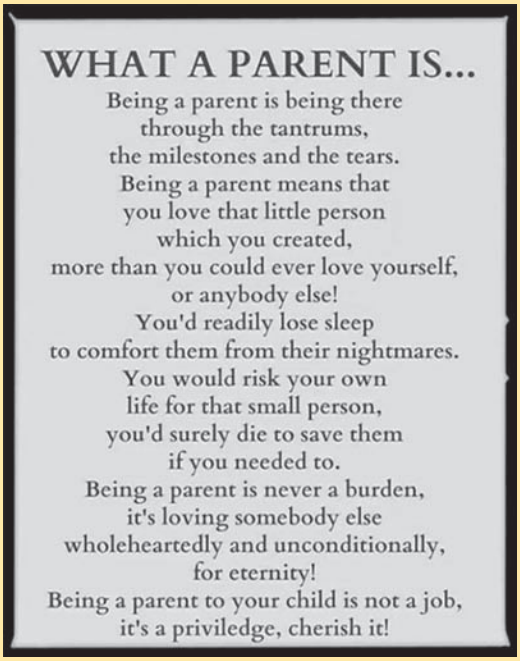
Parenting Tips for Pre-Schoolers

Between the ages of about three and five, your pre-schooler becomes slightly less self-centered. There's more awareness of their place in the world and they start learning to manage their emotions and behaviour. To set your pre-schooler on the right path, you should:-

- Teach by demonstrating empathy and talk about feelings.
- Continue to create a routine in their daily life, which is comforting as they discover new things that can be scary to them.
- Ensure that they get sufficient rest and sleep.
- Monitor what food is available but allow them to decide how much to eat.
- Listen reflectively to your kid regularly.
- Set limits but empathise when they are disappointed – teach self-discipline rather than enforcing punishment.

Parenting Tips for Schoolers

In their early school and preteen years, children become more attuned to others, and more caring and cooperative. In these formative years, they need guidance to develop emotional intelligence and self-regulation skills more than ever. Utilise these typically reasonable years to cement your relationship and let your child develop his/her unique identity.



- Balance your child's need for self-sufficiency and interaction with peers, and make time to spend quality moments with them.
- Plan regular family outings or events to cultivate strong connections.
- Judge your kid's maturity and need for independence – balance rules and accommodations accordingly.
- Listen attentively to your kid and encourage sharing problems.
- Let them come up with potential solutions and teach them to negotiate and compromise.
- Recognise and praise their strengths and accomplishments.

Limit the use and reliance of electronic devices to specific times a day.

Know your child's friends, their relationships, and values

Parenting Tips for Teenagers

In your child's early teens expect variable behaviour and emotions as they try to settle into independence. At this point, they have developed a personality but may still be trying to find a stable identity. The outside world has an increasing influence on your teen as they navigate peer relationships, look up to role models, and widen their exposure through social media and school, sports, and other events. As a parent you should:-



- Support your teen as much as you can to strive for and achieve their goals.
- Act more as a parent than a friend – guide, be firm and offer support.

- Keep computers in a family space.
- Continue to have regular family meetings and outing.
- Eat as many meals together as possible, especially at dinner time.
- Allow freedom appropriately but know what your teenager is doing, where, and with whom.

Most of all enjoy your children at whatever age they are. It is a time of learning and sharing, reaching new heights together. Be there while they grow so that they realise their full potential.

“The way we talk to our children becomes their inner voice”

Peggy O’mara

Positive Discipline



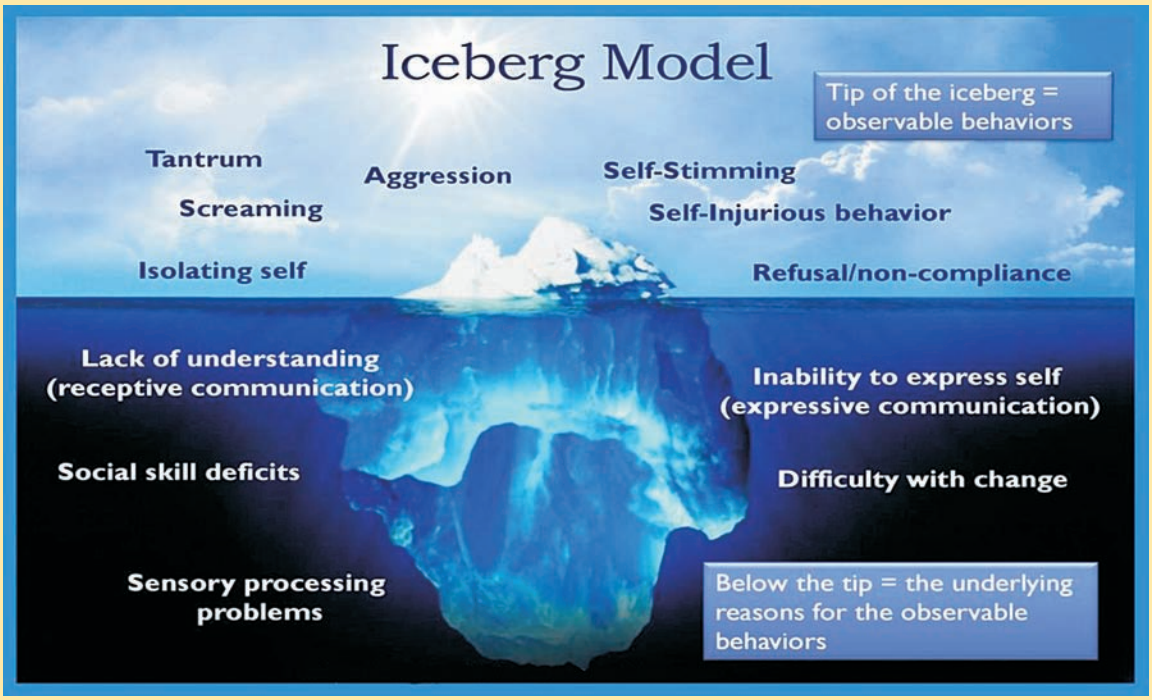
Discipline

“The right way to discipline a child is one that doesn’t make the child (or the parent) feel bad at the end”

-Tina Payne Bryson

Studies show that punishments are inefficient in the long run and have several negative effects on kids. Instead, using gentle discipline methods is a great way to raise happy and confident kids!

The fundamental concept of positive discipline is that there are no bad kids, just bad behaviours. So, we don’t need to punish the child, we just need to teach him how to behave better.



- **A Child's Temperament** Every child has a unique way of being in the world. Some children are quiet and calm, others are outgoing and active. Some children prefer the library, others the outdoors. Observing and accepting your child's inherent temperament can guide you on how to parent them in ways that fit their particular preferences.
- **Heredity and Environment** Many things are determined by heredity and cannot be changed but can make an impact on the child: how tall you are, the colour of your eyes, the colour of your skin. But the environment you provide for your children is flexible. The atmosphere you as parents create -your style of relating to each other, family values all contribute to the family environment.
- **Birth Order** A child's position in the family is also significant. There are generalized traits that the oldest, middle, and youngest child exhibit, as a result of changing family dynamics. Being familiar with them can help parents understand their children's behaviour. For instance, when the oldest child is born, parents may be struggling financially. When the second child arrives, the family is more stable and experienced in child-rearing.
- **Gender Role** Society has ideas, standards and expectations for girls and boys, men and women. As parents, it is important not to be caught up in stereotypes like boys don't cook, girls are emotional. These concepts can excuse bad behaviour or discourage talents. Instead, the focus should be on developing them into well-rounded, capable individuals with the skill set to thrive in the real world.

- **Child Development** Parents who educate themselves about child development are better equipped to understand their child's behaviour. It is important to know which different abilities should be expected with different age range and stages of development. This knowledge will help guide parents in their expectations.

Why Children Misbehave

Children are social beings. They strive to find their place first in their family and then society. They are also very good observers, but can easily misinterpret their observations. Misbehaviour may be a result of their misinterpreted conclusion to find their place in the family.

Misbehaviour could be to address one of the following factors:-

- **Undue Attention** Children desire and need attention for emotional growth. However, if a child does not get the attention they need, they may resort to misbehaviour to incite response by way of scolding, warning or special treatment.

- **Power** Some children may want to show by misbehaving that they are the “ones in control”. By provoking, challenging and infuriating the parents, they create a power struggle. If the parent gives in, the child ‘wins’ and there is temporary pause in misbehaviour until the next struggle.

- **Revenge** Some children, when feeling hurt, may resort to misbehaviour as a means to getting even.

- **Assumed Inadequacy** Sometimes, children will feel inadequate in measuring up to their parents’ expectations. But instead of displaying their helplessness or talking about it, they want to be left alone. Parents may also feel defeated in this scenario, or want to intervene. This may lead to misbehaviour. Often, this will be displayed only in certain areas like homework or assigned activities.

Children do not know "why" they misbehave. They learn by trial and error. They see the results of what they do. If the desired result is produced by misbehaviour it will continue. Parents will have to learn to understand the child's goal of misbehaviour, and guide them towards more positive behaviour.

Understanding that children are not consciously plotting their misbehaviour but instead basing it off a mistaken goal, goes a long way in promoting a respectful parenting style.

Some Positive Discipline Techniques

- Build and maintain a strong connection with the child by spending quality time with them. This will also help to identify triggers.

- Gentle parenting doesn't mean that the child doesn't have to follow rules. Set limits and see that they follow rules. Be empathetic but firm and explain the rules over and again if needed.

- Remember that negative behaviour is the kid's way of showing that they need support in dealing with powerful feelings. Once you've identified the triggers or probable causes, you can involve the child in the problem-solving process, as well. This will teach them to deal with their own emotions over a period of time.

- There are moments of anger when things are said or done only to end in regret. As a parent, it is important to keep calm, be patient and not let emotions interfere with the disciplining.

Encouragement vs Praise

The eminent psychiatrist Rudolf Dreikurs claimed: "The most important skill for raising a child is the ability to encourage that child". Dreikurs considered encouragement to be the single most important quality in getting along with others - so important that the lack of it could be considered the basic influence for misbehaviour. "Encourage the deed, not the doer." In other words, instead of, "You got an A, I'm so proud of you," try, "Congratulations! You worked hard. You deserve it." A subtle difference, but it will change the perception of your child.

Encouragement is positive feedback that focuses primarily on effort or improvement rather than outcomes. Encouragement is not praise, reward, or language used to gain compliance, it is recognising, accepting, and conveying faith in a child for the mere fact that he or she exists. It attempts to develop social interest by enhancing a child's sense of belonging and connection.

Children who feel encouraged like themselves and have a higher degree of empathy for others. Encouraged people do not fear mistakes, are open to their experiences, and are free of success and failure. When praised, they learn to depend on others to evaluate their worth. Encouragement leads to self-reflection and self-evaluation. Praise always contains an element of judgment. Praise is given only when one achieves "good" results, whereas encouragement can be given any time, even when things go poorly.

Tools for Encouragement

- Family Meetings where children learn to give and receive compliments and learn to brainstorm for solutions to problems.
- Questions that invite children how to think instead of what to think—and to give them a sense of choice to use their personal power for social responsibility.
- Letting Go so children have opportunities to learn and grow from their mistakes.
- Show Faith in children so that they can develop faith in themselves.
- Spending special time to make sure the message of love gets through.

Strategies to Motivate Your Child to Learn

There are seven fundamental learning styles: Visual, Auditory, Verbal, Physical, Logical (mathematical), Social and Solitary. By helping your child discover their preferred learning style, you can use techniques that will improve their rate and quality of learning. When a child is actively engaged with a game-based learning technique their mind experiences the pleasure of learning a new system.

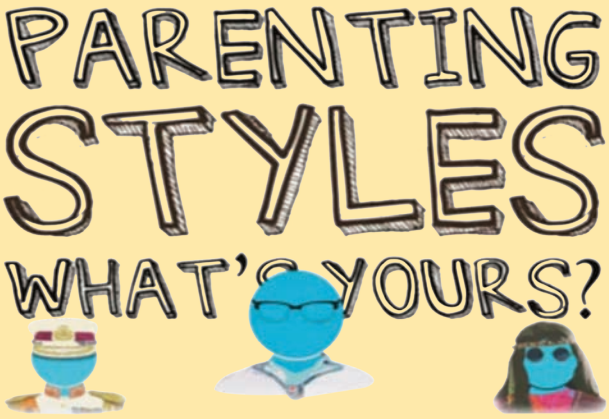


- Focus on what your child is learning, as opposed to how he is performing.
- Overwhelmed children spend more time and effort being frustrated and worried than they do learning.
- Organise their school supplies and assignments. This will help them feel in control, less overwhelmed and more motivated to learn.
- Offer recognition and celebrate your child's achievements.
- Finishing a difficult project deserves a special treat.

Reading not only helps children develop a much richer vocabulary, but it also helps their brain learn how to process concepts and formal communication. The skills gained from reading extend far beyond increased performance. If you want to help your child to become a good learner, encourage them to explore topics and subjects that fascinate him.

Turning every day into a learning day will help your child develop the internal motivation to learn - wherever they may be.

Parenting Styles



One of the interesting things about being a parent is that there is great variation in how we raise our children. At the same time, there are many commonalities from one parent to another. In fact, there is enough similarity that researchers have tried to group

parents into four common parenting styles. Your parenting style refers to the combination of strategies that you use to raise your children.

Four Types of Parenting

Authoritarian Parenting

Authoritarian parents are rigid and controlling, and demand a lot from their children without offering warmth or responding to a child's needs. A child must do as he is told. If a child asks why, the parent answers, "Because I say so." Authoritarian parents rely on harsh discipline, and a child has little control over his life.

- They use a strict discipline style with little negotiation. Punishment is common.
- Communication is mostly one way: from parent to child. Rules usually are not explained.
- Parents with this style are typically less nurturing.
- Expectations are high with limited flexibility.

Permissive Parenting

Permissive or indulgent parents mostly let their children do what they want, and offer limited guidance or direction. They are more like friends than parents.

- They have limited or no rules and mostly let children figure problems out on their own.
- Communication is open but these parents let children decide for themselves rather than giving direction.
- Parents in this category tend to be warm and nurturing.
- Expectations are typically minimal or not set by these parents.

Uninvolved Parenting

Uninvolved parents give children a lot of freedom and generally stay out of their way. Some parents may make a conscious decision to parent in this way, while others are less interested in parenting or unsure of what to do.

- They let their child mostly do what he wants, probably out of a lack of information or care.
- Communication is limited.
- This group of parents offers little nurturing.
- There are few or no expectations from the children.

Authoritative Parenting

Authoritative parents are reasonable and nurturing, and set high, clear expectations. Children with parents who demonstrate this style tend to be self-disciplined and think for themselves. This style is thought to be most beneficial to children.

- Disciplinary rules are clear and the reasons behind them are explained.
- Communication is frequent and appropriate to the child's level of understanding.
- Authoritative parents are nurturing.
- Expectations and goals are high but stated clearly.

Today, there are also some new parenting styles arising. For example, "Helicopter parenting" is similar to the authoritative style, but with over-involvement, in a child's life, sometimes even when the child is capable of taking care on his own. "Free-range parenting" is like the uninvolved style, but with a conscious decision to allow more independent thinking that is in the best interest of the child.

When it comes to parenting, one size doesn't fit all. Very few of us fit neatly into one single parenting style, instead, we raise children using a combination of styles. Think of the four styles as a continuum instead of four distinct ways to parent. Ideally, we think about our children and what they need from us at specific points in time. For example, while a parent might not typically adopt an authoritarian parenting style, there might be times in a child's life when that style is needed.

Good Parenting

Parents Teaching Skills to Children

There are three key ways you can help children learn everything from basic self-care to more complicated social skills:-

- Instructions
- Modelling
- Step-by-step

How to Give Good Instructions

- Give instructions only when you have your child's attention. Use your child's name and encourage your child to look at you while you speak.
- Get down to your child's physical level to speak.
- Remove any background distractions like the TV.
- Use language that your child understands. Keep your sentences short and simple.
- Use a clear, calm voice.
- Use gestures to emphasise things that you want your child to notice.
- Gradually phase out your instructions and reminders as your child gets better at remembering how to do the task.

How to Make Modelling Work Well



- Get your child's attention and make sure he's looking at you.
- Get your child to watch first, then move slowly through the steps of the skill so that your child can see what you're doing.
- Point out the important parts of what you're doing. For example, 'See how I am …'. You might want to do this later if you're modelling social skills like greeting a guest.
- Give your child lots of opportunities to practice for themselves once they have seen you do it.

Step by Step: Teaching Skills by Breaking Down Tasks

The idea of step-by-step teaching is to teach the steps that make up a skill one at a time. When your child has learned the first step, then you teach the next step, then the next, and so on. Move to the next step only when your child can do the previous step reliably and without your help. You keep going until your child can execute the entire task on their own.

Factors Affecting a Child's Development

Physical and Emotional Abuse



Physical and emotional abuses constitute an acute traumatic event for the child, generating phobic responses and anxiety-related symptoms including post-traumatic stress disorder.

Physical abuse occurs when a child's body is injured as a result of hitting, kicking, shaking, burning, or other show of force.

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity that a child cannot understand or consent to. It includes acts such as fondling, oral-genital contact, and genital and anal intercourse. It also includes exhibitionism, voyeurism, and exposure to pornography.

Emotional and psychological abuse in children is any kind of behaviour, speech, and action of parent, caregiver, or another significant figure in a child's life that have a negative mental impact on the child.

Not all children who are abused have severe reactions. Usually the younger the child, the longer the abuse continues, and the closer the child's relationship with the abuser, the more serious the mental health effects will be.

How You can Prevent

Personal supervision and involvement in your child's activities are the best way to prevent physical and sexual abuse outside the home. Pay careful attention to your child's reports and reactions to their experiences at school.

Although you don't want to frighten your child, you can teach them some basic rules of safety in a non- threatening manner. Teach them to keep their distance from strangers, not to wander away from you in unfamiliar territory, to say "no" when someone asks them to do something against their will, and to always tell you if someone hurts them or makes them feel bad.

Good Touch and Bad Touch

Explain to your child that a good touch will never make them uncomfortable or afraid but a bad touch will. Teach them to run away if someone tries to touch them inappropriately, specially their private parts, or if they feel scared or insecure. They must tell their parents or their teacher if anything like this happens.



How to Help an Abused Child

A close relationship with a very supportive adult can increase resiliency, reducing some of the impacts. Treatment of child victims is necessary not only to diminish their psychopathology and emotional distress but to prevent the cycle of violence in the next generation. Have open, two-way communication with your child as it provides the best chance that you will know early when a problem occurs.

Emphasise that you need to know this to be able to keep them safe and that they will be OK if they tell you. Ensure that they understand that they will not get in trouble if they tell you about abuse or any confusing event that occurs. Instead of teaching them that they’re surrounded by danger, teach them that they are strong and capable; and that they can count on you to keep them safe, as long as they talk to you about it. Seek counselling so that they’ll be able to provide the support and comfort the child needs.

Bullying

Most kids have been teased by a sibling or a friend at some point. And it's not usually harmful when done in a playful, friendly, and mutual way, and both kids find it funny. But when teasing becomes hurtful, unkind, and constant, it crosses the line into bullying and needs to stop. It's important to take bullying seriously and not just brush it off as something that kids have to "tough out." The effects can be serious and affect kids' sense of safety and self-worth. In severe cases, bullying has contributed to tragedies.



Signs of Bullying



Parents might notice kids acting differently or seeming anxious. They may not be eating or sleeping well, or may not be doing the things they usually enjoy. When kids seem moodier or more easily upset than usual, or when they start avoiding certain situations (like taking the bus to school), it might be because of a bully. If you suspect bullying but your child is reluctant to open up, find opportunities to bring up the issue. For instance,

you might see a situation on a TV show and use it as a conversation starter by asking, "What do you think of this?" or "What do you think that person should have done?"

Dealing with Bullies

- If your child tells you about being bullied, listen calmly, and offer comfort and support. Kids are often reluctant to tell adults about bullying because they feel embarrassed and ashamed that it's happening, or worry that their parents will be disappointed, upset, angry, or reactive. Emphasise that it's the bully who is behaving badly - not your child. Reassure your child that you will figure out what to do about it together.
- Sometimes kids find it useful to practice "cool down" strategies such as counting to 10, writing down their angry words, taking deep breaths, or walking away. Sometimes the best thing to do is to teach kids to wear a "poker face" until they are clear of any danger (smiling or laughing may provoke the bully).
- Dealing with bullying can erode a child's confidence. To help restore it, encourage your kids to spend time with friends who have a positive influence. Participation in clubs, sports, or other enjoyable activities builds strength and friendships.
- Bullying can exist in many forms: It can be physical (pushing, punching, or hitting); verbal (name- calling or threats); or psychological and emotional (spreading rumours or excluding someone from a conversation or activity). And with the pervasive use of social media, inappropriate behaviour between kids can occur outside of school hours via emails, text messages, and Facebook posts. Known as cyber bullying, this can be particularly hurtful and aggressive, and their harmful effects are often brought back into school the next day.
- As kids get older, they have a significant awareness of peer relationships, so you can be more direct with your questions. When your kids talk, really listen to what they share and keep your own emotions in check. Use a calm, friendly tone and create a nurturing climate so that they aren't afraid to tell you if something's wrong.

Build Your Child's Confidence

"When it's the kids who speak up, it's ten times more powerful than anything that we'll ever be able to do as an adult," says Walter Roberts. The better your child feels about himself, the less likely the bullying will affect his self-esteem. Encourage hobbies, extracurricular activities, and social situations that bring out the best in your child. Tell the child to use these strategies while dealing with bullies:

"Don't let a bully make you feel bad. Tell the bully how you feel. Don't reward the bully with tears. Disarm the bully with humour. Use your best judgment, and follow your instincts". If your child is reluctant to report the bullying, go with him to talk to a teacher, guidance counsellor, principal or school administrator.

Peer Pressure

"Man is known by the company he keeps."

Being social creatures, it is natural to want to fit in. For children, this is especially important as peer pressure can really influence their thinking and even their character by subconsciously affecting this need to 'belong'.

Negative Peer Pressure



This need to 'belong' may be exploited for those around the child into pushing them to do things that are either socially unacceptable (like stealing, destroying properties, taking drugs, driving under influence) or age inappropriate (smoking, drinking, sex etc.).

How to Spot It

Besides the large influence that comes from peers, they often share a lot of time together, too - friends, classmates, schoolmates. It is not possible for you to police the people around your child. Even when you have the most open communication with your child, the child may not talk to you about the kind of people around them. The one way you can tell if your child is under negative influence is by observing the subtle and not-so-subtle signs:-

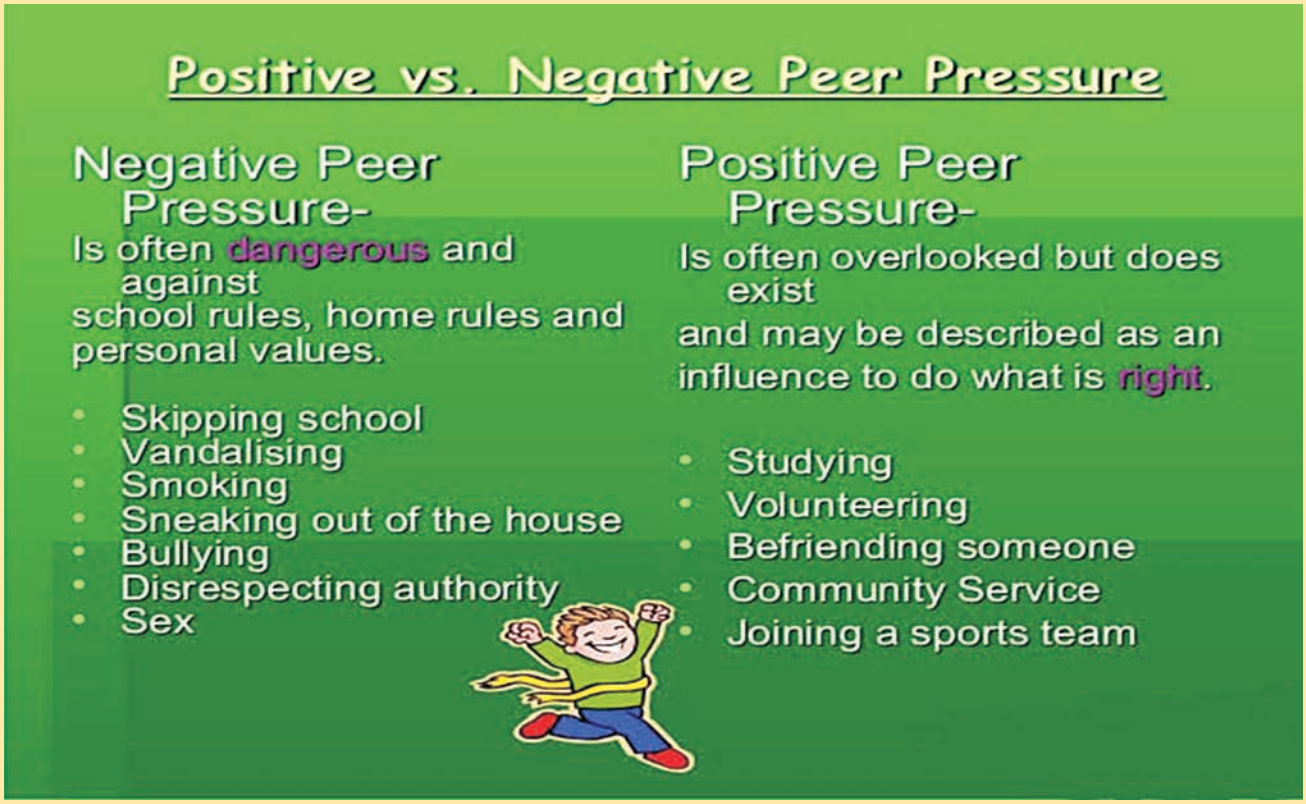
- **Drastic change in communication** A talkative child may seem to talk less, as if holding back. A shy child may just shut down altogether. As a parent, you need to watch for such alienating behaviour from your child.
- **Dip in self-confidence** When in a group, the child's confidence appears to be fading or their values will affect a child's confidence. They may seem unhappy for no discernible reason.
- **Drop in performance** You may see a drop in their grades that doesn't recover. If they seem to have lost some (if not all) interest in their studies or area of interest - something's bothering them.
- **'Negative' behaviour** They are suddenly answering back, snapping at you, showing bad attitude. You'll have to reflect to see if they are mirroring this from your household, or if they have acquired it from elsewhere.

How to Prevent It Beforehand

It is not possible for you to track your child around the clock, every day. However, there are some things you can teach them, so that they can stand their ground against negative peer pressure.

- **Empathy and Discussing Possible Scenarios** A child who learns to put themselves in others' shoes will, ideally, do no wrong by them. By asking a child how they would feel in a certain situation, and ensuring that they understand how it may feel wrong, you teach them not to be in a position where they may afflict someone else. (How would it feel if someone was mean to you? Steal from you? Push you around? etc. are great ways of making the kid understand that these are not acceptable behaviours).
- **Setting Family Rules and Values** If you set 'family' rules (with due explanations), kids are more likely to follow them. Being kind, being brave are values you can teach a child right from the start. Being able to say that their family wouldn't approve of certain behaviour gives the kid some ground to stand on. Also, kids learn by watching, so be doubly sure to set a good example.
- **Choosing Right Friends** Teach them to admire good values. They will automatically lean towards befriending people with whom they share ethics. Remember to focus on behaviours and not people.
- **Respond, not React** Every step is followed by its consequences. Remind them to think for themselves instead of blindly following. This makes for an inquisitive child with an informed line of reasoning.
- **Discuss Dangerous Behaviours** Teach them about drugs, cigarettes and alcohol - and why it's so important to stay away from them. Its better if they don't find these risks on their own. Even adults give in to the peer pressure of social drinking and smoking. Discuss other age appropriate matters. Don't be upset if they are curious - if their curiosity isn't satisfied, they'll be more compelled to take the risks. Answer their questions.
- **Set up 'Code Words' and 'Safe Pass'** Establish a few ground rules that ensure your child's safety over everything else – even your need to know. Teach them to listen to their 'gut feeling'. Set up an inconspicuous set of words they can say over the phone or send you over text if they ever want to leave a hang-out urgently. They could be feeling pressured to do something they've been taught not to, or just having a feeling of something not being right. Whatever be the case, ensure that if the words are ever used, you'll pick them up right away – no questions asked. Keep your promise.

Being honest with children, and keeping your communication open with them will go a long way in them keeping their conversation honest and open with you. As long as the relationship is built on trust, you can be assured that your child will seek your help if they feel torn.



Positive Peer Pressure



Peer pressure is known to be a negative influence for the kids. But it isn't always bad! Good company and positive peer pressure will often push the child to be a better version of them. This means they might be motivated to achieve better academically, or to participate in extracurricular activities that you did not expect them to be interested in. They may show interest in new hobbies, try to pick up skills that make them a more rounded person, show enthusiasm or share a great ambition.

As a parent, it is a matter of pride that the circles your child picked for themselves are such positive influences. But remember that it stems from the values you inculcate. What you teach, and the belief you show in them can go a long way in helping them hold their ground when they get to ethical crossroads.

Divorce of Parents



At any age, it can be traumatic to witness the dissolution of your parents' marriage and the breakup of the family. They've developed deep attachments to both parents and the family as a unit. Some children react to divorce in a natural and understanding way, while other children may struggle with the transition.

Let us view the common and the uncommon effects a divorce can have on a young brain.

- Children may think they have done something to trigger it. This feeling of guilt is pretty common. It increases pressure, stress, which may lead to depression and create health problems.
- Adolescents with parents who are divorced tend to indulge in wrongful doings like substance use and participating in crimes, and tend to rebel through their destructive behaviour.
- Irrespective of their age, gender, and culture, these children may experience psychological problems. Studies have found that depression and anxiety rates are higher in children from divorced parents and are more likely to divorce when in their respective relationships.
- Divorce affects children socially as well. It can lead to insecurity and the effect can be noticed in their academic performances, as well.
- Divorce usually means children lose daily contact with one parent-most often fathers. Decreased contact affects the parent-child bond and also affects a child's relationship with the custodial parent-most often mothers.
- Parents who are separating should make sure that the children know they still have two parents who love them and will continue to care for them. They should protect their children from adult worries and responsibilities. Parents also should make it clear that the responsibility for what is happening is theirs and not the child's.

Social Media



Media in all of its forms has become a key tool to socialise in this age. It now has a great influence on a child's social as well as psychological development. It is often viewed as a double-edged sword. "Good quality" media can have a positive effect. Exposure to educational TV has shown to better prepare children for a school environment. Social media is being used by the youth in positive ways that weren't thought of before. It is not just a medium for socialising, but kids

and adolescents have found a new way to express themselves creatively,and interact and learn with a broader audience. Kids maintain long-term friendships by staying in touch online, even when they can no longer meet each other in person.

On the contrary, excessive screen use can increase the risk of obesity and interfere with the sleep cycle, and sometimes, even lose grip on the 'real life'. Exposure of teens through media to alcohol, tobacco use, or sexual behaviours is associated with earlier initiation of these behaviours. The depiction of violence in media is being associated with desensitizing children to suffering. Adolescents fall prey to comparing their life with the highlights that people often post on social media. This leads to them developing insecurities about not being "good enough" and anxiety in social circumstances.

Parents always want what is best for their children – and that means wanting them to be exposed to the world, yet protecting them from the worst. If your child is upset after looking at their phone, talk to them about it. Teach them to not take things that happen online to heart. Guide them to use social media productively to enhance their learning, and to collaborate with others who have similar interests. Supervise their online activity, so you can teach them to protect themselves from online predators and bullies who are always inevitably present. Ensure they spend only as enough time on it as it is useful.

You may even allow social media time as a reward for good behaviour. Emphasise the difference between social networking and real life. When kids learn to feel good about what they can do instead of how they look and what they own, they're happier and better prepared for success in real life.

Children Needing Special Care

"God only gives you what you can handle". One in five people has a disability and many disabilities can be present at birth or diagnosed shortly after. Parents of special needs children are special themselves; they are stronger, braver and more resilient than others, doing the best they can for their special children.

Vision and Hearing Impairment

Parents should keep an eye on their child's vision and hearing health. The two important senses develop in a child's first year and one should know what may indicate a problem.

Vision

- A newborn baby's eye will cross or wander because they cannot focus to look at an object. But gradually they will focus on your hairline, eyes, mouth, nose or lips.
- By 3 months they begin to follow a moving object and can watch a toy or a person directly in the line of their vision.

Get your babies general eye health check done, at the well baby clinic.

Hearing

- A newborn child should react to a loud sound by startling or jerking his arms and hands.

- Human voices, the sound of a rattle, talking, singing or cooing, should stimulate the child.

If your baby is not responding to sounds or not developing age appropriate language skills, consult your pediatrician.

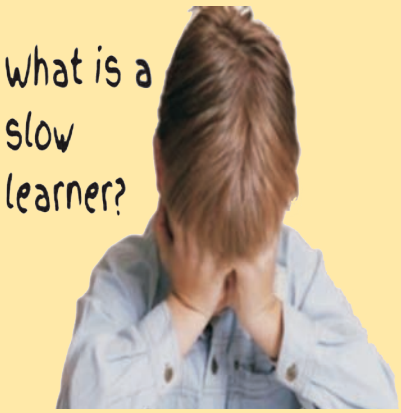
ADHD- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

It is a medical condition in which a person has differences in brain development and brain activity, that affects attention, the ability to sit still, and self control. ADHD can be treated using medication and therapy and is to be done by a specialist, such as a paediatricians or a psychiatrist. Some common symptoms of an ADHD child are:



- Gets easily distracted
- Has trouble organising tasks
- Fidgets with or taps hands or feet
- Has difficulty in staying seated
- Runs around or climbs up
- Talks too much
- Has trouble waiting for his turn

Slow Learners



A slow learning child hits their developmental markers at a much slower rate compared to their peers. If a child is a slow learner, it is often assumed that it makes them incompetent, or that they're not trying hard enough, or that they are actually 'dumb'. This is NOT TRUE! The truth is that every child has their own pace to learn and develop.

Some children naturally learn much faster, and others are known to take their time to learn the same concepts and lessons.

One of the hardest things for parents to accept is that their child is a slow learner. When dealing with a child who struggles to learn, there are steps you can take to help make their life easier. Before that, it is important to better understand the mind of the child and the challenge they might feel.

The basic development milestones that can suffer in case of a slow learning child are developmental, social, personal and educational.

- **Developmental** Child may have a varying degree of developmental learning disorder including poor memory and a delay in speech and language development.
- **Social** Child may be seen to relate better to children younger to him more often and avoid interacting with peers in case of social learning disabilities.

- **Personal** Child may seem to have less control over their emotions if they have personal learning problems. They may tend to anger or get frustrated quickly; express emotions like anxiety for seemingly minor issues; or get depressed over setbacks.
- **Educational** Child may take much longer to process and understand provided information when suffering from learning or educational disabilities.

How to Help and Handle A Slow Learner?

- **Praise** Motivation is one of the most essential requirements for children who are slow learners. To help them continue learning and to keep them motivated, it is important to praise them when they get a concept or technique correctly. Even the smallest victory should be acknowledged and praised.

"Every student can learn. just not on the same day. or the same way."

George Evans

- **Rewards** As with any child, a slow learning child will be motivated to stay the course and learn as much as possible if there is a reward at the end of it. Try setting rewards for milestones to keep your child motivated and to help him focus on the task at hand.
- **Smaller Targets** When working with a child who is a slow learner, it is important to set small targets that are achievable and within reach. As a parent, it is your responsibility to understand what is achievable for your child.
- **Learning from Failure** Make sure you reinforce the notion that failure isn't a bad thing. Be realistic with teachers and other caregivers as well as with yourself that your child will fail more often than other children. When they do, do not berate them. Instead, encourage them to try again.
- **Be Open with Caregivers** Be it a teacher, your partner, parents, the babysitter or any other caregiver, be open about your child's struggle. Let them know the situation and educate them about how to handle the situation with your child as a slow learner.
- **Patience** Do not compare your child to other children. This will only de-motivate you as well as your child. Stay patient when working with them and be sure that they will hit the milestones in front of them, even if it is at a much slower rate.
- **Be Supportive** Being vocally supportive is essential when dealing with slow learners. Encourage your child to keep at it until they succeed. Just knowing you believe in your child will keep them motivated to keep learning and trying.

Every child is special and has talents of their own. More often than not, it has been noticed that slow learners, children with ADD/ADHD, autism or other learning disabilities

show immense potential in the creative and performing arts. So, do not lose hope. With your effort, your child will shine and make you proud!

Dyslexia

A learning disorder characterised by difficulty in reading. It occurs in children with normal vision and intelligence. It is usually self- diagnosable. Its symptoms include late talking, learning new words slowly and a delay in learning to read. Treatment includes specific educational approaches and techniques. Psychological testing will help the child's teacher to develop a suitable teaching programme.

Dyscalculia

It is the difficulty in learning or comprehending arithmetic, understanding numbers, learning how to calculate or learn facts in mathematics. Learning specialists and education psychologists recommend specially designed teaching plans, based on math- games and practicing math skills a lot more often than other students.

Autistic Children

Communication and interaction in any form is the basis of human evolution. It helps us understand each other in a better manner. But imagine if this basic element is taken away from you. Briefly, that's the situation of those affected by autism.



Autism is still not very well understood. Also referred to as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), it is a serious developmental disorder that damages the ability to communicate and interact. It impacts the nervous system and affects the overall cognitive, emotional, social and physical health of the affected individual. Hence, major complications occur with the child's communication and behaviour.

Utmost support, especially on the emotional front, is required by those dealing with autism, and family - specifically parents – play a very crucial role if their kids are autistic. It is not easy for the child to express feelings and ideas. It is a struggle to bond with one's own family or friends.

Autism is an everyday challenge and can eventually take a toll on overall health. Children with autism are often exposed to bullying which can cause them anxiety and affect them in various ways. Parents, too, find it challenging to understand their child's behaviour. It is not enough for autistic children to receive the right kind of treatment – they also need to have the right kind of support. For this, education about autism – learning about the condition, its treatment, and the way to handle the kids is a must, especially for parents.

Autism Signs and Symptoms

Symptoms of autism usually appear before a child turns three. Some children may even show signs from birth. Common symptoms of autism include:-

- Lack of eye contact.
- Narrow range of interests and/or intense interest in certain topics
- Doing something over and over, like repeating words or phrases, rocking back and forth, or flipping a lever.
- High sensitivity to sounds, touches, smells, or sights that seem ordinary to other people.
- Not looking at or listening to other people.
- Not looking at things when another person points at them.
- Not wanting to be held or cuddled.
- Problems in understanding or using speech, gestures, facial expressions, or tone of voice.
- Talking in a sing-song, flat, or robotic voice.
- Trouble adapting to changes in routine.

Autistic children have a better chance of imbibing the required skills when parents actively participate. Parenting a child with autism is quite challenging but parents' involvement increases the consistency in assuring their child receives the right guidance.

Some Tips for Parents with Autistic Children



- Most important is to get an efficient therapist for your child. Do not delay initiating necessary treatment/therapy.
- Educate yourself. Reach out to experts and learn about autism.
- Have a pre-planned schedule for your child and work according to that. Autistic children perform way better when they are in a constant highly-structured routine.
- Be consistent with your child. Constantly practice at home the same exercises or things they have learned during their therapy or counselling session.
- Appreciate your child when they perform well with an exercise. Positive reinforcement goes a long way for their morale.
- Keep a safety zone in the house for your child to relax and to withdraw from overstimulation.

- Look out for non-verbal cues and get better at recognising them.
- If your child throws a tantrum, try to patiently understand the reason for it.
- Always be supportive and involved.

It is extremely crucial for parents to work in collaboration with professionals for the benefit of the child. It's the best way to ensure great results and at a good pace.

Special Needs Children



A special need in children is an umbrella term for a wide array of diagnoses: from those that resolve quickly to those that will be a challenge for life; and those that are relatively mild to those that are profound. It covers developmental delays, medical conditions, psychiatric conditions, and congenital conditions that require accommodations so children can reach their potentials.

It is a very broad term and every situation is unique. Families should focus on seeking the help and guidance needed for their particular concerns. Being the parent of a child with special needs is challenging. It can bring unexpected stress with spouses, siblings and even within your own belief in your parenting abilities.

Parenting a special needs child has days which include:-

- Resentment that every day is filled with challenges.
- Uncertainty of what's best for your child.
- Frustration with inconsistent information from specialists.
- Sadness for dreams unfulfilled.
- Irritation due to unsolicited "helpful" advice from people who have no idea about your situation.
- Jealous of parents who have "normal" families.
- GUILT for feeling any or all of the above.



Children with special needs come into our lives, leaving footprints on our hearts, and we are never the same.

What Can Parents Do?

Find a Support System

You'll find others who are walking the same path as you, and discover coping strategies, new resources, and get support from other parents who actually "get it." You'll also find out that you aren't the only parent who feels guilty about their child's extra challenges or frustrated because life is so hard at times. Just knowing you're not the only one makes things a little easier, emotionally.

Ask for Help

Asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness. Talk to your

- Paediatrician regarding referrals to specialists.
- Child's teacher for additional suggestions to help your child academically.
- Counsellor, or other special needs parents for personal support.
- Spouse or partner to brainstorm family solutions.
- Friends and family for possible "mom's time out" so you can recharge your battery.

Take Care of Yourself

If you want to be the best parent you can be, you need to allow yourself time to relax and recharge your battery.

- Permit yourself to take 5-10 minutes each day strictly for yourself (It's hard, but your kids need you to do this).
- Use the buddy system. Put the kids in their strollers or wheelchairs, buddy up with a friend and take a walk. The kids will benefit from the change of scenery, you'll feel energized, and the extra support of a friend is always welcome.
- Swapping childcare for running a few errands or even an afternoon out will also help your kids by enabling socialisation with other kids.
- Exercise even if it's only 10 minutes of cardio or stretching.

Take Care of The Relationship

Parents who are exhausted tend to forget to work on their relationship, get irritated and fail to communicate well. Ways to enhance your partnership include:-

- A willingness to communicate your need for help.
- Giving the main caregiver a break.
- Taking time to be together (even if it's just 15 mins) without the kids to talk about things other than the kids.
- Being a compassionate, supportive listener for each other.
- Acknowledging your partner's strengths.

Take Care to Nurture Sibling Relationships

It is so easy for much of your energy and effort to go to the child with special needs that their siblings might feel "slighted", at times. If this happens, be assured you're not a bad parent. You're human! Try the following to help balance between your children.

- Make sure each child gets some undivided attention in the day.
- Engage in both your children's activities.

- Include your children in the care of their sibling, as appropriate.
- Give your children information as they want it.
- Empower your family by accepting what is your “normal”.
- Problem-solve as a team.
- All children should “overhear” you bragging about their accomplishments.
- Invite other families over to play, don’t seclude yourself from others.

Remember, you’re not alone. There is help out there and you are going to be the best parent your child could ask for!

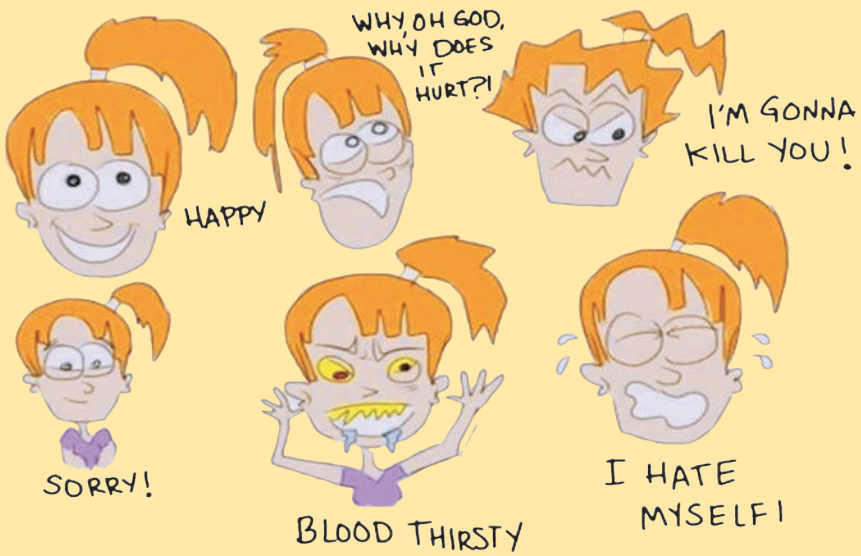
Left-Handed Children

A child who is left-handed primarily uses his or her left hand, more than the right hand; a left-hander will probably use the left hand for tasks such as personal care, writing, and so on.

In the past, due to cultural and social pressures, children who were naturally left-handed were encouraged or forced to use their right hand to write and perform other activities, mainly because of prejudice against the awkwardness of left-handed writing and the negative association of the left hand with personal hygiene. These days, left-handedness is more accepted.

Left-handed children are generally right-brain dominant, meaning they are often more creative, emotional and think holistically. If your child is naturally left-handed, don’t try to force them into using their right hand. Don’t let your left-handed child feel left out. Help him/her feel comfortable and special by developing his/her left-hand skills for writing and playing sports.

Adolescents and Mood Swings



Adolescence is the period of transition between childhood and adulthood. It includes some big changes—to the body, and to the way a young person relates to the world. The many physical, sexual, cognitive, social, and emotional changes that happen during this time can bring anticipation and anxiety for both children and their families.

Mood swings during adolescence are normal and are partially due to biology. Hormonal shifts that occur during puberty play a major role in the way teens think and feel. As teens mature, they commonly experience increased irritability, intense sadness, and frequent frustration due to the chemical changes occurring inside their brains.

Teens' quests to establish their own identities also play a role in their moods. It's healthy for teens to gain independence and to establish their own beliefs, goals, and guidelines, which are separate from their parents. As they establish that independence, they're likely to experience some inner turmoil that manifests as dramatic behaviour.

Healthy adolescent development leads teens to ask themselves, "Who am I?" This is why teens sometimes go through a variety of interesting phases during adolescence.

Tips for Parents of Moody Teens

It's important to keep your cool when you're dealing with a moody teen. Raising your voice or using sarcasm will only make the situation worse. Reply in a calm, but firm manner and hold your teen accountable for disrespectful backtalk and behaviour.

Encouraging healthy sleep habits is one of the best ways to address a teen's mood. An overtired or sleep-deprived teen is likely to experience increased difficulty regulating emotions. One of the biggest reason teens have trouble sleeping is because they're using electronic devices near bedtime. Establish a rule that no electronics be used within an hour of bedtime, and don't allow your teen to sleep with a Smartphone in the room.

Exercise is a natural mood booster and it can go a long way to easing mood swings. Encourage your teen to get at least 20 minutes of exercise each day. Not only will exercise reduce stress, but it will also release endorphins, which will help improve mood.

A healthy diet is another way they can naturally combat mood swings. Eating breakfast, reducing caffeine and decreasing sugar are just a few of the things that can help teens feel at their best. Talk to your teen about the importance of a balanced diet and provide healthy snacks and meals.

The adolescent years can feel like riding a roller coaster. By maintaining positive and respectful parent- child relationships during this period, your family can (try to) enjoy the ride!

The Success Mantra



Since adolescence are the forming years in the life of a child, rather than imposing one's expectations or pressuring a child to fulfill the unrealised dreams of oneself, the parent should focus and encourage on multi-dimensional growth of the child.

Psychologists state that there are four quotients that lay the foundation for the success of a person during his/her lifetime. Life's success depends 20% on Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and 80% Emotional Quotient (EQ) and Adversity Quotient (AQ), collectively known as **"3Q"**. However, there is another under-rated quotient, namely Spiritual Quotient (SQ). Let's understand these pillars of success.

For example, it is a well known story that Thomas Edison was expelled from school at a very young age for being a slow learner. However, if his mother had forced him to focus solely on his academics he wouldn't have been able to become a business man and succeed in commercialising the invention of the light bulb, which eventually led him to much fame and money that he enjoyed in his life.

Intelligence Quotient (IQ)

This is a measure of one's comprehension ability like solving mathematics, memorising and recalling subject matter. It is one's ability to learn and understand and is a measure of person's reasoning ability. It assesses one's long and short term memories.

Emotional Quotient (EQ)

This is the measure of one's ability to build and maintain peaceful and cordial relations with others, act responsibly and honestly, being respectful of other's boundaries, being humble, genuine, considerate and punctual.

Adversity Quotient (AQ)

This is the measure of one's ability to go through the ups and the downs of life and coping with it without losing your mind. It comprises four CORE dimensions:-

C = Control

O = Ownership

R = Reach

E = Endurance

In the current scenario of COVID-19, many professional and successful people are going through the bouts of depression and anxiety, because they are not prepared for adversities due to lack of experience of dealing with situations like the current pandemic.

People with high AQs often see themselves with higher ability to control adverse situations, take initiatives to deal with various challenging situations, manage setbacks, and remain calm, rational and positive.

Spiritual Quotient (SQ)

It is one's awareness and response to god. In the era of technology, the world has become very materialistic. Everyone is working towards fame and wealth and this very important quotient of life is long forgotten. Maybe one does not have time for it or has no knowledge to understand the importance of it.

Human life is based on 'Karmas'. What one gives, one gets back. One has to bear the result of his/her own actions. If SQ is introduced since childhood as a part of one's character, the society will restructure itself to become a positive community in the future. It will cultivate honest and compassionate human beings.

People who have higher EQ & SQ tend to go further in life than those with high IQ but low EQ & SQ. Most schools capitalise in improving IQ level while EQ & SQ are played down. EQ represents one's character while SQ represents one's charisma. One needs to adopt the habits that results in improvement of these three Qs.

A Note to the Parents

Parents play a crucial role and have very significant impact on the person that a child grows up to become. Thus, it becomes the responsibility of the parents to ensure all round development of their children. It is extremely important for the children to be exposed to areas of life other than academics like sports, performing arts etc. Children should also be encouraged to learn the daily household chores that form the basic needs of humans like cooking, cleaning, doing laundry etc.

Children are bound to make mistakes, and as such, should not be expected to be perfect at all times. They should learn to accept their flaws and correct their mistakes, which is only possible if the parent(s) encourage an open communication and listen to their problems patiently and encourage them to share their thoughts. Parent(s) should make sure that the child learns how to own up to their mistakes and face consequences of their actions. A child, in the present world, needs to learn to take successes and failures in his/her stride and strive to do better. Children need to be taught good values and morals through stories and legends. Parents should encourage children to not only acquire higher IQ but also develop higher SQ & EQ.

Role of AFWWA in Child Care

AFWWA plays an important role in conducting various activities for the personality development of the children. These are well organised and seek assistance of the station, if required, to ensure the smooth conduct of these activities.

Facility of Vaccination for Children

You want to do what is best for your children. One of the best ways to protect them is to make sure they have all of their vaccinations. **AFWWA** plays an important role in facilitating the parents to avail this facility in the Station Medicare Centre(SMC). AFWWA in its monthly meetings informs the sanginis about these camps/schedules. Universal immunisation programme (UIP) is being followed along with other immunisation schedules and all these vaccinations are available in the SMC. The information regarding the schedule is published in Station Routine Order (SRO) from time to time. Parents are counselled and advised by AFWWA regarding the importance of vaccination. The SMC in consultation with the concerned specialist also helps in providing additional vaccination for high-risk children. Successful interventions by AFWWA have led to improvements in maternal and child health.

Healthy Baby Show

The healthy baby shows are organised by AFWWA with the help of SMC to encourage the mothers to interact with each other and share their parenting experiences as well. The doctor gives a talk on maintaining good health of the baby and the mother, and also advises on breastfeeding, weaning, growth, and development of the baby. These special talks by the doctors help the young mother in gaining knowledge about everyday essential health needs. AFWWA urges its members to advocate for a supportive healthcare workforce, with the knowledge and skills to successfully improve the lives of their families.

Play School



To facilitate the families of air warriors posted across the nation, AFWWA operates playschools, which gives them preschool facilities for the toddlers even in such terrains where other preschools are not available. The pre-school/ play school is run by AFWWA where tiny-tots are kept busy in creative work before joining a formal school. The playschools are well equipped with blocks and puzzles, dramatic play area, colourful tables and chairs, art supplies, music corner, reading material, rest mats, and outdoor play items like slides, rockers, swings, traffic park, and sensory park. These schools are the foundation of your child where he/ she explores, gains a sense of self, plays with peers and builds self confidence. Qualified teachers are appointed in these schools to provide best care and values to the young kids.

Details of Play Schools
Run Under Aegis of AFWWA

AFWWA HQ/(R)	State / Union Territory	Place
AFWWA	Delhi NCR	Dadri, Gurgaon, New Delhi
WAC	J & K	Srinagar, Awantipur, Jammu, Udhampur
	Himachal Pradesh	Dalhousie, Kasauli
	Punjab	Adampur, Halwara, Pathankot, Bathinda, Mamoon Cantt (Pathankot), Amritsar, Barnala, Rajpura, Amritsar
	Chandigarh	Highgrounds Chandigarh
	Delhi NCR	Palam, Rajokri, Hindon, Arjangarh, Basantnagar, Subroto Park Delhi
	Haryana	Ambala, Sirsa, Baknoor
	Rajasthan	Suratgarh, Nal, Bikaner
	Uttar Pradesh	Sarsawa, Faridabad, Chandinagar
SWAC	Rajasthan	Utarlai, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Phalodi, Mount Abu
	Gujarat	Bhuj, Jamnagar, Vadodara, Wadsar, Naliya, Samana, Gandhinagar
	Maharastra	Pune, Thane, Mudh Island, Borgad
CAC	Uttar Pradesh	Agra, Bareilly, Gorakhpur, Bakshi Ka Talab, Memaura, Prayagraj
	Madhya Pradesh	Gwalior
	Bihar	Bihta

AFWWA HQ/(R)	State / Union Territory	Place
EAC	Assam	Jorhat, Tezpur, Chabua, Guwahati, Dinjan, Kumbhigram, Mohanbari, Digaru, Missamari
	Bihar	Purnea
	Jharkhand	Singharsi
	Meghalaya	Shillong
	West Bengal	Kalaikunda, Barackpore, Hashimara, Bagdogra, Panagarh
SAC	Andhra Pradesh	Suryalanka
	Karnataka	Mysuru, Bengaluru
	Kerala	Thiruvananthapuram
	Tamilnadu	Sulur, Thanjavur
TC	Karnataka	Bidar, Belagavi, Bengaluru
	Tamilnadu	Coimbatore, Chennai
	Telangana	Hyderabad
MC	Chandigarh	Chandigarh
	Maharastra	Pune, Nasik, Nagpur, Amla, Devlali
	Delhi NCR	Najafgarh, Tuglakabad
	Assam	Guwahati
	Karnataka	Bengaluru
	Uttar Pradesh	Kanpur, Manauri

AFWWA Activities Conducted at Station Level

Activities that take place outside the classroom but reinforce or supplement classroom curriculum in some way are called co-scholastic activities. AFWWA understands the importance of co-scholastic activities in the overall development of growing children. They provide complementary learning and help the students to explore strengths and talent outside academics. It also helps in channelising energies in a positive direction and helps them to build friendships and participate in group activities. These activities are run with the help of trained teachers in their respective fields. A detailed roster of activities with the allocated time is displayed in the AFWWA notice board. All these classes are run after school hours. Some of these activities are mentioned below:-

- Tuition classes /coaching classes
- Dance and music classes
- Art and drawing classes
- Counselling for children and parents
- Cultural activities
- Abacus/Vedic math
- Children's day/Christmas party
- Taekwondo/Karate classes

Activity at Regional Level

Summer Adventure Camps for Boys and Girls AFWWA (Regionals) organize summer adventur.e camps at a hill station for the wards of serving Air Force personnel whose mother is an AFWWA member. These camps provide an opportunity for the children to have an experience of outing in their summer vacations with activities like trekking, tent pitching, rock climbing, river crossing, and campfire. A nominal collection may be made from the participants on account of registration fees to provide better facilities during the camp and the rest of the expenditure be made from AFWWA (Regional) after obtaining approval from the competent financial authority. Permission from AFWWA HQ for organising summer camp is to be obtained in advance. Camps help the children to build self-confidence and self-esteem. It helps them develop life skills, promotes independence, teaches teamwork, resiliency, and connection with nature. It provides a perfect environment to develop risk-taking and conflict- resolution skills as they learn to make their own decisions without their parents' help. It is an outward bound learning process that also instills team spirit and leadership with the element of entertainment and fun.

Activity at Central Level

Declamation contest for children of sanginis These contests are conducted by AFWWA once a year, after the selection of the candidates from each Command. The Command selects its candidates after conducting these contests at the station and then the regional level. The declamation contest is conducted both in Hindi and English for the students of classes IX to XII. These contests inculcate in our children the skill of public speaking and the ability to address the audience with confidence and enthusiasm. It helps them develop leadership qualities.

Umeed Asha Kiran School / Vocational Training Centres

AFWWA believes in inclusivity. To help bring inclusivity for the differently-abled, AFWWA runs special schools under the name of Umeed Asha Kiran. These schools impart life skills as well as vocational skills to our special children. It has special educators who help the children in their educational, social, physical, and mental growth. These schools are also equipped with physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, sensory, aural, and speech therapy experts. The vocational training centre teaches the children to make candles, decorative diyas, handmade paper articles, and handloom products. These products are displayed in all the AFWWA run welfare shops.

Details of Umeed Asha Kiran School/VTC
Run Under Aegis of AFWWA

UMEED/ AFWWA HQ/(R)	Location	Facilities
Umeed VTC AFWWA HQ	Subroto Park New Delhi	Special educator cum Vocational Trainer, Psychological Counsellor.
Umeed AKS WAC	Chandigarh	Physiotherapy, Occupational therapy, Speech therapy, Hydro therapy, Vocational training, Sensory Park with bubble tube column, Crawling Tunnel, Sensory Learning Wall and Sound Activated Light Towers, Hydropool, Computer classes, Art and Music.
	Halwara	Physiotherapy, Speech therapy, Teaching aid & equipment.
Umeed AKS SWAC	Pune	Physiotherapy, Speech therapy, Teaching aid & equipment, Training equipment, Computer classes, Music classes, Tunnel, Hanging Bridge, See-Saw, Circular Path, Sand Pit, Water Pool, Bell Tree, Merry Go Round, Multi Texture Path, Herb Garden and Musical Strings.
Umeed AKS CAC	Memaura	Physiotherapist, Speech Therapist, Sensory Park, Play ground and traffic park with road signs, Multi exercise unity, Bocce Ball, Cylinder peg board, Rolling pin ankle and heel exercise & Special Chair.

UMEED/ AFWWA HQ/(R)	Location	Facilities
Umeed AKS EAC	Barrackpore	Physiotherapy, Occupational therapy, Speech therapy, Vocational Training Unit, Ball pool room, Multi-sensory unit room, Audio visual unit room, Hydro therapy unit, Aquatic therapy pool, Sensory integration park, Computer room, Play station.
Umeed AKS MC	Kanpur	Physiotherapy, Vocational training, Ball pool room, Sports, Music and Dance classes, Art and Painting classes, Computer classes, Jaw motion device, Acupressure park, Audio visual room, Group hearing aid, Screen painting, AAC super talker progressive communicator, Hot And Cold Water Pool, Herbal Plants, Pebbles, Sponge, Mud and Sand Wind Chimes.
Umeed AKS TC	Bangalore	Physiotherapy, Speech therapist, Teaching & learning aids, Gaming facility x-box, Dance classes, Computer classes, Sports & music classes, Sensory Park and pool.
	Jalahalli	Physiotherapy, Speech therapy, Occupational therapy, Yoga, PT, dance, music, arts & painting classes, Multimedia basics and computer education, 3D gaming, Ball pit & sensory park.
	Tambaram	Physiotherapy, Speech therapy, Vocational training, Sensory park, Computer classes, Yoga & music classes, Play Ground And Traffic Park With Road Signs.

Parent Support Group

AFWWA runs this support group for the parents of these special children by providing them with a platform to address their issues and learn different ways to cope up with their special children.

Counselling sessions and recreational activities or trips are also arranged for the parents of the special children. It gives the parents an opportunity to come together, learn, and share their experiences with other parents. The knowledge they share can help them to manage their children better and also be a source of emotional support as they can share and talk about their problems.

AFWWA Hostels

Children are affected in some way or the other when parents are in a transferable job. To meet the needs of children when their parents are posted out and they need to stay back because of their education, AFWWA hostel proves to be a great boon for them.

AFWWA provides separate hostel facilities for boys and girls at various Stations. These hostels are located inside the campus and ensure safe and hygienic living. Good quality food and security arrangements are provided to the children. Since these hostels are run by AFWWA their fees is affordable compared to the hostels outside.

Details of Hostels
Run Under Aegis of AFWWA

AFWWA HQ/ (R)	Name & Place	Hostels	Contact No.
AFWWA HQ	Happy Landings AFWWA Girls Hostel, Subroto Park, New Delhi	Girls	AF Net - 2311 6948 Mobile - 7303888053
HQ WAC	Trishul AFWWA Boys Hostel, Subroto Park, New Delhi	Boys	Land line - 011 - 25697551 /5947 Mobile - 9599946470 Mobile - 8141216670
HQ SWAC	AFWWA Hostel AF Stn Pune	Girls	AF Net - 3916-85-2497 Landline - 020-26699542 Mobile - 8380985106
	AFWWA Hostel AF Stn Mumbai	Boys	Mobile - 7304105173
HQ MC	AFWWA Hostel 3 BRD, AF Stn Chandigarh	Boys	AF Net - 2516 - 7850 Landline - 0172 - 2615133
	AFWWA Hostel 5 BRD, AF Stn Sulur	Boys	AF Net - 4324 - 7851 Exchange - 0422 - 2683281
	AFWWA Hostel Vayusena Nagar, AF Stn Nagpur	Boys	AF Net - 3911-6880 Exchange - 0712 - 2512771
	AFWWA Hostel, 9 BRD, AF Stn Pune	Boys	AF Net - 3912-7852 Exchange - 020 - 26633281

AFWWA HQ/ (R)	Name & Place	Hostels	Contact No.
HQ TC	Basera Student Study Centre AF Stn Jalahalli	Boys & Girls	AF Net - 4118-7866 Landline - 080-28399009
	AFWWA Student Study Centre AF Stn Tambaram	Boys	AF Net - 4319 - 7850/ 51 Mobile - 7578051820
	AFWWA Student Study Centre AF Stn Begumpet	Boys & Girls	AF Net - 040-27759055 Mobile - 8978396516

Priority for Admissions in AFWWA Hostels:-

I - Wards of serving & deceased (while on active service) Air Force Officers, Airmen & NCs(E).

II - Wards of Air Force Officers, Airmen & NCs(E) superannuated from service.

III - Wards of Air Force Officers, Airmen & NCs(E) who left service on premature separation from service (PSS) or on completion of period of regular engagement (RE), before the age of superannuation.

IV - Wards of deceased Air Force Officers, Airmen & NCs(E) not on active service.

V - Wards of DSC personnel serving in AF Units.

VI - Wards of serving/deceased (while on active service) personnel from Army & Navy.

VII - Wards of deceased personnel from Army & Navy (death not on active service).

VIII - For short term duration courses of less than 10 months.

AFWWA Scholarships

For the benefit of its members, AFWWA awards scholarships, stipends and financial assistance. Scholarships are provided to children based on their academic performance as well as other criteria, as per the type of scholarships. Every year AFWWA invites applications for 17 Scholarships - 16 to wives of serving personnel, 01 to wife of deceased personnel (for details of this scholarship, refer chapter no. 6 page no. 207).

Scholarships Applicable to Wards of Serving Personnel [Officers, Airmen & NCs(E)]

<table>
<tr><th>Name of Scholarship</th><th>Salient Features</th><th>Eligibility Criteria</th></tr>
<tr><td>AFWWA Scholarship for under graduates</td><td>• Total number of scholarships - 215
• Amount per scholarship ₹10,000/-
• Financed/ sponsored by AFWWA HQ.</td><td>• Mother of the child should be a life member of AFWWA.
• Scholarship only for children of serving Air Force personnel.
• The child should have scored 80% and above marks in CBSE/ ICSE/ State Board examination of class XII in the previous academic year.
• The child should not be in receipt of any other scholarship.
• Priority will be given to girl child, in case of a tie.
• Duration of scholarship is for one year only.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Scholarship for sports person</td><td>• Total number of scholarships - 15
<table>
<tr><th>Position</th><th>No. of Scholarships</th><th>Amount</th></tr>
<tr><td>I</td><td>06</td><td>₹ 15,000/-</td></tr>
<tr><td>II</td><td>05</td><td>₹ 10,000/-</td></tr>
<tr><td>III</td><td>04</td><td>₹ 8,000/-</td></tr>
</table>
• Financed/ Sponsored by AFWWA HQ</td><td>• Mother of the child should be a life member of AFWWA.
• The child should excel at national level and secure a position in top three.
• Games included in Olympics will be given priority
• Duration of scholarship is for one year only.
Priority for selection
<table>
<tr><th>Priority</th><th>Events at national level</th></tr>
<tr><td>I</td><td>Individual Events</td></tr>
<tr><td>II</td><td>Team Events (Doubles)</td></tr>
<tr><td>III</td><td>Team Events</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>Name of Scholarship</th><th>Salient Features</th><th>Eligibility Criteria</th></tr>
<tr><td>Scholarship for artists</td><td>Total number of scholarships - 03
Amount per scholarship
<table>
<tr><th>Position</th><th>Amount</th></tr>
<tr><td>I</td><td>₹ 15,000/-</td></tr>
<tr><td>II</td><td>₹ 10,000/-</td></tr>
<tr><td>III</td><td>₹ 8,000/-</td></tr>
</table>
• Financed/ sponsored by AFWWA HQ.</td><td>• Mother of the child should be a life member of AFWWA.
• Child should excel at national level and secure a position in top three.
• Duration of scholarship is for one year only.
• Priority will be given to girl child in case of a tie.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Scholarship to girl child achiever</td><td>• Total number of scholarships - 08
• Amount per scholarship ₹12,000/-
• Financed/ sponsored by AFWWA HQ</td><td>• Mother of the child should be a life member of AFWWA.
• Scholarship is awarded to 01 child from each AFWWA (R) and 01 child from AFWWA (L) directly under AFWWA.
• Child should have secured highest marks in class XII exam in the concerned region.
• Duration of scholarship is for one year only.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Scholarship for higher education</td><td>• Total number of scholarships - 10
• Amount per scholarship ₹15,000/-
• Financed/ sponsored by AFWWA HQ.</td><td>• Sangini should be a life member of AFWWA.
• Scholarship is only for Sanginis of serving Air Force personnel.
• Higher education will be given preference.
• Regular courses will be given priority over correspondence courses.
• In case of more number of applicants, % scored in the newly acquired higher education will be used to award the scholarship.
• Will be awarded on completion of course post marriage in the previous academic year.
• Scholarship is for one time only.</td></tr>
</table>

Name of Scholarship	Salient Features	Eligibility Criteria
Late Smt Amarjeet Kaur Memorial Scholarship	• Total number of scholarships - 03 • Amount per scholarship ₹8,500/- • Financed / sponsored by Air Marshal Jagjeet Singh (Retd)	• Mother of child should be a life member of AFWWA. • Scholarship will be given to special children of Umeed VTC/ UAKS. • Economic condition of family will be taken into consideration. • Should not be in receipt of this scholarship or Naik's scholarship in preceding three years in case of multiple applicants. • Duration of scholarship is for one year only.
Late Air Chief Mshl PC Lal Memorial Scholarship	• Total number of scholarships - 04 • Amount per scholarship ₹8,700/- • Financed / sponsored by Mrs Ila Lal W/o Late Air Chief Marshal PC Lal	• Mother of child should be a life member of AFWWA. • Scholarship is awarded to disabled ward of serving personnel. • Student should have passed XII Std in previous academic year and obtained admission for graduation in a recognised college. • Medical certificate of handicapped child from competent authorities. • Percentage of disability will decide the award of scholarship in case of tie. • Duration of scholarship is for one year only.

Scholarships Applicable to Wards of Serving Personnel [Airmen & NCs(E)]

Name of Scholarship	Salient Features	Eligibility Criteria
Goodwill Scholarship to Special Children	• Total number of scholarships - 15 • Amount per scholarship ₹8,000/- • Financed/ sponsored by AFWWA HQ	• Mother of child should be an AFWWA member. • Scholarship is instituted for welfare of special children of serving Airmen / Ncs(E). • Economic condition will be the criteria for giving scholarship. • Scholarship will be over and above any other scholarship received by the special child. • Should not be in receipt of this scholarship in preceding three years in case of multiple applicants. • Duration of scholarship is for one year only.
Canberra - Flt Lt MS Sarin Memorial Scholarship	• Total number of scholarships - 02 • Amount per scholarship ₹4,500/- • Financed/ sponsored by Canberra - Flt Lt MS Sarin	• Mother of child should be a life member of AFWWA. • Scholarship is awarded to 02 special children (one boy and one girl) of Airmen / NCs(E) who are studying in the special wing of AFGJI, Delhi. • Scholarship is awarded on the recommendations received from AFGJI. • Should not be in receipt of this scholarship in preceding three years. • Duration of scholarship is for one year only. • Scholarship will be over and above other Scholarships.

Name of Scholarship	Salient Features	Eligibility Criteria
Naik's Scholarship to a special child	• Total number of scholarships - 01 • Amount per scholarship ₹5,000/- • Financed / sponsored by Mrs Madhubala Naik (Ex President, AFWWA)	• Mother of child should be a life member of AFWWA. • Scholarship has been instituted for a special child of serving Airmen / Ncs(E) studying in Umeed Vocational centre. • The name of the child will be recommended by administrator of Umeed Vocational Training centre. • Economic condition will be the criteria for giving scholarship. • Should not be in receipt of this scholarship or Late Smt Amarjeet Kaur Memorial scholarship in preceding three years in case of multiple applicants. • Duration of scholarship is for one year only. • Scholarship will be over and above other scholarships.
Late Air Marshal SR Deshpande Scholarship	• Total number of scholarships - 02 • Amount per scholarship ₹10,000/- • Financed / sponsored by Mrs Sunita Deshpande W/o Late Air Marshal SR Deshpande	• Mother of student should be a life member of AFWWA. • Awarded to children with special needs. • Scholarship awarded to one boy and one girl of serving Airmen / NCs(E). • Economic condition of family will be the criteria for giving this scholarship.

Name of Scholarship	Salient Features	Eligibility Criteria
		• Should not be in receipt of this scholarship in preceding three years in case of multiple applicants. • Duration of scholarship is for one year only. • Scholarship will be over and above other Scholarships.
Late Wg Cdr AS Puranik Memorial Scholarship	• Total number of scholarships - 01 • Amount per scholarship ₹2,500/- • Financed/ sponsored by Mrs Puranik W/o Late Wg Cdr AS Puranik	• Mother of child should be an AFWWA member. • Scholarship is awarded to a ward of serving Airmen / Ncs(E). • Student should have passed VIII Std with 95% marks and above. • Scholarship will be awarded till XII Std provided scholarship is to be applied every year. • Scholarship will be transferred in case child scores less than 75% marks in the exam held in subsequent years. • Should not be in receipt of any other scholarships. • Priority will be given to girl child in case of a tie.

Scholarships Applicable to Wards of Serving NCs(E)

Name of Scholarship	Salient Features	Eligibility Criteria
Educational Scholarship For Children of Ncs(E).	• Total number of scholarships - 45 • Amount per scholarship ₹10,000/- • Financed/ sponsored by AFWWA HQ	• The mother of child should be a life member of AFWWA. • This scholarship is awarded to children of Ncs(E) who are studying in class VIII to X and have scored 75% and above marks. • The child should be studying in a recognised school or in an Air Force school. • Only one child per family is considered for the scholarship. • Duration of scholarship is for one year only. • Preference will be given to girl child in case of a tie. • Student should not be in receipt of any other scholarship.
Scholarship for Praudh Shiksha to sanginis	• Total number of scholarships - 05 • Amount per scholarship 10th Class - ₹5000 12th Class - ₹10000 • Financed/ Sponsored By AFWWA HQ.	• Sangini should be a life member of AFWWA. • Scholarship is only for sanginis of serving Ncs(E). • Qualification to be attained after marriage. • Qualification should have been attained in the last academic year. • In case of more number of applicants, % scored in the newly acquired higher education will be considered to award scholarship. • Scholarship is for one time only.

Name of Scholarship	Salient Features	Eligibility Criteria
Late Smt Amarjeet Kaur Memorial Scholarship to a girl child of Ncs(E)	• Total number of scholarships - 01 • Amount per scholarship ₹10,000/- • Financed/ sponsored by Air Mshl Jagjeet Singh (Retd)	• Mother of child should be a life member of AFWWA. • Should be admitted in professional courses of minimum four year degree like B.E /B.TECH, BDS, MBBS, integrated LLB, integrated B.Ed, integrated MBA, integrated MCA. • Student should have scored 80% and above marks in XII Std in previous academic year. • Duration of scholarship is till completion of the course, provided applied every year. • Scholarship will be discontinued if she scores less than 70% in the exam held in subsequent years and will be awarded to another child. • Should not be in receipt of any other scholarships.

Scholarships Applicable to Wards of Serving Personnel [NCs(E) & DSC]

Name of Scholarship	Salient Features	Eligibility Criteria
Wg Cdr & Mrs PC Kalia Scholarship	• Total number of scholarships - 02 [01 each for wards of NCs(E) & DSC] • Amount per scholarship ₹25,000/- • Financed/ sponsored by Wg Cdr PC Kalia (Retd)	• Mother of child should be life member of AFWWA in case of NCs(E). Not applicable for DSC. • Exclusively for girl child. • The girl child should be studying in a college/institution recognised by UGC/Govt after passing XII class with 80% and above marks in the previous academic year. • Scholarship will be granted on merit basis. • Student should not be in receipt of any other scholarship /free education. If student has received any other scholarship, student will have liberty to retain only one scholarship. • Duration of scholarship will be for one year and name of the same student will not be considered in future.

IAFBA Scholarships to wards of Serving AF Personnel

Scheme	Officers (in ₹)	Airmen (in ₹)	NCs(E) (in ₹)	Conditions
Scholarship for school/college education				
• School For VI to X	NA	NA	4000/-pa	
For XI to XII	7500/-pa	7500/-pa	7500/-pa	
• Under Graduate	15000/-pa	15000/-pa	15000/-pa	
• Under Graduate Professional	20000/-pa	20000/-pa	20000/-pa	
• Post Graduate	25000/-pa	25000/-pa	25000/-pa	
• Post Graduate Professional	30000/-pa	30000/-pa	30000/-pa	
• Special Child with disability less than 70%)	15000/-pa	15000/-pa	15000/-pa	
• Sports	International - 10,000/- pa National - 6,000/- pa Others - 3,000/- pa			
w.e.f. 2004-05: Junior < 17yrs Sub Junior < 14 yrs	10,000/-pa 5,000/-pa			
A scheme for special children named 'VISHESH' had been launched on 01 Apr 13. Grant of ₹36000/- pa to special child having 70% or more disability is payable upto the age of 30 years, whether child is attending an institute or not.	3000/-pm	3000/-pm	3000/-pm	Application duly recommended by CO along with disability certificate issued from Service/ Civil Hospital notified by State Govt. and photograph of the child The date of birth certificate is also to be attached.

<table>
<tr><th>Scheme</th><th>Officers (in ₹)</th><th>Airmen (in ₹)</th><th>NCs(E) (in ₹)</th><th>Conditions</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Education loan @ 7% pa (5% for NCs(E)) interest for pursuing higher studies by wards of serving personnel. (To be refunded in max180 instalments) The loan can be availed for maximum of two children. This can be availed simultaneously also.</td><td colspan="3">30 Lakh</td><td>For 04 Yr and above Degree/ Integrated PG Courses or 02 Yr PG/ PG (Prof.) Courses</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">15 Lakh</td><td>All other courses of less than 04 Yr duration</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Other conditions like repaying capacity etc are applicable to all. No processing fee applicable.</td></tr>
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Relocation - A Challenge for Our Children

Defence families relocate more frequently than civilian families. This poses a challenge to our children, as they have to bid adieu to their friends and teachers and adjust to a new environment, time and again. To make it easier for them, here are a few things you can do:

Military kids say goodbye more often in their first few years than some people do in a lifetime.

If you have young children, delay the packing as much as possible. They may get stressed because of the unsettled house. If you're hiring help, ensure you pack your child's stuff yourself, so that you can locate it easily when settling into the new house.

- Remember to collect your child's transfer certificate well in time before your move.
- Talk to your child about the move and focus on the good things.
- At your new place, include the children in selecting their rooms and setting them up. This may keep them excited as well as engaged.
- If the children are old enough, take their help in unpacking and arranging the stuff.
- Motivate them to make new friends.

Keep these moving tips in mind and your move will be a lot simpler.

The feel-good factor of parenting and child care is lost many times in our mad rush to show that we are exemplary. We do not have to be reminded time and again that children are mighty vigilant at all times and any aberration on the part of their parent is thoroughly scrutinized. It hardly takes a second for all our painstaking efforts to go down the drain and expose our vulnerability.



A parent wants to safeguard the child's well-being not only in the present but also

in the future. The best way is to raise them in such a way that they become adept in dealing with success as well as adversity. Good parenting is more important than a good school in a child's life. Lessons of moral values, manners, discipline, compassion, and kindness learned at home make them good human beings and responsible citizens. Parents should help them tread carefully so that they become independent individuals, ready to contribute to the well-being of society.

Your children are not your children.

They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

They come through you but not from you,

And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts, For they have their own thoughts.

You may house their bodies but not their souls,

For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.

You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.

For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.

You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth.

The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He bends you with His might that His arrows may go swift and far.

Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness;

For even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable.

-Khalil Gibran

You always have to remember to take care of yourself, first and foremost. Because when you stop taking care of yourself, you get out of balance and you really forget how to take care of others.

– Jada Pinkett Smith

HOLISTIC HEALTH



A fit body, a calm mind and a house full of love, is all that a person needs to lead a comfortable and fruitful life. None of these things can ever be bought, so we need to work towards achieving them. It is natural for every Sangini to give utmost priority to her family's health and well being. However, while being involved in taking care of her family, she neglects to look after herself, which should never be the case.

For the Air Warriors of the Indian Air Force, there is a great deal of stress at work, continuous training, Squadron detachments, flood relief, COVID couriers, rescues, so on and so forth. The IAF is constantly on alert, all the time, ready to react at a moment's notice. It is our husbands who work towards building this readiness. So reducing stress in their lives, is as essential as ensuring health of each and everyone in the family. It is important for the whole family to have a sound mind and a healthy body. Physical health is a result of diet, fitness, exercise and taking timely medical intervention, to stay free from diseases. Mental health includes emotional, psychological and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act. It has a direct impact on our behaviour. This article will provide guidance to having good physical and mental health for all, which is important at every stage of life; childhood to adolescence to adulthood to old age.





Like any other responsible organisation, the Indian Air Force is also genuinely concerned about the health of its Air Warriors. As soon as you become a part of the Air Force family after marriage, you become entitled for medical treatment at Armed Forces Hospitals. Almost every Air Force Station (AFS) has a Station Medicare Centre (SMC). At some places there are Air Force Hospitals (AFH) also. In case some specialist treatment is required, you will be referred to the nearest Military Hospital and thereafter to respective Command Hospital. If even higher level of consultation or specialist treatment is required then you will be referred to Army Hospital Research & Referral (AHR&R) at New Delhi. Alternatively, at some places due to the nature of illness and distance involved, you can be referred to any nearby Government or private hospital for treatment, the charges for which can be reimbursed to your spouse. The same is also applicable to all registered dependants of your spouse. Similar facilities are available in case of Dental issues as well. Most SMCs have outsourced services of a Dentist. In case of requirement of specialised dental treatment, the service personnel are referred to the nearest Air Force Dental Centre where all facilities are available or else facilities of nearby Government or Private specialised hospitals are utilised.

Annual Medical Examination (AME) is done for every Air Warrior in IAF where he is checked on every medical parameter and accordingly a medical category is awarded to him. The category differs depending on the branch /trade to which an Air Warrior belongs. As an example for ground duty personnel, the highest category would be A4G1 which signifies he is mentally and physically fit and the same for any personnel involved in active flying will be, A1G1.

Swasth Sangini Health Check-Up Camps by AFWWA

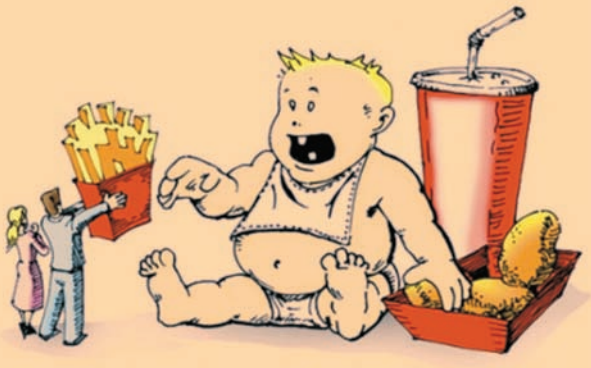
Just like all Air Warriors undergo an AME every year, there is also a system for analysing Sanginis' health. They are also important because Air Warriors and their families are the IAF's greatest asset. Comprehensive Medical Camps are organised by AFWWA for Sanginis on a regular basis in almost every Air Force Station. Right at the outset, every Sangini is provided with a Sangini Health Card in these camps, which should be maintained and carried for all visits to the doctor. These camps help to screen all Sanginis for preventive life-style diseases, particularly aiding in early detection of obesity, anaemia, hypertension, osteoporosis, cardiac diseases, endocrine disorders like thyroid, diabetes etc. Special emphasis is also given for the early detection of cancer, especially breast, cervical and oral cancers.

Provision of Specialist OPD Services

Specialist OPD services as per requirement are also being provided through SMC or MI Rooms, to address specific medical issues of the Sanginis and their families. Civilian doctors are hired to come and work in the SMC. In this way, a specialist is made available close-by and helps avoid going to distant referral hospitals, which may cause mental/ financial burden on the families. The various specialist OPDs include Gynaecology, Dental surgery, Pediatrics etc.

Health Education Campaign

AFWWA organises many camps and lectures on health issues, during their monthly meetings. It is advisable for all Sanginis to attend these medical camps and lectures, as they are held for our benefit. Sanginis are made aware of various lifestyle and communicable diseases and their preventive measures. Demonstrations are also given in various First-Aid techniques including pulmonary resuscitation by trained medical staff. Self check-up training is also imparted by lady doctors, to ensure detection of Breast lumps by the Sanginis themselves.



Lifestyle Diseases Clinics

Lifestyle diseases clinics are also organised with the help of the AF Station. Services of dieticians and psychologists are provided with an aim to achieve reduction of morbidity due to lifestyle diseases.

School Children Health Camps

Health Check-up Camps are also organised for school children on a regular basis to detect problems, spread awareness and to prevent spread of communicable diseases.

Immunization Camps

Sanginis are encouraged to avail the benefits of immunization facilities for their children. This includes pregnant Sanginis who are part of the National Immunization Programme. Additional immunization activities are also carried out through participation in vaccination camps organised by the State/ Central Government like the Pulse Polio Programme. During these camps, children are not just provided a shot of the vaccine but also checked for vitals and any delay in their development milestones.





Mental Health Issues

Just as physical health is monitored in the Annual Health check-ups, mental health issues like stress, anxiety, depression etc. also must be grappled with. These issues can be dealt through sessions with the Station Psychological Counsellor. A Counsellor is available in SMC at any Air Force Station, at least once or twice a week for consultation. The main issue is of identification of mental health issues. Broadly, anyone having the following issues continuously should not hesitate to approach a Counsellor:-

- Feeling of sadness, excessive anger or just not being “you”.
- Dependence on drug abuse, alcohol or food.
- Losing someone or something important and finding it difficult to cope and lead a normal life.
- Dealing with the aftermath of a traumatic event.
- You do not find interest in activities that were once pleasurable.

Awareness Camps organised by AFWWA

Various awareness camps including Medication Safety Awareness, Mental Health Awareness etc. are also organised through AFWWA. Awareness on ‘Look Alike Sound Alike Drugs’ are imparted to the Sanginis, through various lectures and a list of such medicines is displayed on various notice boards near pharmacies which disburse medications. Stress related issues are addressed through Counseling camps, Yoga and Meditation sessions.

Ensuring the Best for Our Lives

The Healthy Diet



The requirement for a healthy diet needs no emphasis. But, here is something which we all should know. There is no magic diet that will suit everyone. In the following paragraphs, the advantages of different food groups are described. All you have to do is to keep these in mind while planning the daily menu. We know that nobody likes a boring set menu every day, least of all children. So we need to be practical and adjust the menu, depending on the availability of seasonal vegetables & other items.

The intake of food is generally measured in units of Calories. Calories are not all bad for you. Your body needs calories for energy. But eating too many calories and not burning off enough of them through activity, can lead to weight gain. You will not go wrong, as long as you remember that ***Output must be more than Input*.** This is the key phrase, mantra, whatever you like to call it.

A balanced diet is one which contains variety of foods in such quantities and proportion that the need for all nutrients is met adequately for maintaining health, vitality and general well-being and makes a small provision for extra nutrients to withstand short duration of leanness.



As a healthy diet consists of different kinds of foods, the emphasis has been shifted from nutrient orientation to a Food Based Approach. Foods can be categorised according to the function as:-

- **Energy Rich Foods** (Carbohydrates and Fats)-whole grain cereals, millets, vegetable oils, ghee and sugars.
- **Body Building Foods** (Proteins)- Pulses, nuts and oilseeds, milk and milk products, meat, fish, poultry.
- **Protective Foods** (Vitamins and minerals) - Green leafy vegetables, other vegetables, fruits, milk and milk products and fresh foods.

Role of Different Food Groups

Vegetables and Fruits are rich source of micronutrients (iron, calcium, vitamin C, folic acid, carotenoids and phytochemicals) and macronutrients (complex carbohydrates/ fibre).

Animal Fats Major sources of animal fats are ghee, butter, milk, cheese, eggs, meat and fish. They contain cholesterol and high amount of saturated fatty acids and trans fatty acids.



Vegetable Fats Seeds of some plants are sources of vegetable oils as groundnut, mustard, sesame, coconut, canola, olive and soya bean. Edible plant foods have a low content of fat and saturated fatty acids, but they are good source of mono-unsaturated fatty acids (MUFAs) and polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs). It is recommended that between 15-30% of total calories in the diet should be provided in the form of fats (visible + invisible). Excessive fats in the diet increase the risk of obesity, heart disease, stroke and cancer. The risk of developing these diseases can be lowered by reducing saturated fats to less than 10% of total intake and trans fats to less than 1% of total intake while replacing both with unsaturated fats (MUFAs+ PUFAs).

Salt (Sodium and Potassium) Intake Salt is an important ingredient of the diet. However, high salt consumption and insufficient potassium intake (less than 3.5 g) contribute to high blood pressure, which in turn increases the risk of heart disease and stroke.

Sugars Free sugars increase the risk of dental caries (tooth decay) and can lead to overweight and obesity. The intake of free sugars should be less than 10% of total energy intake.

Whole Grains A whole grain contains all edible parts of the grain, including the bran, germ, and endosperm. A diet rich in whole grains (like whole wheat, brown rice, oats, unprocessed maize & millets) has been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, obesity and some forms of cancer.

Milk Milk proteins are valuable supplements to most vegetarian diets. Milk is a rich source of calcium (poor source of iron) that helps in building up of strong bones. It is also a good source of proteins, fats, sugars, vitamins (except vitamin C) and minerals.

A healthy eating plan gives your body the nutrients it needs every day. It should have enough calories for good health, but not so much that it makes you overweight. A healthy eating plan is the one that is low in saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, sodium (salt) and added sugar. Following a healthy diet will lower the risk of overweight / obesity, heart disease and other related conditions.

Building Up Immunity



In today's **CORONA** stricken world, everyone has heard of the word **"Immunity"** and has a general idea of what it is supposed to do. Simply speaking, having immunity means, that our body can resist diseases. Therefore, it is important to have a strong immune system.

Immunity is defined as, "The capability of multi-cellular organisms to resist harmful microorganisms from entering their cells". **Immunity** involves both specific and nonspecific components. The nonspecific components act as barriers or eliminators of a wide range of pathogens, irrespective of their antigenic make-up. The key word here for us is 'Non-Specific components'. Science has not yet been able to identify these complex compounds individually; however there are certain foods that are known to increase immunity.

While a balanced diet and regular exercise keep our immune system stronger, there are also certain foods with essential nutrients and minerals that help our body fight off invasion of infection and disease-causing bacteria and viruses. When our body comes in contact with a pathogen, our immune system triggers a response and releases antibodies that help in killing the virus.

These immunity-boosting foods are rich in antioxidants and other nutrients to keep the cells active and healthy. You also have to understand that you can't just eat a specific food and expect a quick boost in immunity. A truly healthy immune system depends on a well-adjusted combination of minerals and vitamins over a period of time, in addition to regular exercise and normal sleep patterns. We in India are very fortunate to have many of these wonderful foods and spices with amazing properties as a natural part of our diet. Some of these **super foods** are:

Turmeric Taking turmeric in one form or the other is very good for health. It contains a compound called *curcumin* that has strong anti-inflammatory effects and helps in preventing flu and even heart disease. Moreover, it improves digestion and soothes a sore throat.



Black Pepper This essential ingredient is a great health booster. *Piperine* is a compound in the spice which is high in antioxidants and has anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties. It eliminates harmful toxins from the body.



Cinnamon Cinnamon is laden with antioxidants. It has anti-inflammatory properties and is said to help reduce the risk of infections and diseases. People suffering from diabetes should consume it as it helps lower blood sugar levels.



Ginger is another wonder ingredient. Ginger contains *Gingerol*, a relative of capsaicin that can help reduce a sore throat and inflammatory illnesses. Ginger may help with nausea as well. Ginger may also decrease chronic pain and even possesses cholesterol-lowering properties.







Spinach is rich in iron, vitamin A, calcium, protein, vitamin K, vitamin E, vitamin D, vitamin C, folic acid, thiamine, riboflavin, nicotinic acid, pyridoxine, antioxidants as carotene, flavones, indoles and Isothiocyanates, essential amino acids, along with potassium, manganese, magnesium, copper and zinc which are important components of cells and body fluids. They increase the infection-fighting ability of our immune systems. The comic character Popeye was created by the US Govt to motivate children into eating spinach.

Tulsi In Ayurveda, Tulsi is nature's best antibiotic. It has got some really effective antiviral and antibacterial properties which work to cure fevers, headaches, sore throats and coughs. It has about 40 special chemicals that have medicinal values and is known for its anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, anti-






pyretic and anti-cancer properties. That is why it is worshipped & people eat a tulsi leaf directly or by adding it in tea or water.

Neem Neem cools our body and gives it the required boost. It also has antibacterial and anti-fungal properties that keep infections at bay. Other than this it purifies and cleanses the blood of harmful toxins. **The best way to have it:** Crush some neem leaves into a glass of water.

Amla Amla is a fantastic source of Vitamin C. It increases the body's white blood cell count and also helps in preventing viral infections like flu. Besides that, it also improves digestive health and balances stomach's acid levels.

Papaya Papaya is a fruit full of vitamin C. Papayas also have a digestive enzyme called *papain* which contains elements that ensure anti-inflammatory effects. Papayas also have good amount of potassium, vitamin B and folate, all of which are beneficial to our overall health.



Jamun It also has a myriad of benefits. It purifies the blood, controls blood pressure, regulates blood sugar levels and reduces incidences of fever, cold and cough.

Almonds Almonds are packed with vitamin E and also contain healthy fats. It fights and prevents cold and is known to boost overall immunity.



Jackfruit This fruit is a multi-tasker: It can be a fruit, nut, vegetable meat or a carbohydrate. Its use as chakka, a whole meal that's an alternative to rice and roti, has now come to the forefront. It can help you reduce weight, beat diabetes, reduce cholesterol, prevent colon cancer and increase longevity.

Coconut can be consumed in various ways. Coconut water contains high ascorbic acid, vitamin B and proteins. Its fat-free property makes it an ideal drink to be had throughout the day to detoxify your body. Coconut oil is used for healthy cooking and for oiling the hair. Coconut can be used to make a variety of dishes as well.

Daliya is known as broken wheat. It is almost devoid of fat and an excellent source of protein. Apart from being rich in fibre, it is also very high in vitamin B and manganese.

Barley Jau can lower cholesterol levels in your blood. It is rich in calcium, vitamin E and proteins. It can treat urinary tract infections and helps in detoxification of your body. Barley water is excellent for weight loss. It can be eaten as a cereal or can be rolled out in the form of rotis.

Jowar being gluten-free is found to be beneficial for people with Irritable Bowel syndrome (IBS) and Celiac's disease. Replacing wheat with jowar was found to reduce symptoms like bloating, diarrhoea, constipation, fatigue, headaches etc. The fibre in jowar prevents constipation. It is associated with lower levels of bad LDL cholesterol that protects the body against onset of cardiovascular diseases. Low glycemic index of Jowar itself is a good reason for diabetics to include this grain in their daily diet.



This grain is a rich source of vitamin B and folate that are essential nutrients for a healthy body. It is available as a whole grain, flour, dalia, and in rava form.

These Indian superfoods have taken the world by storm, as they are affordable and filled with nutrients and vitamins to help your body. Including them in your diet, will ensure that you stay healthy and fit.



Physical health is a combination of food, nutrition and exercise. Mental health is essential for balanced well-being. To lead a happy life, one has to be both physically and mentally healthy. Having seen the benefits of the many types of foods, we now look at the advantages that Yoga, Meditation and Exercise bring towards our physical and mental health. It is believed that our essence is pure energy. In Yoga, eating is viewed as an energy exchange that connects us with our environment.

Meditation is a mind and body practice that has a long history of use for increasing calmness and physical relaxation, improving psychological balance, coping with illness, and enhancing overall health and well-being.

Exercise is a miracle cure we have always had, but we have neglected taking our recommended dose. Whatever your age, there's strong scientific evidence that being physically active can help you lead a healthier and happier life. To stay healthy, adults should try to be active every day and aim to achieve at least 150 minutes of physical activity over a week through a variety of activities. Regular physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health.

The Well-Known Benefits of Yoga

Before we get into the benefits of Yoga, it is essential to understand what exactly Yoga really is. Yoga is not a religion; it is a way of living that aims towards a healthy mind in a healthy body.

Yoga is a spiritual, mental and physical practice that has been around since ages. With time, people have discovered a number of health benefits associated with yoga. Yoga does more than burning calories and strengthening muscles, it is a workout which involves both body and mind. Yoga is not just about bending or twisting the body and holding the breath. It is a technique to bring you into a state, where you see and experience reality simply the way it is. Yoga enables you to experience the whole universe as a part of yourself, making everything one, this is the union that yoga creates.

Some of the Advantages of Yoga are:

Improves posture

Builds muscle strength

Boosts metabolism

Helps in lowering blood sugar

Better Cardiovascular Endurance

Increases circulation and blood flow

Improves lung function

Lowers Blood Pressure

Lowers Respiratory Rates

Stimulation of Organs

Increased Immunity

Improvement in Gastrointestinal Health

Higher Levels of pain Tolerance

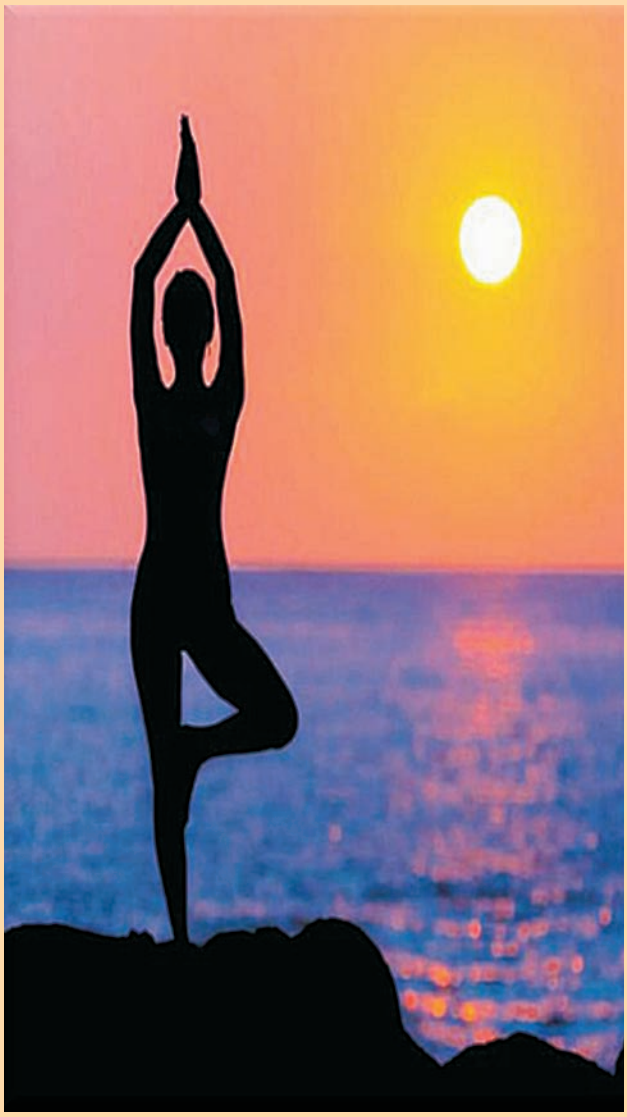
Keeps diseases at bay

Reduces Stress. Brings Tranquility and Calmness

Uplifts your mood and fights Depression

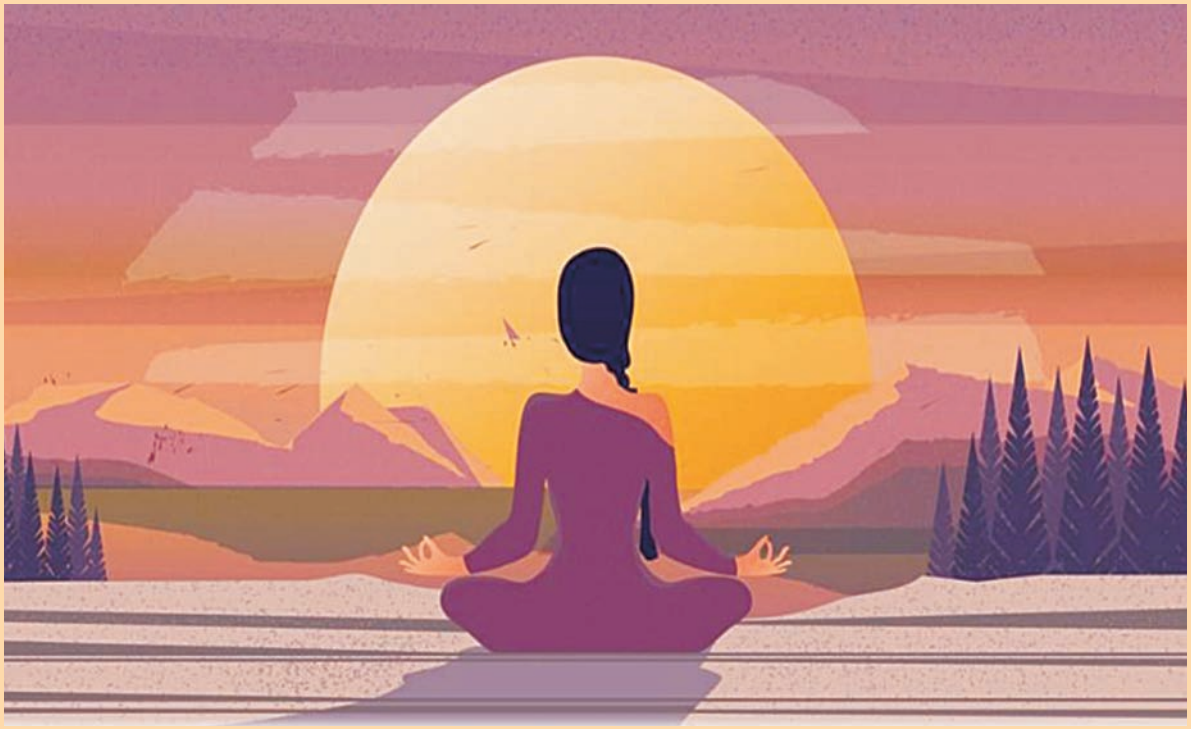
Increases Self-esteem

Helps you sleep better



Yoga transforms your life and broadens your horizons in ways you can never imagine. It is absolutely worth trying!

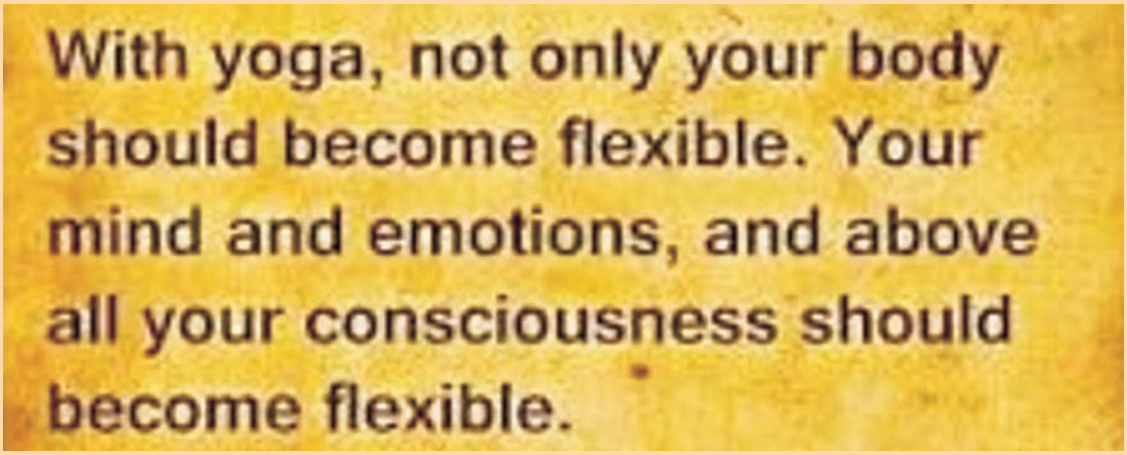
Benefits of Meditation



As the day comes to a close, we sometimes start to feel worse instead of feeling satisfied. Work has become stressful for everyone. At the end of the day, there's a lot of monkey chatter going on in our minds and self-criticism is at an all time high. It makes you irritable and it is contagious. One unhappy stressed person in the family will cause tensions and tempers to rise amongst everyone. With so much to take in every day, how does one still manage to remain sane and mindful? Well, the people who are succeeding in their lives while being content and mindful, will tell you that meditation is the answer.

'Meditation is good for you, You must try it', is something you might have heard often, over the past couple of years. While we all intuitively know the benefits of practicing meditation on a daily basis, it takes much more motivation to begin practicing. Its important to know what Meditation will not do for you. Meditation will not mend broken relationships, it will not make you any happier or behave better. This practice of silent retreat is all about taking your time and space, so as to process everything that is going on in your life.

You get more Focused Do you ever find it hard to concentrate on your tasks at hand, no matter the situation you're in? A lack of focus is one of the primary concerns of many people all over the world and meditation helps you to fix this issue. Moreover, meditation helps in fighting stress and anxiety, two of the main causes of distress and discomfort among people today.



You become Self-Disciplined Consistent meditation helps people develop a sense of self-confidence, self-acceptance and self-awareness. Meditation helps people become more conscious and aware of oneself and awareness.

You become Healthier According to multiple studies, meditation has been found to help people recover quickly from acute respiratory infections and also reduced risks of a heart attack/ stroke.

Brings Clarity and Peace of Mind Meditation helps people come to terms with their shortcomings. This self-awareness helps people achieve peace of mind and brings clarity to the events in one's life.

Sharpens the Mind and Consciousness With improved concentration and focus skills, meditation helps people improve memory retention and recall. Meditation has been found to help people manage ADHD, improve cognitive skills, decision making and an overall better information processing ability.

How to Start Practicing Meditation?

To Meditate means to simply concentrate on your breathing, while sitting in a relaxed environment and focusing on one single thing. It can be anything that you choose. Sitting silently, focusing on your breath and trying to calm the mind is what meditation is all about.

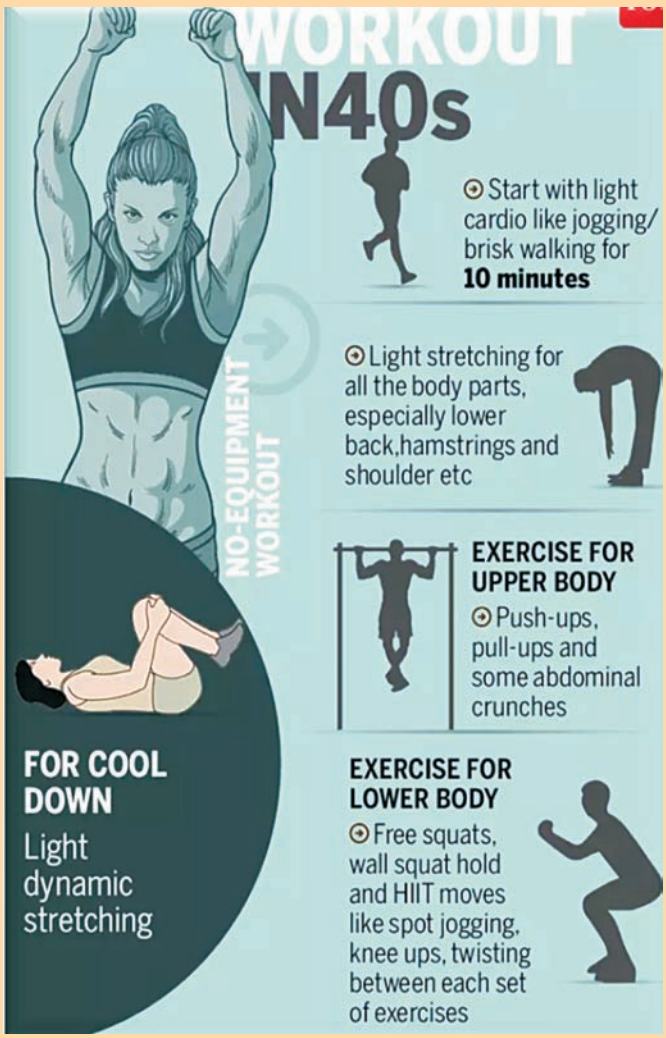
Overdoing meditation may not help you more. Remember the mantra, 'Less is more'. Practicing meditation, even for three to five minutes a day, is much better than doing it for two hours straight one day and thereafter not practicing it for the entire week.

Start small. Take ten minutes out of your busy schedule daily to connect with yourself. It is usually tougher in the beginning to sit idle and concentrate on your breathing. But over time, it becomes easy and you start seeing the benefits soon.

Going to the Gym and Exercising



Ladies, we as women need to be doubly concerned about our fitness. On average, we have to put in 20 minutes of extra exercise to burn the same amount of calories as men. Why? Blame it on our difference in metabolism. Moreover, fat deposition in our bodies is different from that of men. As all the deposited fat gets converted in the form of cellulite, it is not easy to burn it off that easily. So, our exercise regimen needs to be designed in such a manner that we are able to sweat it out in an easy and effective manner. Fitness for women is an absolute must.



The exercises we do should be able to change the metabolism of the body. These exercises should also be able to strengthen our core muscle groups, which in turn will increase muscle strength. Most of us do not know what exercises to pick. Moreover, there are so many of them. But there is something you ought to know – *most of the exercises that are touted on the internet or in fashion magazines are fads and ineffective in the long run*. Some of them exist just because they have been marketed in a better way than others.

If you enter your forties with an inactive lifestyle, blood pressure, poor heart health and osteoporosis are some of the health issues that can affect you. While no amount of exercising can stop the process of ageing, it can indeed be slowed down with an active lifestyle. Once you turn forty, you lose one per cent muscle every year. The right types of exercises can prevent this muscle loss, delay (or even prevent) cognitive decline, which is a common result of aging.

Flexibility Working on flexibility gets imperative after 40. Fitness experts suggest active isolated stretches wherein you hold every stretch for two seconds, improving circulation and elasticity.

Cardio If you are new to workout, do not directly jump on to doing long hours of cardio exercises that require extreme endurance training. More than 45 minutes of cardio is not recommended for people above 40.

High Intensity Interval Training Extreme intensity workout for short durations, 3-4 times a week is better than long hours of workouts. HIIT also enables production of HGH (Human Growth Hormone), preventing muscle loss. But remember, you must allow your body to recover.

Core Workout Exercises that engage your core like planks, work on inner muscles and its benefits go a long way. Various plank variations can be done for better balance and posture. Make sure, you hold the plank right. Many studies suggest that weight training is essential to fuel bone and muscle strength in the body as these two tend to become weak due to inactivity and can lead to lethargy.

To summarise, there are basically three kinds of exercises that make you injury-proof and can benefit our body in a variety of ways: Stretching exercises like Surya Namaskar and Virabhadrasana for muscles; Strength training like free squats, pushups and planks to increase your core strength. It manages three major body parts: chest, back and legs; Cardio exercises like brisk walking and jogging to encourage healthy heart movement.

Knowing Our Bodies and Awareness of Its Ailments

There's a common expression that goes, prevention is better than cure. This proverb is most commonly used to encourage people to take proactive health measures; by going for regular tests and checkups to identify any potential infections as early as possible. With awareness, we can prevent many illnesses. However, there are some diseases which are not in one's control, but if with awareness, we catch the disease early, we can get them treated.

"Take care of your body.
It's the only place
you have to live."

- by Jim Rohn

The following paragraphs will describe some common issues that affect the female body. The symptoms are listed out, so that we all become more aware. The important thing is to understand our bodies and not to neglect them at anytime. Be constantly aware and learn to recognise any changes and deviations in your own body. Medical expertise and doctors are available to all Sanginis at all our Air Force Stations. Do not hesitate to seek the intervention of a doctor at the earliest.

Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome [PCOS]

Polycystic ovarian syndrome is a hormone disorder, in which ovaries produce too many male hormones, called androgens, which affects ovulation and progesterone production. Common symptoms include irregular periods, weight gain and hair growth in unusual places like your face, neck, or abdomen (known as hirsutism), thinning hair on your scalp, acne on your face, chest, or back, and infertility issues. The syndrome does not typically cause pain, as the fluid-filled sacs in the ovaries are tiny and do not stretch the ovary to cause pain.

The common Signs and Symptoms of Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) are:-

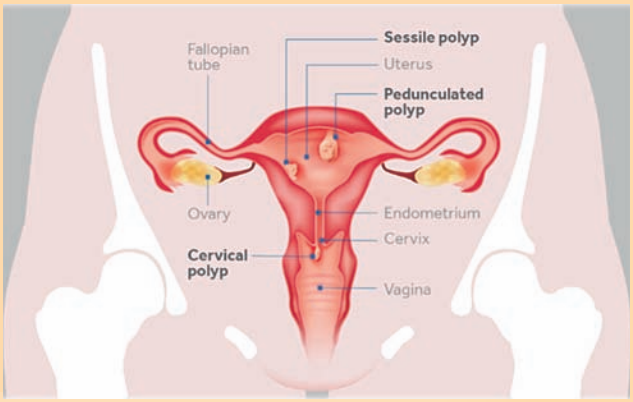
- Irregular menstrual periods. Menstrual disorders can include absent periods, periods that occur infrequently or too frequently, heavy periods, or unpredictable periods.
- Infertility PCOS is one of the most common causes of female infertility.
- Obesity Up to 80% of women with PCOS are obese.
- Excess hair growth on the face, chest, abdomen, or upper thighs. This condition, called hirsutism, affects more than 70% of women with PCOS.
- Severe acne or acne that occurs after adolescence and does not respond to usual treatments.
- Oily skin.
- Patches of thickened, velvety, darkened skin called acanthosis nigricans.
- Multiple small cysts on the ovaries.

What Causes PCOS?

While the cause of PCOS is not known, genetics are thought to play a role and high levels of insulin and androgens exacerbate the problem. Excess insulin, which can lead to weight gain, is thought to boost androgen production in the ovaries. Therefore, if you have a family history of PCOS, or if you are struggling with obesity or diabetes, your chances of developing the disorder are higher.

Uterine Polyps

Uterine polyps or endometrial polyps are formed due to abnormal growth in the innermost layer (endometrium) of the uterus. They are noncancerous (benign), but may cause complications associated with menstruation and fertility. In very few cases, these polyps can turn to be cancerous (pre-cancerous). Uterine polyps are usually round or oval and range in size ranging from a few millimeters to a few centimeters, or larger. Most of the polyps are small and less than half an inch wide. These polyps are extended into the uterus and are attached with the help of a thin stalk or a large base. They usually appear single or in a group.



In most women, uterine polyps do not show any signs and symptoms, but few women may experience light bleeding or spotting. Signs and symptoms of Uterine polyps are:-

- Irregular menstrual bleeding
- Mid-cycle bleeding
- Excessively heavy menstrual periods
- Vaginal bleeding after menopause

You May Be At a Risk of Developing Uterine Polyps If You are:-

- In perimenopausal or postmenopausal phase
- Having high blood pressure
- Overweight or obese
- On tamoxifen medication, a treatment for breast cancer
- Infertility

A diagnosis of polyp is often suggested by a transvaginal ultrasound, but the confirmation of the diagnosis can only be made by hysteroscopy. Hysteroscopy also allows biopsies to be taken in order to confirm the benign or malignant nature of the polyp. Fibroids occur when smooth muscles cells in the wall of the uterus multiply and form a mass. Women with fibroids usually have more than one, but it's possible to have just a single fibroid. Most are found in or near the uterus, including in the cervix. You cannot prevent this condition. The only way of self-management is to have regular gynecological checkups.

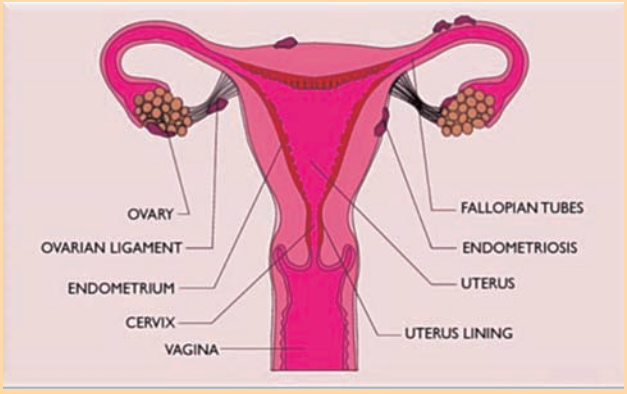
Different types of surgical procedures are used to treat fibroids. These treatments can remove the entire uterus, the uterine lining or just the fibroids themselves. Available surgical treatments include:-

- **Myomectomy** This is a conservative surgical approach that removes the fibroids and leaves the uterus intact. This may allow a future pregnancy.
- **Uterine Fibroid Embolisation** This procedure cuts off the blood supply to the fibroids by blocking the arteries that deliver blood to the fibroid. It is unclear how this procedure may affect the ability to get pregnant in the future.
- **Hysterectomy** The entire uterus is removed. Pregnancy is not possible after hysterectomy.
- **Uterine Fibroids** Uterine fibroids are extremely common, but their effect on each woman's life is unique. Doctors say that, "Women should know that many options are available to treat fibroids, and that these options can significantly improve their quality of life". So don't worry too much, just get treated in time.

Endometriosis

Endometriosis is a condition in which the lining of the uterus, known as the endometrium, grows outside the uterus or on other areas such as the ovaries, the outer surface of the uterus, the fallopian tubes, the vagina, the cervix, or even on the bladder or rectum.

With a typical menstrual cycle, your endometrium thickens, breaks down, bleeds, and exits your body through the uterus each month. Endometrial growths do the same, except they remain trapped in the body, unable to exit through the uterus. Endometrial growths can expand and cause inflammation.
The most common symptoms are:-



- Immensely painful periods
- Pelvic and lower back pain
- Pain during or after intercourse
- Pain while using the bathroom
- Excessive bleeding
- Digestive problems
- Infertility

It is possible for women to have both disorders. There are no known cures for PCOS or Endometriosis, but both are treatable and the symptoms can be managed once correctly diagnosed. Lifestyle changes, like improving your exercise routine and limiting

foods that contain soy, gluten, dairy, and sugar can make a big difference. An additional option for treatment of both conditions is hormonal birth control.

For PCOS, hormonal birth control can help level hormones and therefore regulate periods. This prevents abnormal build-up of the endometrial lining, which can increase the risk of uterine cancer. Boosting certain hormone levels helps decrease androgen production which can manage several PCOS symptoms including abnormal bleeding, hirsutism, and acne.

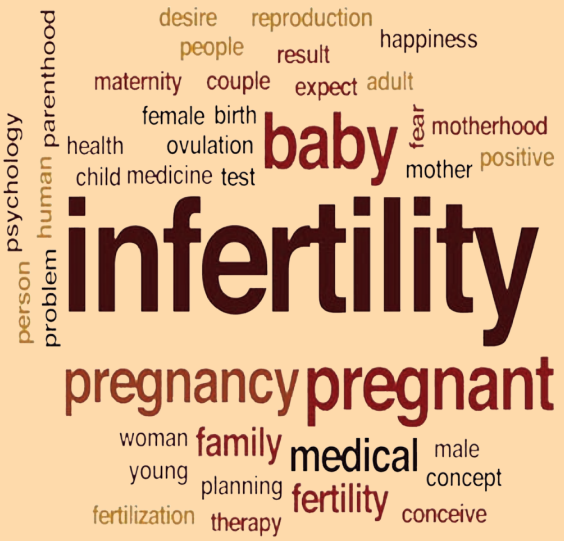
For Endometriosis, you can take an extended-cycle pill, meaning you would only have a few periods a year, or a continuous-cycle pill, eliminating your period completely. A hormonal intrauterine device (IUD) is another option. It can be inserted to help reduce pain and bleeding. For severe endometriosis, a total hysterectomy and removal of both ovaries can be an option, but it's generally the last line of defense.

Combined hormonal birth control pills can be used for long-term treatment in women with PCOS who do not wish to become pregnant. Combined hormonal pills contain both estrogen and progestin. These birth control pills regulate the menstrual cycle and reduce hirsutism (excessive hair growth) and acne by decreasing androgen levels. They decrease the risk of endometrial cancer.

The Take-away. Don't take the pain lying down! If any women in your family suffer from PCOS or endometriosis, or if you have any concerning symptoms, get yourself checked out. Pain should never interfere with your daily activities.

Infertility

It is widely admitted that a modern lifestyle, rapid urbanisation, hormonal changes (especially in prolactin levels), job pressures, stress, pollution, and postponing parenthood are main reasons for infertility in India. Lifestyle diseases such as obesity and diabetes lead to infertility. Moreover, sexually transmitted infections, polycystic ovarian syndrome, fibroids, and genital TB are other new areas of concern among women. The average age of menopause in India is 47 years as against 52 years in the developed world. This sharp decline in fertility can also be attributed to environmental toxins.



Infertility is defined as unsuccessful efforts at conception for 12 months in women under 35 years old, or six months in women 35

years old and up. It is a myth that the problem is gender-specific. In reality, both male and female partners can be equally responsible for the inability to conceive a child. Both male and female infertility is common in India. While female infertility accounts for 40-50% of infertility cases, male infertility accounts for 30-40% of infertility cases. There is a tendency among couples to avoid tests and visiting infertility specialists. Only genuine cases need to be referred for advanced infertility treatments like IVF, egg donation or surrogacy.

Infertility can be caused by many factors. Some of these are structural issues while others are lifestyle related. The top causes of female infertility include:-

- Birth defects
- Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS)
- Endometriosis
- Damaged or blocked fallopian tubes
- Ovulation disorders
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Stress

The top causes of male infertility include:-

- Pituitary gland disorders
- Gonad disorders
- Low sperm count
- Poor quality sperm

Lifestyle factors that can influence fertility include smoking, alcohol consumption, exercise and obesity. In many cases of infertility, simply addressing these factors can help a couple conceive.

Myths and Taboos about Infertility Because infertility is not talked about openly, it is associated with several myths. For example, most people still assume that infertility is only a female problem. A common myth about infertility is that it can be relieved by relaxing and is only a psychological issue. The truth is that while stress does aggravate infertility, it is not the sole cause of this condition.

Infertility treatment does not have a 100% success rate. In many cases, even after several cycles of IVF, a couple may be unable to get pregnant. The success rate of IVF treatment is inversely proportional to the woman's age. However, this cannot be a reason to give up on the thought of having a family.

The IAF provides many facilities to its Air Warriors. Our hospitals in Delhi, Pune, Bengaluru have the latest medical equipment to deal with Infertility. Air Warriors can apply for postings to these places, to obtain treatment from Armed Forces Hospitals.

Adoption Sometimes, things may not work out at all. Don't lose heart. You can still be parents. In our country, there are thousands of children who need loving parents. Adoption of these children is always an option. In this way, a child will get a loving and caring home and the couple become parents. All adoptions in India are required to follow the procedure set out by the Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA) of the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India.

Breast Cancer

Despite innovations in treatment and various awareness campaigns, the risks associated with breast cancer, continue to rise. While it is becoming an increasing threat to women, one thing we all can do, is a self-examination. Checking for lumps, discolouration and fluid discharge and taking immediate actions, can really make a big difference.

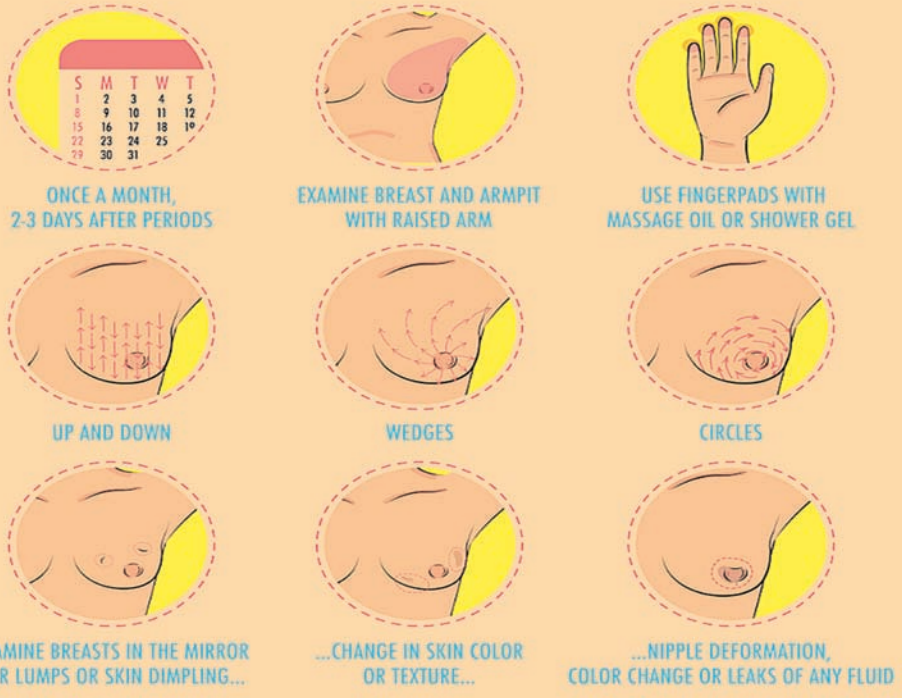
A Step-By-Step Guide to Breast Self-Examination (SE) Doctors believe that Mammography and SE are the best ways to detecting breast cancer at its nascent stages. If possible one should plan to have a mammogram once every 5 years at least from the age of 40 onwards. A self-examination means familiarising your senses with your breasts-including its size, tissues, shapes, position, and any bumps. Here's how you can go about it:-

Step 1: Do a Visual Analysis

Self Examination (SE) should be performed by every woman after her 30s, preferably once every month, approximately 10 days after her periods, when the breasts are least tender or lumpy. For this, stand in front of the mirror to visually examine your breasts and memorise the smallest of details. The first step calls for examining any visual or physical changes in the breast. No two women have identical breasts. So, it is important to feel the size, shape, and position of your breasts and sense the normalities. Check if your breasts have any superficial marks, redness, scarring, puckering, or white spots.

Step 2: Examine your Breasts

Examine your breasts using the first four fingers of your hand. The purpose of this step is to touch and feel your body to scan the size, consistency, texture, and location–and to pinpoint any tenderness. This can even help in finding any mobile or fixed lump in your breasts. For this, lie on your back on a flat surface. Then, with your fingers flat, compress the breast tissue while running your fingers around the areola in a concentric circular motion. During this step, ensure that you follow a streamlined pattern to be certain that you cover the entire breast. You can start from the nipple and move outwards to reach the outer edge.



Step 3: Examine your Nipples

Squeeze your nipples to check for any discharge. Any kind of fluid–clear, milky, yellowish, or bloody–excreted from the breasts can be dangerous. In case you notice any discharge, reach out to your doctor immediately. While, not all discharges are cancerous; some of them can arise due to a benign condition. It is better to be safe than sorry. Also, check if your nipple is inverted.

Step 4: Check Beyond Your Breasts

Raise your arms and check for lumps or other abnormalities near the armpits. Breast cancer can spread to the axillary lymph nodes in the armpits; it usually spreads there first beyond the breast tissue.

What to do if You find a Lump?

While it is natural to have lumps and bumps in your breasts, it is necessary to do a regular breast self-examination, which will help you to spot the abnormal ones. If you do find a lump, remember to:-

- Stay calm and not panic. Panicking will not help you in any way.
- Visit your doctor immediately. Even if you feel slight changes in your breasts, it is important to talk to your doctor and get a professional opinion.
- Schedule an appointment for breast cancer screening, which includes mammography and ultrasound, to get a clear picture of your breast health.

Now that you know, do not forget to do a self-check once every month. And while you're at it, encourage your friends as well. Remember, early detection makes all the difference.

Cervical Cancer

Cervical cancer is a form of cancer that affects the cells of the cervix, the lower part of the uterus that connects to the vagina. It is caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV), a virus that is generally transmitted through sexual contact.

The body's immune system is known to prevent the HPV virus from causing any severe harm. However, the virus can survive for many years, and in some women, it can cause cells of the cervix to become cancerous. In India, cervical cancer occupies a formidable share of the total cancer cases in women. Unfortunately, cervical cancer does not cause any noticeable symptoms in its initial stages.

Cervical Cancer can be Prevented There exist vaccines today that protect women against cervical cancer. Such vaccines are available for girls and women between 9 to 26 years. The HPV vaccine is known to be most effective when given to girls before they become sexually active. Cervical cancer can also be caught early with the help of regular screenings.

When should you consult a doctor?

- Abnormal vaginal bleeding: Bleeding and spotting between periods, unusually longer or heavier periods, bleeding after menopause.
- Unusual or excessive vaginal discharge with foul smell.
- Vaginal bleeding after having sexual intercourse.
- Pain in the lower abdomen or pelvic pain.
- Pain during sexual intercourse.



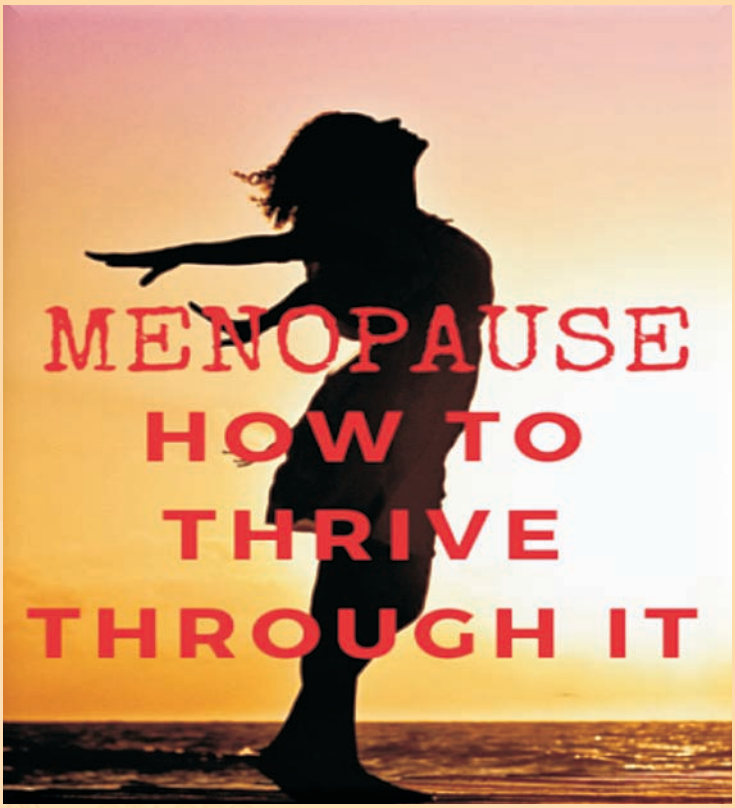
The presence of these signs and symptoms does not imply that you are suffering from cancer. However, if you have one or more of these, it is advisable to consult your doctor. He will probably prescribe a Pap smear test. A Pap smear (or Pap test) is a quick, painless procedure that screens for cervical cancer. It involves examining cells taken from the cervix under a microscope. The test doesn't diagnose cancer, but rather looks for abnormal cervical changes (cervical dysplasia)—

precancerous or cancerous cells that could indicate cancer. If any are found, further testing, such as a colposcopy or biopsy, will be done in order to diagnose cancer.

If you've had a hysterectomy, you still may need to have Pap tests. This depends on why you had the hysterectomy, whether your cervix was removed (because cervical cells can remain at the top of the vagina after surgery), and if you have a history of moderate to severe cervical changes or cervical cancer. In such cases you should continue to have Pap tests for 20 years after your surgery.

Menopause

Menopause is a time of significant changes in a woman's life. All women experience symptoms related to the dramatic hormonal changes of menopause. They usually begin in the period of menopausal transition, that is; the time leading up to the final menstrual period, and typically persist post-menopause. They include hot flashes, sexual changes, psychological and mood changes, poor quality sleep and rapidly ageing skin.



Menopausal symptoms can significantly and negatively impact on a woman's well-being and quality of life. However, there are many ways to manage menopausal symptoms by leading a simple lifestyle with pharmaceutical and herbal remedies. It's a time of significant change, but it is possible to live well with menopause.

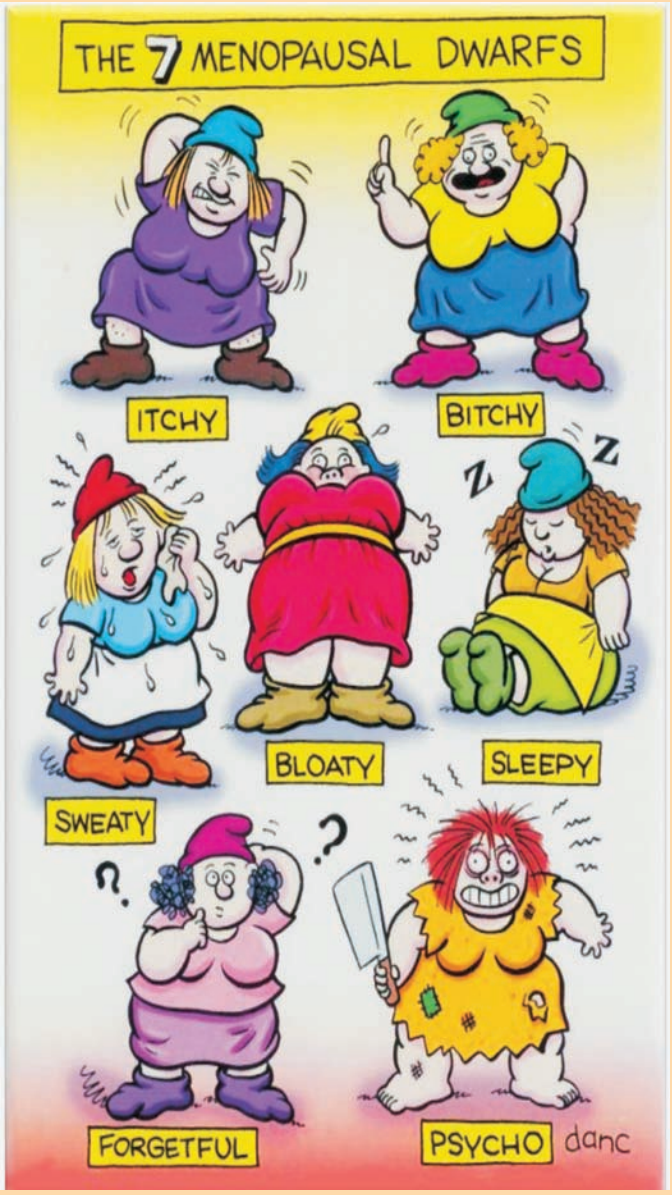
Hot flashes and vaginal dryness are the two symptoms, most frequently linked with menopause. Other symptoms associated with menopause include sleep disturbances, urinary complaints, sexual dysfunction, mood changes, and quality of life. However, these symptoms don't consistently correlate with the hormone changes seen with menopause transition.

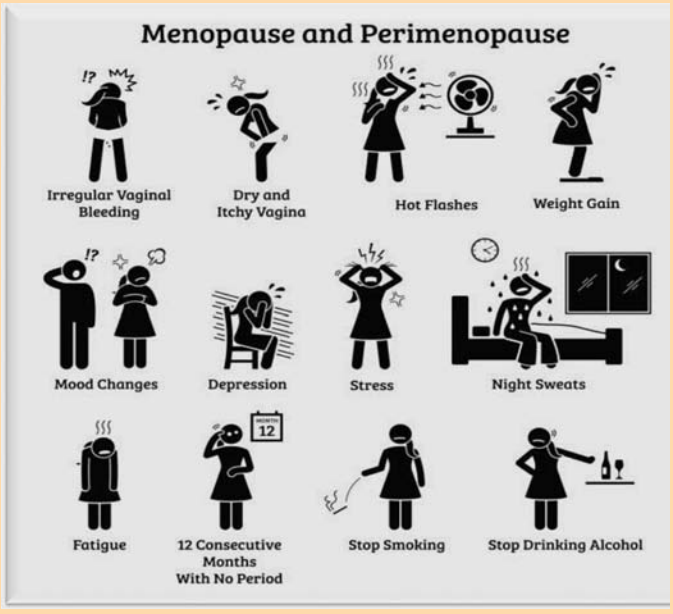
Hot Flashes Also called vasomotor symptoms, hot flashes may begin in perimenopause, or they may not start until after the last menstrual period has occurred. On average, they last three to five years and are usually worse during the year following the last menstrual period.

Treating Hot Flashes Depending on their severity and how much they affect your day-to-day activities, we can take several steps to help alleviate hot flashes. Some possible triggers of hot flashes are hot beverages, spicy food, warm air temperatures, stressful situations, alcohol, caffeine, and some medications. If you can identify your own triggers, you may be able to avoid some hot flashes. Try to sleep in a cool room. Some women find deep-breathing exercises helpful. Short-term hormone therapy is quite effective in treating hot flashes. Doctors try to prescribe the lowest dose of estrogen, that effectively relieves symptoms.

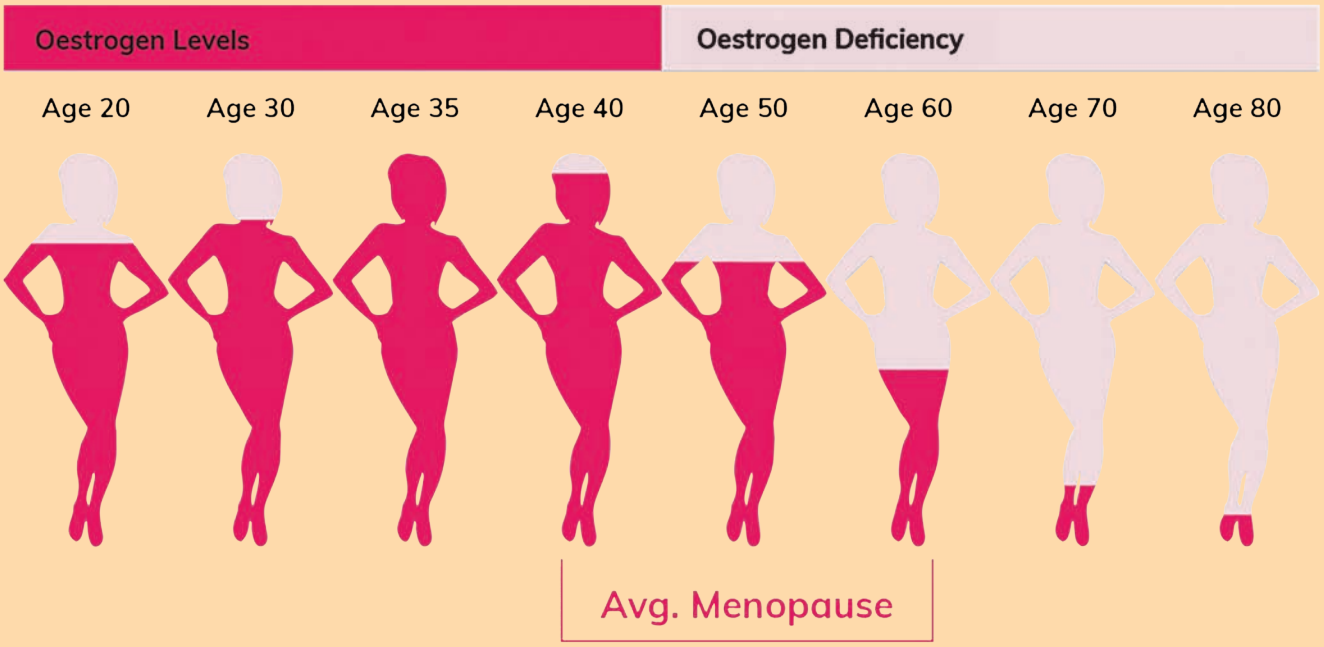
Irregular Uterine Bleeding A pear-shaped organ about the size of a fist, your uterus is made mostly of muscle. As you move through perimenopause, your uterus shrinks slightly, and the inner layer of tissue, or endometrium, no longer builds up and sheds on a predictable monthly cycle. Changes in the menstrual cycle are a hallmark of perimenopause, so determining what's normal and what isn't can be a challenge for women.

Irregular Periods In the early stages, your menstrual cycle may shorten, with periods beginning sooner than you expect. Bleeding may become lighter or heavier. Going for three months without a period suggests menopause is at hand, although more than 20% of women have regular periods again after such a break. For women whose periods become very irregular, prolonged, or heavy, doctors often prescribe birth control pills, which can make periods lighter and more regular.





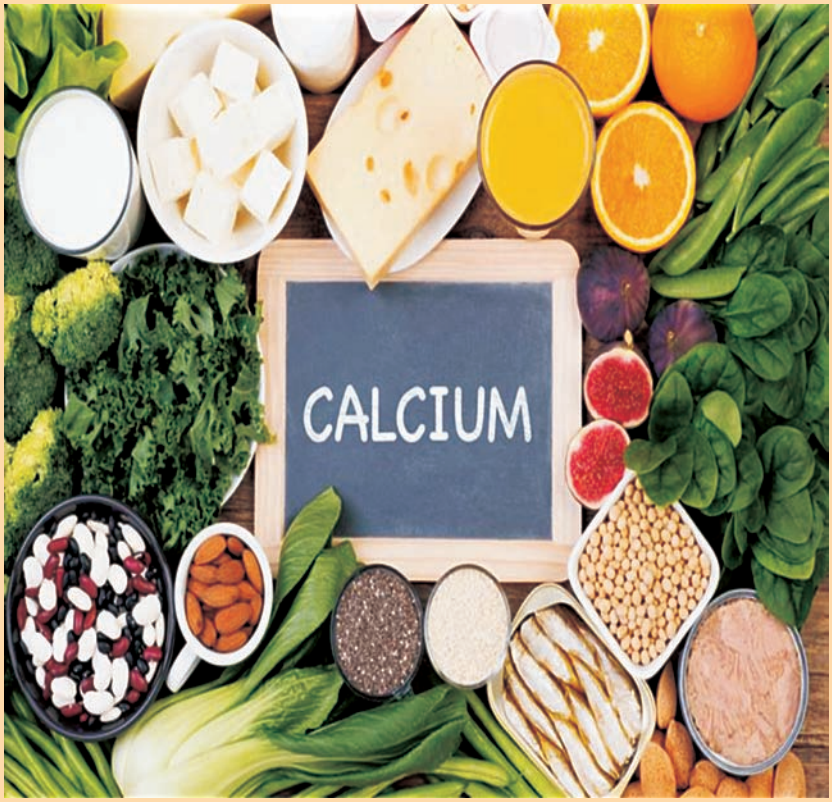
Other Physical and Mental Changes Some common midlife changes that are often attributed to menopause are not necessarily related to the fluctuating or decreasing hormone levels of menopause. The four most commonly reported changes include mood changes and depression; insomnia or other sleep problems; cognitive or memory problems; and decline in sexual desire, function, or both. Other physical changes that crop up in the middle years include weight gain, urinary incontinence, heart palpitations, dry skin and hair, and headaches. These can be treated by taking care of yourself by getting more sleep, exercising regularly, and using stress-control methods can all help even out your mood. Staying physically active may be the best way.



Focusing on a Healthy Mind and Body Menopause is a time of significant changes which often have a negative impact on quality of life. However, it is possible to live well with menopause. A healthy body and mind are the basis of a happy, healthy menopause. Lifestyle and behavioural changes such as healthy eating, exercise and avoiding harmful substances form the basis of any strategy to live well with menopause. Social measures such as socialising, participating in leisure activities, thinking positively about life and one's menopausal body and seeking support when needed, play an important role in making menopause a positive new phase of life rather than a negative event.

Osteoporosis : The Role of Calcium and Vitamin D

Osteoporosis is a condition characterised by a decrease in the density of bone thus decreasing its strength and resulting in fragile bones. This leads to porous bones, making them like a sponge. This disorder leads to the weakening of bones resulting in fractures.



Women have a lower bone density than men, so they need a regular source of Calcium and Vitamin-D to keep their bones sturdy. Generally women lose one-fourth of their bone density between the ages of 20-80. With growing age, the essential nutrients present in the body, like Iron, Vitamin B12, Vitamin D and Calcium, start decreasing and as women reach menopause, their ovaries stop producing Estrogen, a hormone which promotes the formation of bone-forming cells. As the levels of Estrogen drop, the absorption of Calcium by the bones also reduces, leading to weaker bones.

WHO's Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) of Calcium for adults is 500 mg per day, which increases to 1000 mg per day during pregnancy and lactation. For the absorption of Calcium in the bones, your body needs Vitamin D. Calcium cannot be absorbed by the body in the absence of Vitamin D. Vitamin D is difficult to get from food. Luckily, it is produced by the skin after exposure to sunlight. Just going outside during the day twice a week for 10-15 minutes will do the trick. However, use of sunscreen, blocks the production of Vitamin D. Long-term Calcium deficiencies have serious effects on the body. Some symptoms of calcium deficiency are:-

- Confusion or memory loss
- Muscle spasm or cramps
- Numbness and tingling in hands and feet
- Weak and brittle nails
- Easy fracture of bones
- Depressions and hallucinations
- Slower Hair growth
- Seizures
- Rickets in children and Osteoporosis in adults

Osteoporosis, Pregnancy and Lactation. During pregnancy, 2-3% of maternal calcium is transferred to foetus, mostly in second and third trimester. Because of high demand of Calcium, there is decrease in bone mineral density by nearly 3%. During lactation, 300-400 mg of Calcium is transferred per day through breast milk.

One also has to take a Magnesium rich diet, to make enough of a hormone called C*alcitonin* which draws Calcium out of the blood and back into the bones, preventing bone loss in women. So yes, Calcium, Magnesium and Vitamin D supplements would be required if you fail to meet the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) of Calcium through your diet. Avoid excessive salt, coffee, tea (caffeine) and alcohol as they reduce the ability of the body to absorb Calcium and cause most of it to get expelled out in the urine. The main dietary sources of Calcium are:-

- Dairy products, Milk, Paneer, Dahi, Cheese
- Dark green vegetables like Palak (Spinach),Broccoli, Kale, Turnips
- Soya beans, Til seeds (Sesame)
- Fortified Soyamilk
- Fortified Orange juice



Testing for Osteoporosis. A doctor can measure Calcium levels in many ways. He could do a Calcium blood test, which gives certain results. However the best method is through a Bone Mineral Density (BMD) test, which measures how much calcium and other types of minerals are in an area of your bone. The most common and accurate way uses a Dual-Energy X-Ray Absorptiometry (DEXA) scan. The test hardly takes 10 minutes and is not at all painful. There are two types of DEXA scans:-

- **Central DEXA --** You lie on a soft table. The scanner passes over your lower spine and hip. In most cases, you do not need to undress. This scan is the best test to predict your risk for fractures, especially of the hip.
- **Peripheral DEXA (p-DEXA) --** These smaller and portable machines measure the bone density in your wrist, fingers, leg, or heel.

These tests are arranged at AF Stations for the Sanginis, through AFWWA in liaison with SMC. So if you are above 30 and are present in the station, do not miss the opportunity to get this test done for yourself.



Living in Air Force Stations, we are all blessed to be close to nature. We are extremely fortunate to be able to listen to the many birds, hear the rustling of leafs in the trees and feel the morning fresh breeze against our face. These stations provide us with all amenities and opportunities to lead a healthy life. It is for us to take advantage of all these facilities.

There is a saying that, “Charity begins at home”. Therefore, while taking care of our family’s health, every Sangini should also take care of her own health. Always remember that in order to make others happy, we should first be happy from within. Thus with a healthy body and healthy mind, each Sangini can nurture a healthy family. Let us all come together and follow the AFWWA leadership to make ours and the Air Force families, healthier and stronger.

“When we talk about families.... No one is without troubles, without personal hardships and genuine challenges. That fact may not be obvious because most people don't advertise their woes and heartaches. But nobody, not even the purest heart, escapes life without suffering battle scars..... Smile Anyway”.

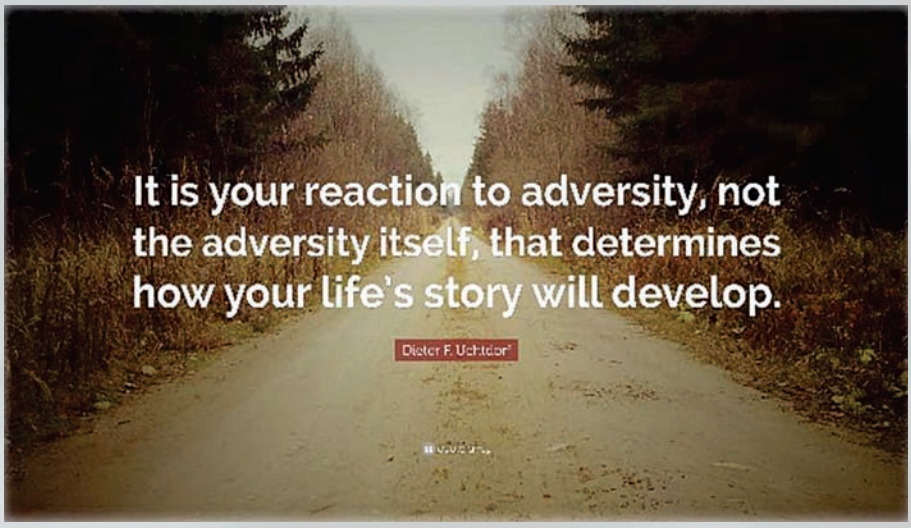
--Richelle E. Goodrich

SANGINI- A RESILIENT WARRIOR

Married to a Man in Blue..
You are privileged
Lord has chosen you
As you are one in a million…
He has embodied you with strength and beauty...
Knowing that you too will have to fulfill the duty...
Which world may not know,
But silently you would
Hold back firm
When he surges ahead and says
Dear, "Service before self"

Life is a combination of puzzles as you solve one you face another, each has its level of difficulties. Some situations are immensely difficult and we call them adversity or hardships. The lessons of life are best learnt in adverse scenarios. It teaches us how to be strong and stay motivated during difficult moments. Everything in life is transitory- joys, sorrows, failures, successes. Life may seem like a paradise at one point and turn out to be hell at another. Change is part of life, we have to accept the reality and not brood over it.

Life in Armed Forces has its share of challenges due to service commitments. "Service before Self", to withhold this motto in its true sense can call for several sacrifices. As a better half of an Air warrior you have to learn to see everything in a positive aspect. Take every adversity as an opportunity to thrive and make the most of it. The age old mantra still holds good **"Prepare for the worst, but hope for the best."**



Challenges of Life

"Beautiful October morning, with a little chill in the air and clear blue skies. By the time I finished my cup of tea, he was ready to leave for the office or should I say to quench his adrenaline rush for skydiving. "All the best for your school inspection visit. I'll take care of the kids. Goodbye". With these assuring words he drove away.

Later that morning, as I sat in my office, dialing his number again and again, a strong intuition struck me that something is not OK. Just then the news came that one of our officers has met with an accident during routine para.

Few minutes later my phone rang. It was his Chief Instructor and he asked, Ma'am where are you? "For me the time froze and I knew it's HIM".

This is an extract from a Sangini's life. The day she met with the greatest adversity of her life. With husband fighting for his life and two kids (8 and 5 years old), what followed were the endless days of 'What ifs….?' and sleepless nights.

"That which doesn't kill us makes us stronger"



It is a reality of life that, it is full of ups and downs, victories and losses and threats and opportunities. Same is the case with Air Force life. As we live as a nuclear family, we are happy as long as all family members are hale and hearty. The moment we face difficulties or adversities, the real test of strength begins.

No matter how strong, intelligent, fun loving, god fearing we are, we all experience these heart wrenching moments. It could be physical, mental, emotional, social, financial or spiritual adversity. They are all interconnected, woven into a web.

Ailments of Spouse/ Sangini

A healthy life is all that one desires. No one would choose a life of unwanted limitations willingly. At the same time, no one is perfect. We grew up learning health is wealth, but we forget that we are mortal beings. At any juncture of life we may face certain medical challenges, from heart disease, to cancer, to stroke and other physical limitations. When we face such adversities we are shaken up and tend to get emotionally affected which is the truth of life. Here is a saga of a resilient Sangini who never surrendered to the adversity that dawned on her-

My life was all happy, until, it started playing unfair with me. I started losing all my maiden family members, one by one.....

Taking blow after blow will not be easy for anyone, and definitely not for me. Although I tried my best to face the challenges with all my strength but as destined, doctors diagnosed me with Post Traumatic Nervous Disorder which caused the right side of my body to be completely paralysed. I even lost the control of my bladder. As a result of my pathetic medical condition, I was confined to bed. I could no longer do my work. I could no longer attend to my own routines, let alone taking care of my children. This was my condition, not for days or months, but for six long years. I could not figure out where my life was going or rather not going. I was emotionally broken. Most people would have given up hope, but for me, it was the last thing to lose. I still had my mother with me who was managing everything all by herself. I had two of my own beautiful jewels of seven and nine years old each. Most importantly, I had the anchor of my life, my husband. But above all the Sanginis played a very important role in helping me overcome my challenges in a positive manner. They were and still are my constant source of encouragement and true motivators.

"The most beautiful people we have known are those who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss, and have found their way out of those depths".

With this indomitable spirit she participated in Mrs. South India beauty queen pageant where she was awarded the title "Mrs. South India beauty queen DIVA".

This insight shows that with grit, determination a good support system who always give you the hope, courage and much needed love to forge ahead one can fight any adversity.



Whether it's the Sangini or your spouse such difficult moments can dawn on anyone without any prior notice. The least we can do is always be proactive whether it's about our own health or our family's.

Yet another Sangini, her husband met with an accident just three months after their wedding. He suffered severe spinal injuries, the Sangini faced the reality with grit and resilience. She stood by him through all thick and thin. Now her husband is the first Indian Paraplegic rower, selected by Rowing Federation of India. He represents our country in several prestigious Championships across the world and has won several awards and accolades.

Such examples from our fraternity show that, "Every adversity has the seed of an equivalent or greater benefit." We have to hold ourselves strong and move ahead with a firm belief in ourselves, our family and our fraternity.

In case of any such emergency always seek help. The Station Medicare Center refers such cases to our specialty hospitals such as Command Hospital/Research & Referral Hospital. All these hospitals have state of art facility and treatment. But amidst these challenging times a Sangini must have a positive approach.

Grants From AFWWA for Wives of Medically Boarded Out Air Warriors

Medical Assistance.	**Category**	**Grant**	(a) One time grant to wives of medically boarded out AF personnel on medical grounds not attributable to service. (b) Paid by AFWWA (L) of last serving Unit / Station [₹7500/- each will be reimbursed by respective AFWWA (R) and AFWWA].
	OFFICERS	15,000/-	
	AIRMEN	15,000/-	
	NCs(E)	15,000/-	

Pressures of Parenting Children with Special Needs

Parenting is no walk in the park. What works for one child may not apply to another and it is imperative for us to alternate our role as good cop/bad cop for the child to understand the fragility or urgency of a situation. The equation gets even more complex when the child in question is differently abled. The foremost struggle is to come to terms with the reality of having such a child. The question “Why me.... Why my kid?” rears its ugly head every other unexpected moment and the challenge becomes even more difficult when the other kid in the family is normal. It’s important to push the questions away from your mind as self-pity is the greatest obstacle when dealing with the situation. Coping with the harsh truth is a necessity and the sooner you come to terms with it, the better. Isolating or denying this issue aggravates the situation.

Disability can be of Various Forms Physical, sensory, mental, cognitive or intellectual, and the degree of support differently-abled people require may vary depending upon the severity of the situation.

Emotional trauma, psychological concerns, physical, social and financial pressures are but the tip of the iceberg with regards to the multitude of situations that may arise in the context of raising such children.

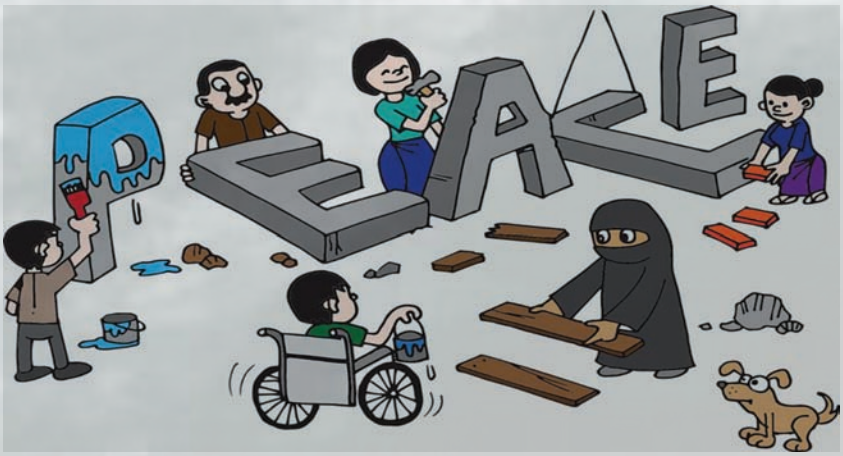
Parental Approach It is easier said than done. Talking out aloud about this with family and friends helps mitigate the stress. The nature of disability being different in different cases. The parents should strive to attain a sense of balance in tackling the changed

circumstances in their lives, as losing focus aggravates negativity all around. While the support of loved ones is truly a blessing, tackling the inner demons is a quest that has to be overcome individually. It takes time, but remember, nurturing anger or constantly cribbing about it is not going to help you, your child or your family. So, be aware of your strengths, the physical and financial support you can muster and work towards improving the situation.

The way we deal with it goes a long way in bringing up these children. It is highly possible that with the right support, timely help and intervention, the child may be raised to have a confident personality and to act independently. Also, with support from family and friends, the stress of raising a differently-abled child can be reduced to a large extent.

We have numerous examples amongst our Sanginis who have accepted this challenge in their life and moved ahead. They have taken the opportunities and benefits provided by the organisation. They have nurtured their children in the best possible way and enabled them to acquire vocational skills.

As a parent, you have to be strong and adapt new techniques to help your kid with special needs. Grow with them!



Though, as parents, both mother and father know their responsibilities well and provide utmost care and support to the child, Air Force on its part has also provided dedicated schools and medical facilities for such children at various places. The service positively considers such requirements for postings and attachments of Air Warriors who have differently abled children.

AFWWA has instituted several UMEED ASHA KIRAN SCHOOLS and scholarships for Special Children (*For detailed reference please refer Chapter "**A Guiding beacon**"*).

Handling of Situations of Discomfort

If a Sangini notices any behavioural change in her husband such as indifferent towards family, seemingly stressed due to some debts, loans, other financial liabilities or overspending the resources and indulging in gambling or addicted to liquor or prohibited

substances etc. which are causing discomfort in the family she must address it immediately. She should report the same to the AOC/CO of the Stn/Unit where the husband is posted. There may also be situations of discomfort a Sangini may face due to family discords, disharmony, domestic violence etc. If the matter is not resolved between husband and wife, a Sangini may:-

- Approach the spouse of CO/Section Cdr of the husband, as it's always easier for a woman to confide her grievances in another woman. She can shed her inhibition and narrate her problem with ease. Further she should be guided to seek professional help if matter doesn't get resolved.
- Consult, psychological counsellors at the Station.
- Seek interview with President AFWWA (Local).

Separation from Husband

The nuances of the Armed Forces are such that a Sangini has to face separation from her husband, which may be due to:-

- **Prolonged TD/Attachment** Movements of her husband on prolonged TDs/Attachment for long periods often mandate compulsory need for coping up to stay alone with children and taking care of elderly parents. This, in the hindsight, enables her to be independent and take charge at the home front.
- **Frequent Moves on Postings** will include move to far flung places with limited infrastructure, change of schools for children, instability of her own career etc. But she has to stand tall and firm, learn to see it as an opportunity. Amidst these uncertainties she should carve out a niche for herself and encourage her children to see the good side of such transitions. While normally, these commitments are fairly planned, at the same time, there will always be situations of immediate moves for service duties without any notice.

Therefore, a Sangini needs to be prepared and cater for such contingencies.

Points of Relevance:

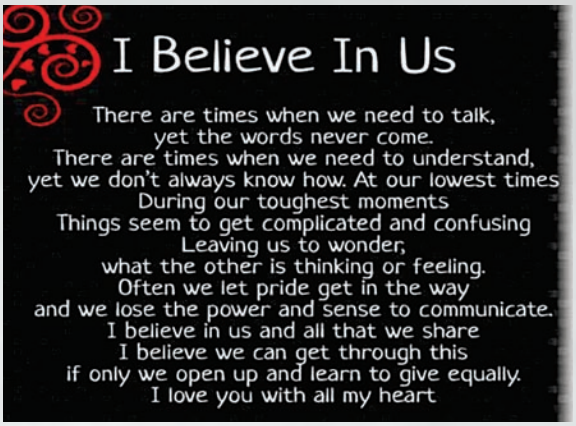
- It is appropriate to have requisite amount of cash/ debit card.
- CSD smart card.
- Utilities and medicines at home to cater for such situations.
- It is advisable to have knowledge of surroundings, shopping complexes, URC, SMC, schools, railway station and airport etc. to be independent and confident.

The true secret to a successful life in Armed Forces is the ability to embrace adversity as a chance to change ourselves and our situation.

Challenges of Marriage

"A great marriage is not when the 'perfect couple' comes together. It is when an imperfect couple learns to enjoy their differences."

– Dave Meurer



Marriage is a vocation to holiness- a wonderful journey. It is full of ups and downs, adventures and incredible memories with the person you love. But sharing your life with another person can be a challenge, as it not only takes work, commitment, and love but also respect to be truly happy and successful. No couple does this perfectly, and everyone needs help when love feels strained and the going gets tough. It can be hard to imagine that you and your spouse might not live happily ever after. Though vows are taken to live happily together but sometimes bonds go sour, cracks develop which deepens with time and become so grave that we have to part ways.



In case of separation or divorce, besides emotional issues, financial hardships, insecurity and uncertainty are most common. As crucial emotional support and financial protection lapses and assets of husband remain with him, it may lead to very severe hardships. Obtaining of maintenance or alimony through courts is a time consuming and financially expensive process.

However, unlike any civil organisations, only Armed Forces provide for legal provisions within service for grant of maintenance from the pay and allowances of an Air Warrior towards maintenance of his dependant wife and children. A Sangini can seek maintenance by representing to the AOC/ CO of the Stn/Unit where her husband is posted *(For further details refer Chapter "**A Commitment of a lifetime**").*

Facing the Demise of Spouse

'Lost love'

I assembled your remains
and kissed your bones,
breathed your ashes;
and embraced your limbs,
watched you changing
from flesh to dying embers,
your sweet voice altering
to crackling fires,
the agony grew tearing me apart,
And then I saw you
standing beside me,
holding my hand
watching yourself burn,
I sobbed on your shoulders,
and you wiped my tears,
We both cried for
Different things,
I – for my lost love
You – for your lost country …



Life has its share of uncertainties. No one has any say on the cycle of life and death. Though we all know we are mortal beings but accepting this grave reality is very heart wrenching. Therefore it's always better to prepare oneself in the times of prosperity as adversity can knock at our door anytime. As Sanginis it should be our endeavour to develop ourselves both vocationally/academically. We are all bestowed with several innate qualities which can be honed over a period of time and be used to reap benefits. Always participate in all the activities and workshops conducted in Air Force Station, it enables you to stay connected with the fraternity while enriching your knowledge to an extent. Acquired skills and knowledge never go waste, it stands in good stead during adverse hours. The more you grow from within, the more bold and confident you will feel as a person, ready to accept and face whatever challenges life throws at you.

One of our Sangini showed exemplary courage when her husband who was commanding a Station died in the line of duty. As she was highly qualified, instead of brooding over the mishap, she stood tall and picked up a job within a fortnight of the accident. Now she is a successful banker.

In another case, a Sangini lost her husband; but she didn't lose hope and is now a commissioned Officer herself.

There are several such Sanginis amongst us who have stood undeterred and carved a niche for themselves which is truly heartwarming. In case of unfortunate loss of life of the husband due to any reason, all financial burden solely comes on the Sangini, with the added responsibility of managing assets of the husband, social responsibilities, settling in civil life and bringing up of the children. All these should be shouldered courageously. As the life in services is challenging, it is extremely important for the Sanginis to not only know about the service policies of monetary entitlements and facilities from Air Force but also about financial resources and asset holdings of the husband.

Assistance Provided by IAF to Next-of-Kin on Demise of Spouse

Parent Unit

- Air fare/Rail fare Travelling Allowances entitlement for NOK.
- Final TA claim (Fare of authorised class of travel from Non-effective Station to Home town for all dependants + Luggage + Car/Scooter).
- Living Out Ration Allowance (LORA) as applicable entitlement of the deceased.

Non-Effective Unit (Last Unit)

- Children Education Allowance (CEAs) Claim up to class XII for two children (for three children in case the second delivery was blessed with twin babies).
- Air fare/Rail fare TA Entitlement for relatives for carrying mortal remains to Hometown.

Directorate of Air Veteran (DAV)

- Pending Enquiry Award (PEA) of 30% of last Basic Pay drawn with applicable DA (Adjustable with original family pension after issue of PPO, Payable to only the widow of the deceased).
- Individual Running Ledger Account Balance as per IRLA closing balance.
- Leave encashment.
- Death Cum Retirement Gratuity amount Calculated as per length of service.
- Enhanced family pension or Ordinary family pension as applicable.

Air Force Central Account Office (AFCAO)

- Provident Fund balance (closing balance + interest).
- Deposit Linked Insurance Scheme amount as per Provident Fund closing balance (Max Rs. 60,000/-).

Air Force Association (AFA)

- Air Force Association (Ex-Gratia) Rs. 10,000/- on request / intimation from NOK.

To facilitate easy reimbursement of various financial assistance, Nominee in coordination with spouse (Serving Air Warrior) should ensure possession of few important documents. These are as follows:-

- List of all the contact details which may be of assistance during distress (Nearest AF Stn, AFWWA HQ/Regional/Local, Comd HQ, Air HQ, P&S Unit, Directorate of Air veteran, AFGIS, IAFBA, AF Association etc).
- Ink signed attested copy of Pan Card, Aadhar Card, Nomination Form, Front page of bank passbook and Joint account details.
- Filled specimen of application form (Form C) for final payment of Balance in provident fund account and all relevant claim forms(Receipt of Death Link Insurance, Contingent bill for payment of AFPPF Balance, Contingent bill for payment of Leave, Receipt for Individual running ledger account balance, NEFT/ RTGS form along with cancelled cheque, Copy of Nomination document etc).
- In case of demise of pensioner for the assistance in filling pension claim forms may contact the last unit of deceased Air Warrior, NCs(E) or Directorate of Air Veteran III (family pension).

It is also advised to take necessary assistance by regularly visiting sites such as www.iafpensioners.gov.in, www.pcdapension.nic.in, www.ksb.gov.in, www.echs.gov.in, www.desw.gov.in and www.indianairforce.nic.in/iafba for getting latest update and policies & procedure in vogue.

Demise of Spouse Post Retirement

A widow of an air veteran can contact Adjutant of the Unit where her husband was last posted and Directorate of Air Veterans (DAV), Subroto Park, New Delhi-10 and seek help. If the husband is a pensioner, DAV will facilitate transfer of pension benefits to the spouse. In addition, AFWWA also has schemes to support such widows.

Welfare Schemes

Various welfare schemes are also available through Indian Air Force Benevolent Association (IAFBA), MIAF Arjan Singh Trust, and Air Force Association. Information about these schemes are available online on respective web pages. Some of the important schemes are as follows: -

- Monthly assistance to the wife of deceased personnel for 08 years by IAFBA. A yearly receipt to IAFBA of having received the money is mandatory for the payment to continue. Check details on www.iafba@yahoo.com.
- 'GARIMA' scheme for last rites of air veteran. The amount is disbursed by the nearest Unit which needs to be intimated.
- Various scholarships for wards of veterans / widows for schools & professional course levels.

Air Force Group Insurance Scheme (AFGIS)

- Air Force Group Insurance Scheme as per latest insurance plan applicable to the deceased.
- A subsidy of Rs. 4 lakh is shared by AFGIS / IAFBA / AFWWA & Command Welfare Fund in the ratio of 60 : 20 : 10 : 10 for acquiring dwelling unit of AFNHB / AWHO / Civil Housing Agencies (including private builders) as well as for self construction to bereaved wife of AF Personnel who joined service on or after 01.04. 2016.

Indian Air Force Benevolent Association (IAFBA)

Various schemes provided by IAFBA in addition to the above are tabulated below:-

Scheme	Officers	Airmen	NCs(E)	Conditions
Missing personnel Grant (Amount is paid to wife / children/ parents up to maximum of 12 months).	10000/-pm	10000/-pm	10000/-pm	The Station/ Unit will release the grant from SI Fund, only with the approval of IAFBA. The amount paid would later be recovered from the pay if the Air Warrior returns to duty or adjusted against the FAS Rehabilitation Grant for presumed death cases.
Ex-Gratia Grant to relieve distress and acute financial hardship to AF personnel.	Amount decided by the Executive committee			
Platinum Jubilee Orphan Children Education Scheme. It's a monthly Education grant given towards reimbursement of expenses for class KG to XII and college education Reimbursement of College fee for pursuing Professional Courses	5000/-pm to 13000/-pm (Rates wef 01 Oct 19) Upto 7 Lakh (Rates wef 01 Oct 19)			Only for children of Air Warriors who died while in service.

Scheme	Officers	Airmen	NCs(E)	Conditions
Scholarship for wards of deceased IAF Personnel (New Scheme) Scholarship is extended to all the applicants from KG to Post Graduation Level, without merit being a consideration and the applicant should have secured minimum pass marks as per the Institution/ Board/ University etc.	KG to VIII IX to X XI to XII Under Graduate Under Graduate (Professional) Post Graduate Post Graduate (Professional) Special child (disability < 70%)		15,000/- pa 20,000/- pa 25,000/-pa 30,000/- pa 45,000/- pa 40,000/- pa 50,000/- pa 25,000/- pa	
Grant for purchase of Trade to instrument to bereaved wives **OR** Grant for Purchase of Laptop/ Computer (Death in Harness cases only). Scheme initiated wef Oct 18. **OR**	25000/- (Max) 50000/- (Max)	25000/- (Max) 50000/- (Max)	25000/- (Max) 50000/- (Max)	Consolidated scheme for widows of Air Warriors (Death in Service/ Death after Retirement). For widow's self employment like Beauty parlour, STD booth, Cyber café, Embroidery, Tailoring etc (Bills to be produced) **OR**

Scheme	Officers	Airmen	NCs(E)	Conditions
Reimbursement of Tuition fees for Schooling/ Graduation/ PG/ Vocational / Professional/ doctorate courses bereaved wives (Lump sum)	75000/- (Max)	75000/- (Max)	75000/- (Max)	Consolidated scheme for widows of Air Warriors (Death in Service/ Death after Retirement). For widow's self employment like Beauty parlour, STD booth, Cyber café, Embroidery, Tailoring etc (Bills to be produced). **Or** To widow for professional/ vocational training room institute identified by AFWWA. On successful completion of the course, fee paid will be reimbursed to the lady on receipt of course completion certificate and fee receipt. In case of self-training, the amount eligible will be 50% if the age of widow is more than 50 yrs.

Scheme	Officers	Airmen	NCs(E)	Conditions
Grant for daughter's marriage (Lump sum) (After death of Air Warrior)	Death in Service – 1,00,000/- Death after Retirement - 50,000/-			Death in service (DIS) : No minimum service required. Death after retirement (DAR): 20 years of service wef Apr 12. Medically Boarded Out cases with pension
FAS-97 FAS-Rehabilitation Grant for death on or after 01 Apr 97 Death in Service **For 15 yrs**	2500/-pm	1900/-pm	1900/- pm	On remarriage of widow, the grant will be transferred to children and to parents (first to mother), if there are no eligible children.
Death after Retirement **For 8 yrs** In case of retirement prior to 31 Mar 97 and died after 01 Apr 97, minimum 20 yrs service required. (only for members of FAS)	1900/- pm	1300/- pm	1300/- pm	MBO case (prior to 1997) with pensionable service will be eligible. No change in other conditions.
FAS-09 Applicable for AF Personnel who are in service on 01 Apr 09 or later and have contributed revised rates of FAS				

Scheme	Officers	Airmen	NCs(E)	Conditions
Death in Service (No service criteria) **For 15 yrs**	5000/- pm	3800/- pm	3800/- pm	On remarriage of widow, the grant will be transferred to children and to parents (first to mother), if there are no eligible children. MBO cases with less than 10 yrs will be eligible. No change in other conditions.
Death after Retirement (Min 10 yrs service required) **For 8 yrs**	3800/- pm	2500/-pm	2500/-pm	
Lump sum Grant with less than 10 yrs of service **Service less than 5 yrs** **Service 5 to 10 yrs**	30000/- 60000/-	20000/- 40000/-	20000/- 40000/-	
FAS-20 (New Scheme wef 01 Jan 20) Applicable to AF personnel who are in service on or after 01 Jan 20 and have contributed in revised rates	10,000/- pm			On remarriage of widow, the grant will be transferred to children and to parents (first to mother), if there are no eligible children. MBO cases with less than 10 yrs will be eligible. No change in other conditions.

Scheme	Officers	Airmen	NCs(E)	Conditions
Death in Service (No service criteria) **For 15 yrs**	10000/-pm	8000/-pm	8000/-pm	
Death after Retirement (Min 10 yrs service required) **For 8 yrs**	8000/- pm	6000/- pm	6000/- pm	
Lump Sum Death Grant to widows of pensioners having less than 20 yrs of service discharged prior to Apr 09 and are not covered under Family Assistance Scheme (FAS)	30000/-	20000/-	20000/-	
	(Rates wef 01 Oct 19)			
Monthly Grant Pending award of family pension (bereaved wives of medically boarded out Officers/Airmen/ NCs(E)).	5000/-pm	4000/-pm	4000/-pm	In case the Air Warrior expires before finalisation of the disability pension/pension, the grant will be extended to the widow pending finalisation of pension in her name subject to a maximum period of six months.

Scheme	Officers	Airmen	NCs(E)	Conditions
A scheme named 'GARIMA' for all air veterans had been launched on 26 Mar 13. Under the scheme, a grant of ₹10,000/- is paid to the widow/ NOK with an aim of ensuring decent last rites of the deceased air veteran. To ensure timely last rites, grant is initially paid by the SI of the nearest AF Unit to the widow/ NOK and subsequently reimbursed by IAFBA to the SI of the unit.	10000/-	10000/-	10000/-	On the demise of the AF personnel, wife/ NOK will approach the nearest AF Unit/ Station for the said grant.

In addition to schemes enumerated above, AFWWA also gives certain grants to widows of deceased Air Warriors and wives of Air Warriors missing from work place Following are the details:-

Grants from AFWWA for Veernaris/Sanginis (Death/Missing While in Service)

Type of Grant	Frequency of Remittance	Amount Per Annum
Ex-Gratia Grant to Widows	One Time	30,000/-
Wedding Grant to one child of Widows	One Time	25,000/-
Rehabilitation grant to Widows of NCs(E)	One Time	15,000/-
Financial assistance to Sanginis whose spouse is missing from work place	One Time	25,000/-

Educational Scholarship from AFWWA to Children of Deceased Air Warrior (Both During and Post Service)

Type of Scholarship	Rate in (Rs)		Eligibility Criteria
Educational Scholarships for one Child of deceased personnel	**Monthly**	**Annually**	• Mother of child should be life member of AFWWA. • Period of scholarship is for six years (72 installment) or till completion of studies whichever is earlier. • Professional course for the award of educational scholarship for under graduates are B.E/B.Tech, BDS,MBBS, integrated MBA, integrated B.Ed, integrated MCA & PG Course such as M.TECH, MBA, MD, MDS, LLM, M.Ed, MCA
School going (Day Scholar)	1,250/-	15,000/-	
School going (Boarder)	1,500/-	18,000/-	
College going (Day Scholar)	1,500/-	18,000/-	
College going (Boarder)	2,000/-	24,000/-	
Professional course (Day Scholar)	2,000/-	24,000/-	
Professional course (Boarder)	2,500/-	30,000/-	

The demise of a committed and dedicated Air Warrior is not only a loss to the family but a massive loss to the IAF. Though, Armed Forces are designed to reciprocate immediately, the personal loss to family can't be compensated. During these tough times, it is a moral responsibility to extend all the support to NoKs / Dependants to claim all the benefits extended by various agencies of IAF/AFWWA on time.

Check List

A comprehensive check list compiled by AFWWA in assisting NoKs (Airmen & NCs(E) towards knowing the entitlements is as follows:-

- For immediate assistance, call-up Station Adjutant / Orderly Officer of the concerned or nearest Air Force Station.
- If the call is not materialising, pass the message to the Guard Room / Main Gate of the nearest Air Force Station.
- If both above are not possible due to the long distance from Air Force Station, call-up nearest civil police for onward message to nearest Air Force Unit /Air Force Police Headquarters.
- The concerned Air Force Station usually nominates an Air Warrior as a single point of contact (SPOC) for any assistance. Therefore, NOK should maintain contact with him for any help and support such as death certificate, Pay Pension Order etc.
- The following immediate financial assistance will be provided by the nearest Air Force Station:-
    - Funeral expense of Rs. 9,000/- will be paid by Accts Section.
    - Immediate death relief of Rs. 80,000/- will be paid by PSI (adjustable from AFGIS benefits).
    - AFWWA grant of Rs. 30,000/- will be paid by AFWWA (L) .
    - An amount from public fund of Rs. 8,000/- will be paid by PSI (adjustable from AFPPF balance).
- For the ease of settlement and to claim various assistance (financial or otherwise) NOK may opt for retaining the Govt accommodation. NOK can apply for a Government accommodation for 2 Years at either last unit or anywhere in India where Air Force station exists within 2 months from the

date of death (only rent and allied charges to be paid by NOK on monthly or quarterly basis).

- The details of various agencies involved in reimbursement of death benefits to NOK have already been discussed before in this chapter.

Employment Opportunity to Widows and their Dependants

- Employment opportunity is available for the widows and their dependants, whose husband/father died while in service. They have to apply to the last Unit served by their husband/father for compassionate ground appointments under indigent circumstances. Chances are very less in Government jobs, since very few vacancies are available in a year. Still every year more than 200 AFWWA members apply for such jobs. JDPC at Air HQs considers their candidature for three times only and offers these vacancies to most needy families in term of financial conditions.

- There are other avenues available through NPF and AFWWA ventures. For these types of jobs they are required to approach local administration for suitable guidance and necessary help to secure employment at local level, according to their qualifications and availability of vacancy, if any.

- Widows are also eligible for commissioning in Ground Duty Branches of Indian Air Force (SSC). The eligibility conditions are as given in page no. 19.

There is relaxation of age up to 04 years for the widows in certain Branches, which is published in the advertisements or can be ascertained from **www.careerairforce.nic.in** or Publicity Cell, Air Headquarters, 'DISHA' Motilal Nehru Marg, New Delhi-110011. Tele: 011-23010231 Exten-7080. Telefax: 01123017918, E-mail: **career_iaf@bol.net.in**.

Ways to Cope with Challenges



It is said, "The flower that blooms in adversity is the rarest and most beautiful of all".

Amidst adverse conditions some people can bounce back and find a way to overcome misfortune and defeat. For one, they don't allow themselves to become overwhelmed with negative emotions or thoughts. They take time to process what they've been through, then they resume moving forward. Their mental fortitude lifts them up to seek opportunities instead of dwelling in despair. There are no firm guidelines to handling adversity, but then people share their journey of success through several setbacks/adversities and sieving through them we found few points of relevance:

- **Be Mentally Prepared**

"I am prepared for the worst, but hope for the best." More than 185 years after these words were written by British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, they still inspire. Being prepared means thinking through the worst-case scenarios and considering how you would react.

What would your plan of action be if a crisis hits? Running through potential disasters on a regular basis builds mental strength and flexibility to overcome mishaps or catastrophes in real life. It doesn't mean you should dwell on negative possibilities. But if the worst happens, having thought through how you'd react will keep you from panicking and help you stay calm and rational. It won't feel so frightening because you won't be caught completely off guard.

- **Take Stock of All You've been Through Already**

They say what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. The hardships and misfortunes you've been through can give you confidence that you're capable of handling whatever comes your way. You've been in tough times before. How did you overcome adversity that time? What got you through? Your past experiences can help you find your inner strength and resilience.

Author Maya Angelou said during an interview, “We may encounter many defeats, but we must not be defeated. It may even be necessary to encounter the defeat, so that we can know who we are. So that we can see...

Oh, that happened, and I rose. I did get knocked down flat in front of the whole world, and I rose. I didn't run away -- I rose right where I'd been knocked down...

And then that's how you get to know yourself”.

- **Adversity Offers Valuable Insights**

Adversity is a great teacher. This is your chance to gain valuable insights; to truly learn from your mistakes so you’ll have a better chance of success next time. However, you will have to engage in some self reflection. Where and how did things go wrong?

Take a hard look at your planning. Did you miss something? Consider your preparations. Were you ready for the challenges ahead? Look at your execution. Did you put in consistent effort? Focus on areas that are within your control and ask yourself what more can you do next time.

- **Make Peace With the Situation**

Now is not the time to blame others for what happened. Moping around and feeling sorry for yourself will do you no good, and can actually sabotage your ability to come up with solutions and next step forward.

It’s important that you consider what mistakes or missteps you might have made.

Spend time processing what you could have done differently and take responsibility for your actions. Make peace with what happened. Accept the situation for what it is, and then move on.

As Steve Jobs said, “Sometimes when you innovate, you make mistakes. It’s best to admit them quickly and get on with improving your other innovations”.

- **Embrace Adversity as a Chance for Opportunity**

Life is full of adversity and struggle. It’s through difficult times that we learn the most important lessons in life and build resilience. Adversity often presents opportunities we might otherwise miss. Now is your chance to dig deep and face this obstacle head on. Hard times present you with the chance to change course, reinvent yourself or find an undiscovered bridge that will get you over this hurdle.

- **Refuse to Give Up**

To overcome a crisis, you need to fully commit to finding a way forward. You must approach the problem determined and motivated. This will create a mindset where you

look at adversity as something to be overcome and solved, not passively accepted. Sometimes dilemmas and obstacles are a chance to create alternative paths, to dream bigger, to push forward and take even larger leaps.

- **Have a Purpose**

When life gets tough, it helps to have a crystal-clear idea of why you're doing what you're doing. If you have purpose and passion for your goals, you'll be motivated to keep pushing through until you're successful. Sometimes things happen beyond your control, and that can knock the wind out of your sails. But if you're working on something meaningful to you, you'll always find a way back to it.

When something is important to you, you'll be driven to continue pursuing your dreams. Oprah Winfrey is a great example of this. She has overcome great adversity and became a multi-billionaire doing what she loved. As she puts it: "Passion is energy. Feel the power that comes from focusing on what excites you".

- **Keep a Positive Mindset**

A healthy dose of optimism goes a long way when you're faced with a bad situation. It may seem cliché, but sometimes the darkest storm clouds really do have silver linings. It turns out that developing a positive mindset is an important coping skill when dealing with adversity.

It's true you need to be realistic and see a situation clearly, but if you constantly frame everything in a negative way, you'll only see the bad.

Try cultivating positivity and refuse to let pessimistic voices and naysayers invade your mind.

- **Believe in Your Capabilities**

People who rebound from adversity begin by believing they are capable of finding a way forward. If you feel hopeless and powerless, it's unlikely you'll find a way to be successful.

You have to have self-confidence and a strong belief in your capabilities to overcome difficult times. You have to be open minded and willing to leverage your talent, know-how and ingenuity to overcome adversity.

- **Find Your Sense of Humour**

They say laughter is the best medicine. It's your body's way of coping with stress, releasing tension and resetting your brain to be more positive. A good chuckle will release endorphins and dopamine, nature's feel-good chemicals.

It might seem unthinkable to find anything funny when you're struggling from one of life's blows. But sometimes just stepping back and seeing the humour of the situation can help lighten your mood and allow you to move forward. You may not be chuckling in the midst of a major setback, but give yourself some time. Finding your sense of humour when facing adversity is a healthy way to build resilience, no matter how bad your situation.

As a wife of an Air Warrior, mother and most importantly a woman one has to learn to stand up firm and believe that "All the adversity I've in my life, all my troubles and obstacles have strengthened me". You may not realise it when it happens, but when you look back over the years you will definitely realise it. **Our organisation too has a well-structured support system which stands by every Sangini in the hour of distress.**

- **Have Faith in Service**

  The CO of the Unit of your husband, Station Commander, President AFWWA (L), section commander, colleagues and their wives are all there to extend emotional and material support. Undoubtedly, it is one extended family you will always be thankful to. At the same time, you may find some people not being up to your expectation. You may even perceive some to be hostile to your interest. However, be assured; it is a system consisting of people below as well as people above, to balance your concerns. As a whole, this extended family will remain the pillar of your strength always.

- **Seek Help**

  There could be some instances which tend to concern you. It is incumbent upon a Sangini to know her position and responsibilities to cope up and find solutions to routine and personal matters. At the same time, when she feels that issues or problems are going out of hand and beyond her, she must seek help of President AFWWA (L), SMC, Counselor or other members of her extended family. They are always there for her.

- **Personal Support System**

  A Sangini is to have familiarity and communication with ladies and Air Warriors, who are co -located with her spouse. It is important to have the details and contact numbers of the President AFWWA (L), wives of CO, Section Cdr, WO i/c of her spouse and take their help.

  At the same time, when she is in a position of responsibility or opportunity, it is also incumbent



upon her to reach out to the new members of Air Force family as well as others who need her guidance and support. She should always be approachable and be a “Sister Sangini” whom they can look up to in their hour of crisis .This is that group of people who are our lifeline in crisis.

- **Take Care of Kids**

  Monitor the growth and development of children. Air Force camps provide for numerous opportunities for development of children. These opportunities are to be utilised. Look out for behavioral changes amongst children and assist them. Remember, you need to set an example in front of them on how to manage and overcome an adversity.

- **Self-Care**

  Always be on a look out to develop yourself. Service gives us immense opportunity all we need is a proactive mindset. Knowledge and skill never go waste so keep your personal growth trajectory on an up move.

- **Stay Positive**

  There are some people who will frighten you, give do’s and don’ts, criticise your decisions and make you feel worthless. Identify such people and ruthlessly stay away from them. A Sangini must know who all are her genuine friends and well-wishers

- **Knowledge of Assets and Liabilities**

  It is important to have knowledge of assets and liabilities of the husband, his bank accounts (it is advisable to maintain joint accounts), investments, bank locker details, insurance policies and Demat account details, if any. The Next of Kin (NoK) and ‘last WILL’ details of the husband are to be updated with her name in service as well as other records. Service benefits like AFGIS insurance amount, gratuity, provident fund etc. will automatically be transferred and credited to the account of NoK. Further, Air Force has various other assistance programmes for financial support and rehabilitation of widows of Air Warriors such as Ex-gratia payment, AFWWA pension, help for dwelling unit and vocational equipment, educational scholarships etc. These may be utilised in the hour of crisis.

Adversity in life is just a bend not the end of life. We, humans generally tend to succumb to adversity, but if we stand tall then these challenges make our life more meaningful. With positive attitude you can graciously overcome every adversity. Every cloud has a silver lining and every end has a new beginning.

If we look around we can see several success stories of women who turned adversity into opportunity. They fought all odds and became victorious like, **Usha Chaumar** from being a manual scavenger became the President of Sulabh International Social Service Organisation.

Dr. Vijayalakshmi Deshmane forced to sell vegetables to make a living, focused on education and became one of the most reputed oncologists in India.

Geeta Phogat suffered opposition and hatred from society, but made her presence felt in a sport dominated mainly by males.

Deepa Malik after being diagnosed with a spinal tumor, underwent 3 spinal surgeries and got 183 stitches between her shoulder blades in a period of 14 years. She was left paralysed from the waist down and the doctors told her that she would never walk again. She went on to become first Indian woman to win a medal in Paralympic Games**.**

The list is endless. But it always gives us immense courage as they too are just like us, made of flesh and blood only difference is they took the path that very few travel and made the difference.

Therefore Sanginis…Our endeavour should be to develop holistically and become "*Aatmanirbhar*". IAF being a very professional organisation with very competent and responsible people is always there for us in our hour of need, not only while in service but even well after retirement. All we need is to maintain good relations, keep the support systems alive and be confident about our own self.



Behind every strong Air Warrior,
there is even stronger brave heart - the Air Force Wife!!

Oh! Soldier....
You are at your career's end....
Be proud of all you have accomplished in your life.....
The wisdom you have gained ...
The family you have nurtured....
The friends you have made....
Now it's time to enjoy all the things you never had time to do when you worked.....
It's your retirement.....

HERALDING THE SECOND INNINGS



The last day of the month dawned, nice bright sunshine, birds chirping and the sweet fragrant early morning breeze flowing by as we sat and sipped our morning coffee after our usual morning walk. He was silent amidst his thoughts. I could read his mind as men can never share emotions in words. He picked up the newspaper and read out the date aloud. I knew what it meant but I kept silent as wanted it all to sink. As this day will always be etched in our mind as it's a turning point. Tomorrow's dawn will not be the same, from an active role as an Air Warrior he will move on to be an Air Veteran.

Suddenly he got up and looked at the watch, our usual time when I head to the kitchen to prepare his breakfast and he gets ready for work. "Breakfast is ready, come" I shouted. I didn't get any acknowledgment so went to check on him. He stood silently in front of the mirror dressed in his blues with his gaze fixed, I stood silently just observing him as that gaze and that silence had so much emotions filled in them. As though saying, "I am wearing you for one last time, I know it's the reality but can't accept it, as last 35years you were my second skin. My pride my passion my identity is you. How will I look good in any other hue?" On seeing me standing by the door he came up to me and hiding his emotions asked," Is the breakfast ready?" I looked at him the same strong man in blue holding back his emotions as that's what he excels in. I too smiled with tears in my eyes and without much ado we finished our breakfast. As he stepped out I made him stand and captured this moment of a lifetime. As he drove by several thoughts, emotions just came gushing by, from his holding my hand and me becoming the better half of blue.

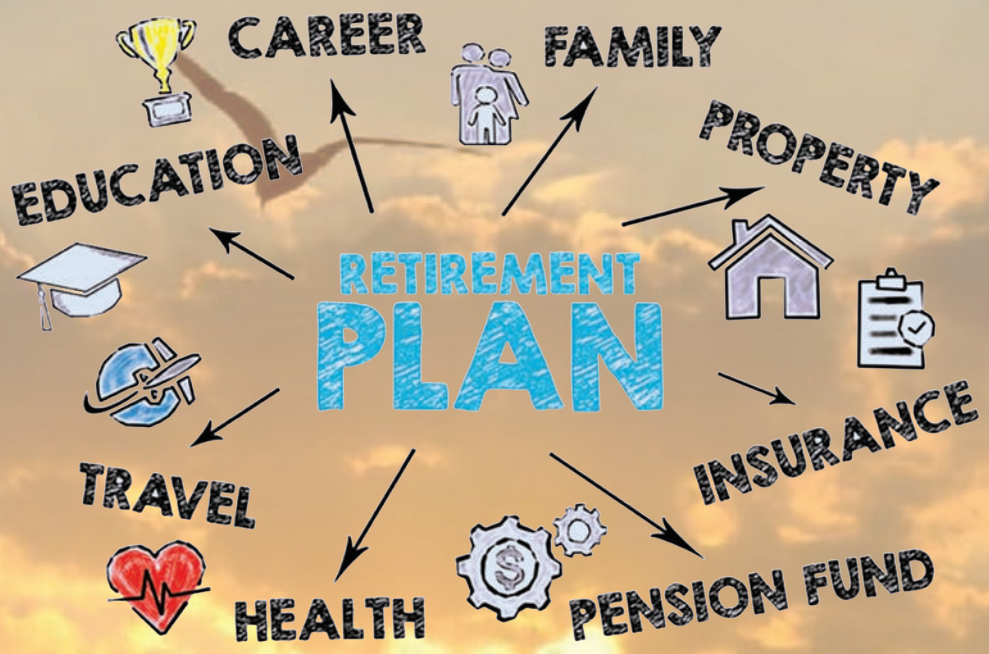
Our Life has Different Phases as Per Our Age,
Though Age is a Number as We All Say
But then the Number has Immense Importance
When it Comes to Services.....

So to be more precise an Air Warrior can serve till a stipulated age as per the service guidelines. Every journey begins to end. In services this end of journey is commonly known as “Hanging of Uniform” or “hanging of Boots” that is **RETIREMENT**. This brings forth a mixed feeling amongst both the Air Warrior and his better half.The life in Armed Forces is paced in such a manner that years roll by as we move from one place to another on postings, shouldering different responsibilities and growing in service. Ultimately the time comes when he has to relinquish this active role. Though the fraternity takes care and enables to make it a smooth transition, yet as the better half we too need to gear up for this new phase.



Planning Your Retirement

It is a misconception that you are not supposed to plan your retirement! In fact it is the biggest plan you would have to outline and draw. As this would entail scribble all that you would like to do or have after your retirement, including starting a second innings if at all. The broad category under which the plan is to be prepared is **Financial planning & Non-Financial Planning**.



Financial Planning

The Air Warriors while in service are offered many schemes which help them in their rehabilitation and settlement. These schemes facilitate an individual to plan his objectives during the span of service career and post retirement. To execute the planned objectives an individual need to know what all retirement benefits are likely to accrue to him on retirement. Non-Effective (NE) benefits available to a retiring Air Warrior and the methodology of calculation of relevant benefits are discussed subsequently. Planning finances at an early stage enables you to reap greater benefits on retirement. Brief insight into pension and other NE benefits to an Air Warrior are placed below:-

Types of Pension

- **Service Pension**
  Minimum qualifying regular service is 20 years for Permanent Commission Officers, for Airmen it is 15 years & 20 years for NCs(E).

- **Invalid Pension**
  If not eligible for Service/Disability pension and qualifying service is 10 years or more.
- **Disability Pension**
  If disability is attributable to or aggravated by military service & disability percentage is 20% or more.
- **Family Pension**
  The widow / Next-of-Kin will get Ordinary, Special or Liberalized Family Pension depending upon the circumstances of death.
- **Ex-Gratia Payment**
  One-time lump sum payment for families of Defence service personnel who die during the performance of their bonafide official duties or invalidment out.
- **Constant Attendance Allowance**
  Given on Medical Board's recommendation for 100% disabled Ex-Airmen drawing disability pension. Special Pension and Gratuity as decided by government.

Pensionary Benefits applicable to Officers

- **Superannuation, Premature Separation from Service (PSS) and Short service commission (SSC).**

NE Benefit	Quantum
Basic Pension (BP)	50% of last pay drawn (Pay in Pay Band + MSP+ (NPA as applicable)).
Commutation	$\frac{\text{50\% of Basic Pension}}{12} \times$ Age Factor* (*Commutation value defined commensurate with Age next birth day in commutation Table).
Residual Pension (Carry Home Pension)	In case opted for commutation: BP/2 + DA % as applicable on BP. In case not opted for commutation: BP+DA% as applicable.
Death-cum-retirement gratuity (DCRG)	15 days salary (Pay in Pay Band +MSP+ DA% as applicable) for each completed year of service subject to max of 16.5 months and max Amount Rs. 20,00,000/-.

Leave Encashment	Max 300 days (Pay in Pay Band + DA% at the time of retirement/ 30 X No. of days en-cashed).
IRLA Balance	As per balance, if any subject to receipt of No Demand Certificates (three numbers) are received by Office of DAV.
Balance of AFGIS survival benefit	Survival Benefits balance of saving element + interest applicable at the time of retirement + Bonus (if declared by AFGIS).
DSOP Fund	Balance available in fund at the time of retirement + Applicable rate of interest till retirement date.
Applicable to Short Service Commission Officers - All benefits as above except pensionary benefits are applicable to SSC Officers also. Over and above, following are admissible only to SSC officers leaving service.	
Terminal Gratuity (for more than 10 & less than 14 yrs of service)	½ month's Reckonable Emoluments (RE) for each six months service.
Terminal leave	Maximum 28 days

Pensionary Benefits Applicable to Airmen & NCs(E)

NE Benefit	Quantum
Basic Pension (BP)	50% of Last Pay drawn (Pay in Pay Band + MSP+ (Group X pay as applicable)).
Commutation	$\frac{\text{50\% of Basic Pension}}{12}$ x Age Factor* (*Commutation Value defined commensurate with Age next birth day in commutation Table).
Residual Pension (Carry Home Pension)	(i) In case opted for commutation: BP/2 +DA % as applicable on BP. (ii) In case not opted for commutation: BP+DA % as applicable.

Death-cum-retirement gratuity (DCRG)	15 days salary (Pay in Pay Band + DA% as applicable) for each completed year of service subject to Max of 16.5 months and max amount Rs. 20,00,000/-.
Leave Encashment	Max 300 days (Pay in Pay Band + DA% at the time of retirement/ 30 X No. of days encashed).
IRLA Balance	As per balance, if any subject to receipt of No Demand Certificates (three numbers) are received by Offfice of DAV.
Balance of AFGIS survival benefit	Survival Benefit balance of saving element+ interest applicable at the time of retirement+ Bonus (if declared by AFGIS).
AFPP Fund	Balance available in Fund at the time of retirement+ Applicable rate of interest till retirement date.

Income Tax Provisions On Pension Section 10 of Income Tax Act 1961 provides the basic exemptions of one time payments made at the time of retirement.

What is Exempted



- Commutation amount
- Gratuity
- Leave encashment
- Provident Fund
- The full monthly pension is exempted from income tax only for those pensioners who are in receipt of Disability element of pension, Gallantry awards and Liberalised Family Pension (LFP) for death in notified operations.

What is not Exempted

- The monthly pension and Family pension are not exempted from income tax.

Added Points to Ponder Regarding Financial Planning Before Retirement



- Increase in cash reserve to cover the increasing rate of inflation.
- Estimate how much money you need on retirement for various occasions like higher education of wards, marriage, house, travel etc.
- Evaluate tax consequences.
- Diversify your investment.
- Educate and keep updating yourself on these subjects.

Non-Financial Planning



The other aspect that require planning are things which revolve around finance but are equally important to give some kind of assurance and personal security for self as well as family point of view. Whether it is owning a fixed asset or current asset which can be liquidated as and when the need arises. Apart from this, sufficient medical cover is required to be planned in addition to the facility of Ex-servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS), to cater for emergency requirement. The medical insurance must have the facility for cashless medical admission as well as claim.

- **Place of Dwelling** All through the service years, Air Force takes care of our accommodation. We enjoy secured campus life embodied with all the amenities which makes our life fulfilling and comfortable. Therefore, it's always a good option to decide and invest in a property for dwelling at an early stage in service. Over a period of time it will become a lucrative investment, secondly the loan we incurred to purchase it too gets settled before retirement and lastly having a house of our own gives a sense of security. Loans to Air Warriors for purchase of dwelling Unit are:-



House Building Loan (HBL) AFGIS provides initial / subsequent HBL to serving Air Warriors for purchase / construction of house / flat, extension / renovation of house / flat, purchase of residential plot.

Modern Home Installations Loan AFGIS provides Modern Home Installation Loan to serving Air Warriors to install Modular Kitchen, Solar Heating Energy System, Rain Water Harvesting system, False ceiling (wooden / POP etc.) and Security and Safety Systems (like CCTV / fire alarm / iron grills).

- **Settlement of Children**. It's always good to plan and park funds for Children's higher education and marriage. The best case scenario is children get settled during the service of an Air Warrior. But everything in life doesn't go as per our wishes so plan for it accordingly. Therefore, IAF provides an avenue for Air Warriors to avail Educational Loan for their wards under the following categories:-



Rates of Payment (in Rs)			
Category	**Officer**	**Airmen**	**NCs(E)**
PG Course/Courses having minimum 4 yrs duration	30 Lakh		
Courses having duration less than 4 years	15 lakh		
Rate of Interest	@ 8% pa		@6% pa

- **Future Employment Prospects and Planning** Some Air Warriors choose to get re-employed, it could be as a desire to continue a routine active life or to bring about more financial stability or it could be a philanthropic approach. This too can be planned from beforehand. However, planning for the exit in time must be well thought of decision mutually consented by both. As this has its long-term impact on future settlement and financial stability. Exiting service at any time has its corresponding impact on the entitlement of Pensionary benefits. This is required to be well understood and examined before applying for exiting service.

  Qualifying service to be eligible for pension for **Officers** is 20 Yrs, **Airmen** 15 Yrs and **NCs(E)** 20 Yrs.



- **Information Related to Second Career Options** Directorate General of Resettlement (DGR) conducts various Training / Skill courses and prepares retiring / retired officers and airmen for their second career. State government have also reserved certain State Govt jobs for Ex-servicemen. Considering the need of Air Warriors and Air Veterans, IAF Placement Cell was established at Air Force Record Office in the year 2007 and now functioning as a part of DAV. The Cell assists the retired and shortly retiring Air Warriors to find a suitable job in the corporate world. The Cell maintains the data of retired and shortly retiring Air Warriors as well as of Private / Public Sector Companies and sponsors suitable candidates to them. Large number of Air Veterans are already on the pay roll of certain major companies. Soon after the establishment of the IAF Placement Cell, the first placement fair was organised in 2007 to bring employer and Air Warriors on a common platform.

Overwhelming response was received from companies as well as the Air Warriors for the fair. Inspired by the success of the placement fair, Regional Placement Cells have been established at various Command Headquarters.

Sangini, plan and prepare yourself for the second innings. Every woman is bestowed with several innate qualities which if nurtured could bring forth wonderful results.

- Therefore, it should be an endeavour on the part of the Sangini to evolve herself academically/vocationally while the spouse is in service. Try and make the most of all opportunities provided by the service. Acquired knowledge/ skills never go waste. You can pursue them post retirement and reap benefits.
- Save little from the very beginning. Play an active role in the financial management of your household. It's a wonderful habit to save, inculcate the same in your children too.
- Always try to stay fit and healthy as you are the pillar of support to the family. While in service be regular with your health checkups and try to attend the health camps /lectures organised by AFWWA from time to time. Always keep your health records up to date by maintaining a folder. Let this habit be engrained in you in such a way that you follow it even post retirement. Try to pursue a stress-free positive lifestyle.

Post-Retirement Health Services



The benevolence of the Government is always visible while one is in service. However, this benevolence is visible in a magnified manner after retirement because of pension schemes and free medical care schemes of the Govt. No private sector jobs can ever match these schemes of the Government. Defence Pension is only half the story. The other half is about free medical cover through ECHS.

ECHS (Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme)

In order to provide quality Medicare to the retirees of Armed Forces, the necessity was felt to establish a Medicare system which is comprehensive and could provide relief to Ex-servicemen similar to the one available for other Central Government employees i.e. CGHS. After due deliberations a comprehensive scheme was launched with effect from 01st April 2003 named as ECHS.

This medical cover is not only for self but also for wife, children below 25 years, handicapped child, unmarried/divorced/widowed daughter and dependant parents/ siblings for life. This medical cover is cashless and cap less i.e without any upper financial ceiling or age limit. There is no medical cover in private sector which can match ECHS in its benevolence. Thus, after retirement every officer can bank on the support of his well-earned Pension and ECHS medical cover for a comfortable and healthy life style.

With the introduction of ECHS, retired Armed Forces personnel and their dependants who were earlier entitled for treatment in only service hospitals, are now authorised medicare facilities not only in-service hospitals, but also in those civil/private hospitals which are empaneled with the ECHS.

The membership of ECHS is mandatory through onetime payment at the time of retirement. The membership is obtained by filling an online application available on https://echs.gov.in/.This is an important web site of ECHS which covers wide range of issues related to ECHS and should be referred to from time to time for enhancing awareness.

Eligibility Status for Dependants

The following qualify to be dependants of Ex-Servicemen (ESM):-

- **Parents** Father and mother of the pensioner shall be deemed to be dependant if they normally reside with the ESM pensioner, and their combined income from all sources is less than Rs 9000/-pm. If both husband and wife are Defence Personnel, parents of both members are eligible if both pay subscription subject to meeting dependancy criteria.
- **Spouse** The following shall be deemed eligible as spouse:-
    - Legally wedded spouse (More than one spouse and children from the second spouse are not permitted to avail ECHS benefits).

- Name should be included in the record of service.
- Legally separated spouse is included as long as the ESM pensioner is responsible for her maintenance.
- If the spouse is employed in Government service then he/she can only be a member of any one Government/ Public sector medical benefit Scheme and not be a simultaneous member of two Government medical Schemes.
- If a war widow remarries, then she alone is eligible. Her husband and children from him will not be eligible.

- **Daughter(s)**
  - Her/their details must exist in the service record of the pensioner.
  - Unmarried as well as divorced daughter (s) with total income from all sources less than Rs 9000/-per month.
  - Widowed daughters who are dependant on the pensioner and whose income from all sources is less than Rs 9000/- per month are entitled.
  - In case daughter is born after the pensioner's joining ECHS, following documents will be required to enable the child to be declared as a dependant and to become entitled to ECHS benefits:-
    1. Birth Certificate.
    2. Fresh ECHS Application Form to enroll her as a dependant.
    3. Part II Orders/Gen Forms/Personal Occurrence are required to be published stating birth of the child or an affidavit by the widow in case the ESM pensioner could not get Part II Orders published for birth of his children.

- **Son(s)**
  - His/their details must be included in the pensioners Record of Service.
  - His total income from all sources should not exceed Rs 9000/-pm. Son(s) above 25 years of age are not eligible to be dependant(s) in ECHS.
  - In case where the son(s) is/are born after the pensioner's joining the ECHS, the following documents will be required as proof of dependency:-
    1. Birth Certificate.
    2. Fresh ECHS Application Form to enroll him as a dependant.
    3. Part II Orders/Gen Forms/Personal Occurrence stating birth of the child or an affidavit by the widow in case the ESM pensioner could not get Part II Orders published for birth of his children.

- **Children with permanent disability** Children suffering from permanent physical or mental disability and are unable to earn their livelihood are permitted to be dependants for life time, irrespective of age limit or medical condition. The certificate of disability is to be certified, by either the Service Classified Specialist or a Civil Surgeon.

- **Persons who are Not Eligible** The following are NOT eligible for becoming members of ECHS:-
  - Whole time NCC officers who do not meet the eligibility criteria as defined at ECHS website.
  - Ex-ECOs (Emergency Commissioned Officers)/SSCOs (Short Service Commissioned Officers).
  - Legally divorced spouse.
  - Married and/ or employed daughters/and any child whose total monthly income from all sources is more than Rs 9000/-.
  - Son(s) above 25 years of age or who have started earning, whichever is earlier.
  - Parents of widow/war widow.
  - Husband of a remarried war widow including children born from him.
  - Gorkha Pensioners of Nepal Domicile.

The Retirement Day: Smiles, Handshakes, and Farewells



It is this moment when you have to stand tall with your husband and hold his hand with much more passion and instill the confidence in him as he had held your hand while welcoming you into this beautiful IAF family. You have to prepare him to say "Goodbye" to the organisation which has groomed him from a civilian to an Air Warrior. Parting moments are tough and you as a better half have an important role to play. By far the shortest stage in the retirement process is the actual cessation of employment itself. The day shall be celebrated with family and friends for successful completion of service career or known as the "First innings". The service rendered to the Nation shall be cherished and celebrated. Retirement age on superannuation of officers, airmen & NCs(E) as follows:-

- **Officers Retirement Age on Superannuation**

Rank	Flying Branch	GD Branch other than Met	Met Branch
CAS	62	--	--
Air Mshl	60	60	--
AVM	58	58	58
Air Cmde	56	57	57
Gp Capt	54	57	57
Wg Cdr	52	54	57
Sqn Ldr & Below	50	54	57

- **Airmen & NCs(E) Retirement Age on Superannuation**

Category	Pensionable Service	Superannuation
Airmen	15 Years	57 Years
NCs(E)	20 Years	57 Years

Directorate of Air Veterans (DAV)

The Directorate for Assistance in IAF for retiring and retired Air Warriors is known as Directorate of Air Veterans (DAV). Directorate of Air Veterans (DAV) located at Subroto Park has been established since 17 Sep 12 to look after pension related matters of retiring Air Warriors / NCs(E), Air Veterans and their dependant family members. DAV is a repository of all pension related policies from 2nd CPC till date. DAV conducts scheduled briefings for retiring personnel about pension process and related issues. Even guidance about placement as part of second innings and judicious investment of funds received as part of Non-Effective (NE) benefits is also provided through guest lectures by specialists in the field.



A little something to look forward to!

Directorate of Air Veterans (DAV) deals with Retiring Pensions, Disability Pensions and Family Pensions etc., to mention a few. It is a single point contact for all retired officers/men, PCDA, Pension Disbursing Banks (PDBs), Central Pension Processing Cells (CPPCs) for any issue pertaining to pensions. DAV also serve as an interface for effective dealing with various Government agencies and other agencies between KSB, ECHS, DO P&T, DGR and C II for welfare and employment awareness of retired personnel. Some of the main roles and tasks of DAV are as follows:-

- To assist the Government to frame policy on all types of Pension/Family Pension and welfare measures in respect of Air Veterans.
- To initiate progress and finalise pension cases of Air Veterans on Superannuation, Pre-Mature Separation from service, discharge from service, Removal / Dismissal, Absorption in PSUs.
- To process Disability/War Injury pensions.
- To process cases for revision for all types of pensions for Air Veterans.
- To process cases of Reservist Pension as applicable.
- To process cases of Gratuity and Commutation of Air Veterans.
- To process Liberalised Family Pension, Special Family Pension & Ordinary Family Pension to next of kin of Air Veterans.
- To process pension for dependant / handicapped children /unmarried /widowed daughter of Air Veterans.

- To process Dependant / Ordinary Family Pension for unmarried Air Veterans.
- To process appeals against rejection of Disability / Special Family Pension etc.
- To process timely finalisation of non-effective dues comprising Leave Encashment (LE), balance in IRLA and Gratuity(Non-pension dues) in respect of Officers, Airmen and NCs(E) on their retirement / Pre-Mature Separation from service / Discharge/ Dismissal / Invalidment / MBO/Death etc. and re-opening of cases, if required.
- Address issues / representation / RTIs / Court cases raised by Air Veterans.
- Process legal petitions filed by Air Force Personnel pertaining to pension and other NE benefits and monitoring such cases i.e. prepare draft for making para-wise comments counter affidavits and filing of legal documents by MoD.
- To formulate policies on ECHS issues in consultation with the other two services, including setting up of new polyclinics under IAF.
- To maintain documents and records of all Air Veterans.
- To coordinate Review Medical Board (RMB) and dispose of cases on disability pension.
- To take up post retirement issues with JCDA like birth, death, divorce, marriage, remarriage etc.
- To handle issues related to counting of former service.
- To assist retired/ retiring Air Warriors in finding a second career in the civil sector.
- To implement Government of India policies in respect of pension and welfare of ESM.
- To formulate policies for management of Air Force Old Age Homes.
- Maintenance and custody of pension and medical documents for retired Air Veterans in Document Library for prescribed period.
- Issue identity cards to gallantry awardees.
- Act as a pension Grievances Cell for retired Air Force personnel.
- Act as single point contact for advisory to pensioners and NOKs and assist them in resolving issues with agencies in the pension process.

Many Air Veterans and family members approach DAV on daily basis to seek support to resolve their pensionary matters and related issues. Analysis of issues indicates that many problems could have been obviated if little care was taken at the time of retirement process. Although, the Air Warriors are briefed thoroughly before retirement, experience indicates that spouses are ignorant of many important aspects which are significant

to them for Family Pension and other benefits in case of unfortunate event of death of Air Veteran. **Therefore, spouse should be an equal partner in going through the process of retirement so that her horizon is also expanded in this regard from the beginning itself.** Some of the important issues requiring participation of the sangini are elucidated in the succeeding paragraphs.

- **Name and Date of Birth (DOB) of Spouse and Children** Name and Date of Birth (DOB) of spouse and children are important data which gets recorded in the retirement documents, some of which have lifelong implications. Similarly, Date of Marriage (DOM) of Air Veteran is significant. All these events are recorded in service records through.

- **Personnel Occurrence Report (POR)** This data gets reflected in pension papers through POR. It's the responsibility of the Air Warriors and NCs(E) that POR of all such occurrences is taken timely and correctly. However, a gentle discussion of spouse with husband on essential aspects at the time of retirement in this regard can be an additional check which is strongly recommended to be carried out.

- **Correlation of Family Details** Details of spouse and children i.e Name, Date of Birth, Date of Marriage, ADHAAR and PAN Number as reflected in Air Force records must be correlated with the original documents. These details must match fully with each original document. This is the time to resolve the conflict, if any, between the details in original documents and the official records.

- **Family Pension** The pension entitled to the spouse or NOK after the demise of a pensioner is known as Family Pension. It is advised that retiring person opens a Joint Pension Account with spouse into which pension will be disbursed every month. The Joint Pension Account reduces hassles for timely commencement of Family Pension for spouse after the death of pensioner without having to open a new account. **Name and DOB of spouse should be same in Joint Pension Account in the bank as in all other documents viz Pension Payment Order (PPO), ADHAAR, PAN, Passport etc. Mismatch of even single alphabet in name can cause problem for spouse to claim Family Pension and other benefits.**

- **Joint Photographs** Pension papers require joint photographs of Air Warrior with spouse along with thumb impressions and specimen signatures of spouse. It is to be ensured that signatures are same in all such documents and joint bank account with husband for pension.

- **Life Certificate** Submission of Life certificate to your bank every year in the month of November is mandatory. It can be submitted as hard copy or if the bank account is ADHAAR linked, it can also be submitted online through *E-Jeevan Praman* App. The

certification will require biometric verification through a biometric reader. However, if Life Certificate is not submitted, the pension may be temporarily suspended by the bank. In case of illness or indisposition of pensioner, it is the responsibility of the bank to take life certificate at the door step after receiving information about the same.

- **Updation of Records** DAV maintains records of veterans. These are required to contact Air Veterans or their family members when required or to affect payments of arrears to their bank account if any such payment becomes due. It is therefore, important that all details in terms of bank account number, IFSC code, mobile number, home address, e mail ID etc. are always kept up to date with DAV. Any change must be informed promptly to DAV.

- **Action on Death of Air Veteran** Death is deemed inevitable. The family members should know the actions to be taken in the event of death of Air Veteran. Following are some of the actions to be taken:

    - Get adequate number of Death Certificates. These will be required by different Government agencies.

    - Approach pension paying bank with an application and death certificate intimating death of Air Veteran. Bank will accordingly stop pension of Air Veteran and take action to commence Family Pension.

    - Inform DAV of the same with copy of death certificate in original. DAV will issue advisory to the family and Home Death Notification to all concerned for necessary action.

    - Inform nearest Air Force Station, preferably before funeral. A grant is also provided by the nearest Station for decent last rites ritual under scheme Garima.

    - Deposit Retired Officers' Identity Card with the nearest unit.

Membership It is advised to get membership of Air Force Association (AFA) and Zilla Sainik Board. AFA provides support in hours of need. Also, many welfare schemes of Government are routed through Zilla Sainik Boards.

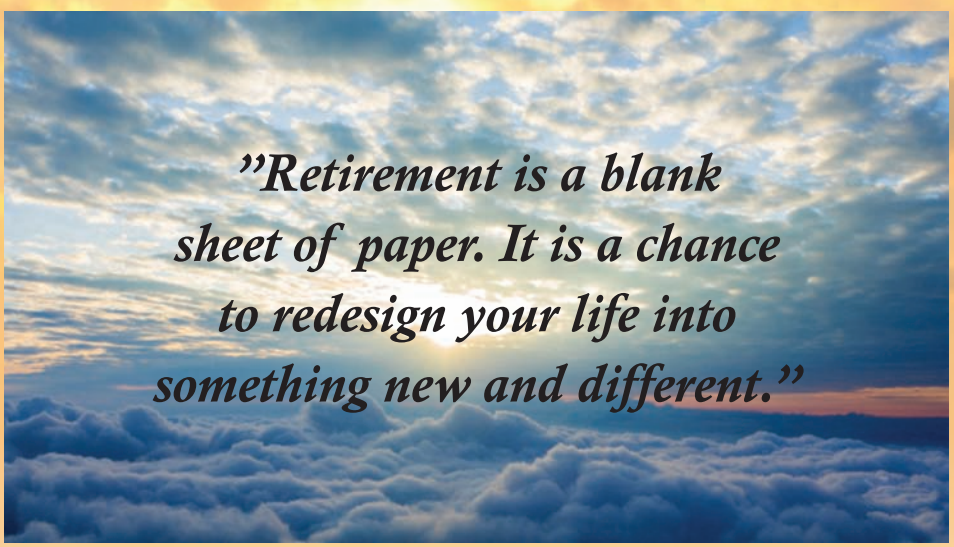
Guides DAV issues two hand books to retiring personnel at the time of retirement. These are **Pensioners Booklet for Consolidation of Assets& Guide for Next of Kin** and **Compendium of Pensionary Benefits for Retirees and NoK**. It is important for

the spouses to peruse these books and understand various provisions listed in these. DAV also forwards power point presentations of Final Clearance Briefing to retirees. It will be a good idea for Sanginis to go through these presentations. Visit the web page www.iafpensioners.gov.in.

Contact Details DAV is always there to extend helping hand to its veterans keeping in line with its motto of "Serving Those Who Served". DAV can be contacted telephonically or by email. The details are:-

Veteran	Office	Mobile No.	Telephone No	Email
Officers	Dir-II	7428926801	011- 25683170	dav.officers@gov.in
	Query Cell	--	011- 25683627 011-25683191	
Airmen& NCs(E)	Dir-III	7428926802	011-25694815	dav.airmen@gov.in & dirav.nce@gov.in
	Query Cell	--	011-25687415 011-25692001	

Positive Notes for an Enriching Retired Life



Retirement The word **R+E+T+I+R+E+M+E+N+T** in English is a perfect representative of the relevant factors when you consider what it embodies.

- **R - Review** A time to reflect on your past. Each of us has met success differently, has different memories to be proud of, or some failures. Looking back at life after you retire will remind you that life is much more meaningful than you may have initially thought.
- **E - Emotion** The emotions referred to is what it feels like when employment ends and one is no longer working. The void of a job title, workplace, and colleagues could leave you with a sense of isolation and require significant emotional adjustment to achieve a good state of mind. Try to pursue your hobbies which both of you could not do during your service years and who knows it may lead to the second innings career option.
- **T - Travel** Travelling and getting around can be a pleasurable way to bring back memories. Visiting your old primary school, your first workplace or leisure trips abroad can top up your experiences and bring lots of satisfaction to yourself or acquaintances. It will help you embrace change in a better way.
- **I - Induce** You can use your accumulated experience as a role model to help shape society in a positive direction. Uphold integrity and ethics to guide the younger generation.
- **R - Religion** It's a path towards true happiness. Your Religion in retirement period presents a huge opportunity to seek enlightenment and bridge your values with deeper spiritual principles.
- **E - Exercise** For retirees, physical exercise needs to be an integral part of retired life. It's advisable to start preparing earlier; don't neglect to care for your physical health or focus just on short term considerations.

Once your spouse retires he can still have career goals and direction, just in a different way. One should have an attitude of gratitude. Be grateful for what you've done and where you've been, and look forward to more of the same. "Keep going".



Fred Rogers very aptly said, “Often when you think you are at the end of something, actually you are at the beginning of something else”. The happiest thing about retirement is that you have a 7 days weekend. With age, comes wisdom and now the ball is on your court. The time has come to play your life the way you want. The second innings of life brings forth the real part of one’s own art. Plan, prepare and make the most of it.

Every journey begins to end
As cycle of life is planned you can’t mend
As you join the forces
Keep in mind
A day will dawn
When you will-“Hang your Boots”
So serve with pride
And take it in your stride
A transition to the other side
With head held high….
All will fall in place
If you follow the mantra
As one says
Plan ahead minutely
To enjoy the second innings IMMENSELY……..



There is only one life to dream for your achievements...
The only limit to the height of your achievements is the reach of your dreams and your willingness to work for them.....

Michelle Obama.

‘SALUTING THE SANGINIS’

‘ATMA-NIRBHAR NAARIYON KI KAHAANI’



“Behind Every Successful Man, There is a Woman.
Behind Every Successful Woman is Herself.”

In a culture that has prided itself for its ancient heritage, women have always been at the forefront of civilisation, leading the society in several fields. In the modern world the mantle of achiever has been taken by women in a big way. IAF Sanginis are the backbone of the service, carrying out their duties without any visible recognition coming their way. ‘**Touch the Sky with Glory’** is the motto of the Indian Air Force and IAF Sanginis, in no small way, are out to prove the same. Name a field and there are very good chances that the dynamic, smart, intelligent alpha leader that you see, is an Air Force Wife.

Strong women are made of Grit and Grace. To be a woman who is strong, determined and independent is a powerful combination. Independence is the most powerful gift that a woman can give to herself. It can lead her to higher heights and help her achieve greater goals. At the end of the day, the happiness and contentment that a woman feels by being independent, is really sublime.



"I love the person that I have become, because I fought to become her"

She has a plan, a mission, a purpose and she will not be diverted or distracted from achieving it. Once she has decided what needs to be done, she goes out and does it. She knows her strengths and weaknesses.

There is No Force More Powerful
Than a Woman Determined to Rise

Women are capable of supporting themselves and their families and are breaking old stereotypes. Living on their own and pursuing a career brings a lesson or two in self-reliance. It makes the woman realise "I have to take charge; I have to shoulder responsibilities". This is what gives our Sanginis an edge over other working women from civil street. Our circumstances and challenges are different from what the civilians face. Persistence, belief, confidence, determination and creative awareness are qualities that IAF ladies have in abundance.

Frequent postings, children's education and managing the family alone when the husband is away – a roller coaster life, but indomitable Sanginis still manage to prove their mettle.

Woman is a Dreamer, a Doer, a Thinker
She Sees Possibility Everywhere

In the next few pages we have put together our tribute to these phenomenal amazons. A salute to their confidence, courage, self-esteem, professional acumen, hard work and desire to excel in all spheres of human endeavour. It is also a story of growth of their '***Atma-Nirbharta***' or the desire to depend on one's self. As all '***faujis'*** know, wives have to depend a lot on themselves… for a *fauji* not being available for the family, is an occupational hazard. Ladies are the everyday unsung '***sheroes'*** who stand behind Air Warriors and make things happen. These stories are by no means the only ones that reflect the true character and achievements of the IAF Sanginis. There are several stories that have not been told and there are several women waiting in the wings…but it's a start…and we hope soon there will be many more….



Damyanti Tambay:
Image of Sacrifice, Vision of Inspiration

"When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful."



" Damyanti Tambay is an icon of courage and strength; drawing inspiration from her belief, she has been a beacon of hope for all those despairing from life's inequities. The road travelled by her has not been easy, for it has involved great fortitude and boundless energy, but she has proven that she has what it takes to be a true Sangini"

Damyanti Tambay is the wife of Flt Lt VV Tambay, one of the 54 missing Indian defence personnel from the 1971 Indo-Pak war, who are believed to be in Pakistani custody.

Damyanti Tambay grew up as Damyanti Subedar in Allahabad. Her father was a lawyer and mother a school principal. She excelled in badminton, a three time national champion. In April 1970 before clinching her third national title, she got married to Vijay Tambay, an IAF pilot. By the winter of 1971, war was in the air and it began on 03rd December; two days later she received a government telegram informing her of Flt Lt Vijay's capture. That was the beginning of an interminable wait…

On the advice of her father-in-law she took up the job of a sports officer in JNU in November 1972, just a day after receiving the **Arjuna Award**.

Soon after she embarked on a long & tortuous journey for repatriation of her husband that included meetings with ministers, military officials, journalists and officials who could

have any information on prisoners of war in Pakistan. She received various inputs from press and friends/ relatives on Flt Lt Vijay's presence in Pakistani Jail. She saw a ray of hope in 1983 when two governments agreed to allow a small group of relatives to travel across the border and identify their own people. However, the proposal was abruptly called off a day prior to the scheduled meeting. She continued her relentless pursuit to get Vijay back and became a leading member of the missing Defence Members' Association. In June 2007, she finally got an opportunity to visit some jails across Pakistan. However, it was very poorly planned by the Pakistanis and she was not permitted to see the prisoners and was shown a few jail record registers in Urdu. Such is the tale of **DAMYANTI TAMBAY,** the *veer nari* who didn't let borders and boundaries get in her way to search for her husband, a valiant fighter pilot of IAF.



In a see-saw of hope and despair, she stood strong as a rock. Her perseverance and remarkable determination is a source of motivation for others. All this while she continued to serve the society through her involvement in the field of sports.

Wonder Woman Damyanti worked very hard and relentlessly as Deputy Director, Physical Education and achieved many milestones before she retired in 2013. A Woman who's been through the storm herself, very well understands the difficulties of other similarly placed women. Nowadays she is actively handling the responsibilities of General Secretary, War Widows Association with pride.

"With each challenge a woman grows mentally and emotionally
She moves forward with her head held high and
A strength that cannot be denied"

Shveta Singh:
Management Guru

**"If you look at what you have in life, you'll always have more.
If you look at what you don't have in life, you'll never have enough."**



She embodies the adage that victory belongs to those who stumble, fall, get hurt, yet get up and continue with life. A story of sublime courage and dogged determination to win.....an inspiration for all.

Shveta Singh "Life is a wonderful journey and the only companion one will have *throughout* this journey is yourself", says Shveta. "Make sure you make it a happy one! This can be done if you choose to be in-charge of yourself and learn to adapt and grow with whatever life brings your way."

She married Sqn Ldr Shailendra Singh (Shail) in 1999, six years after meeting him. They had met and fallen in love when she was still in school (Class 12) and he was still a flight cadet. Both of them understood the importance of education and thus planned to get married after she completed her MBA.

Shveta recounts her welcome as a young bride into an Air Force Station. The love and affection that she received from everyone around made her feel like a part of a joint family, very similar to the one she grew up in. She loved to participate in all squadron activities and the bonding developed through these has resulted in life-long friendships. It also made her confident in dealing with people, a quality that helps her even today.

Shveta was always interested in exploring every potential that she had, both in her personal life (as a Sangini) as well as her professional life. It was important for her to have a separate identity (however humble) that she could carve for herself. However, her first priority always remained being with her husband. As a result, she looked for

available opportunities in places where they were posted and tried to contribute in her own way.



Shveta taught in a school in Ambala and worked with the corporate sector in Pune for nearly four years. Her son was born in 2002 and Shail was posted to Allahabad in 2003. In 2004, based on her corporate experience, she was offered a faculty position in the Indian Institute of Information Technology – Allahabad (IIITA). It was then that Shveta enrolled for a PhD in finance. Shail got selected for the prestigious Surya Kiran aerobatics team in January 2006 and as always, Shveta planned to join him in Bidar in May after completing her official commitments at IIIT-A.

Life, however, had other plans. Shveta lost Shail on March 18, 2006 in an air crash. She went back to IIITA, brought up her four year old son and completed her PhD. Wanting to give both a better life and environment, she decided to apply to the Indian Institute of Technology – Delhi (IIT Delhi) in 2010.

She is now a Professor of Finance at the Department of Management Studies, IIT Delhi with four books and more than 100 research articles in finance to her credit. Recently, she got remarried to a naval officer. However, she believes that every step she took in the journey of life somehow culminated to where she is today.

She has co-authored two research monographs titled "Financial Management Practices: An Empirical Study of Indian Corporates" and "Equity Market in India: Returns, Risk and Price Multiples". She has been honoured by the "Leadership" Award which she accepted on behalf of IIT Delhi from the Institute of Business and Finance Research at the Global Conference on Business and Finance in USA. She was honoured with the "Literati" award for outstanding research and received a mention for the "Most Downloaded Paper" by the Journal of Advances in Management Research, UK. Her courage to restart life after a huge loss is a great motivation to Sanginis.

"Believe in yourself and keep taking those little steps…
you don't know where it might lead you."

Dr. Kohilavani MBBS
Lady With Grit, Courage and Determination

"Self belief and hardwork will always earn you success"



"When you live for a strong purpose, then hard work is not an option It's a necessity"

Life was good, interesting and fruitful and then suddenly everything changed. An untimely tragedy shook the life of a family in Jodhpur. It was a trying time for Mrs Kohilavani, young widow of Sqn Ldr S Somasundaram, holding an undergraduate (BSc) degree and having the responsibility of three younger siblings.

It was time to take tough decisions and hold her life together. She decided to pursue a professional course and finish her higher studies. For that she had to prepare for entrance examination to various professional colleges.

To her disadvantage, she had only five months to prepare. Even though she was shattered emotionally, she gave her all effort and prepared well. Finally she got through the examination with results beyond, expectation. She was highly ranked in the widow's category of MBBS stream for the entire Tamil Nadu. She finished her MBBS degree from the renowned institute of Kilpauk Medical College, Chennai.

When she had left Jodhpur, she was aimless and totally confused. But friends from Air Force helped and motivated her to rebuild her life and pursue a career. The financial and moral assistance provided by the Air Force was immensely helpful to complete her studies and rebuild her confidence.

“The best way not to feel hopeless is to get up and do something. Don’t wait for good things to happen to you. If you move out and make some good things happen, you will fill the world with hope, you will fill yourself with hope”.

Till date Kohilavani is thankful to Air Force for the timely and continued assistance to make her self reliant. The support and inspiration of her Air Force friends is still acknowledged and cherished by her in reshaping her life.

“The key to healthy grieving is to cherish those who have passed on, so that you celebrate their lives and the times you did have together with thankfulness, instead of trying to cling on and wish that things were different. Just hold the precious moments gently in your heart”.

Jay Woodman

Kohilavani firmly believes that one must never lose hope but gain strength to rise above such situations. Air Force is always with you to provide a platform to rise again, But the decision to shape your life rests entirely with you. Only you can take that leap of faith, improve your educational qualifications or skills and as far as possible take up a job so that in times of need, you are not completely dependent on some one.

Be brave and face the world with courage. Nothing is impossible.

“Overcoming challenges with hardwork, perseverance, study and sacrifice will lead to success”



Jayalakshmi Eshwar:
Dansuese Par Excellence

"If you want something said, ask a man:
if you want something done, ask a woman".



An outstanding performer, international danseuse, choreographer, teacher, national cultural and art icon.

Jayalakshmi Eshwar Jayalakshmi Eshwar, an alumnus of Kalakshetra, Chennai, student of Late Padma Bhushan Smt. Rukmini Devi Arundale, is an internationally acclaimed Bharatanatyam exponent par-excellence. She is an excellent Performer, Choreographer, Teacher and Author with an experience of more than four decades of dance.

Ranging from ancient to modern concepts for both solo and thematic groups, Jayalakshmi has presented numerous innovative productions both in India and abroad. Her recent productions (2019) include a Bharatanatyam dance opera that is inspired by the ancient cultures of South India and the dreams of mathematical genius Srinivasa Ramanujan. Its musical score is provided by a carnatic-electronic ensemble of live artists and the opera is accompanied by stunning visual animation from India's first cultural adventure video game with the same name. She and her Abhinayaa Group performed in 2018 for the Festival of India in Russia organised by the Ministry of Culture, GOI.

She has enacted the role of a Tanjore Dancer in the National Award Winning classical Kannada film "Hamsa Geethe" by the Late G.V. Iyer. She is an empanelled artist of Doordarshan in the OUTSTANDING Category of ICCR. Her Abhinayaa group was also adjudged OUTSTANDING for the Festival of India by the Ministry of Culture, GOI.

Wife of *retired* Wg Cdr V.A Eshwar, VSM, she has performed on many important occasions for Indian Air Force at various places and has given lecture-demonstration for three years in National Defence College, Delhi. A unique dance production – Antariksha Sanchar (Evolution of Flights and Aircraft) was performed for Aero India International Seminar-2017 at Bangalore sponsored by DRDO, Delhi. She choreographed and performed along with children of Air Force personnel in a dance production "Shaap Mochan" of Rabindra Nath Tagore at Air Force Station, Pune (1979).



Jayalakshmi has taught a large number of students over the years, both in India and abroad. Many have completed their Graduation (Arangetram) and are well established dancers now with their own dance centres. She has trained hearing impaired children of the NGO-SUNIYE, Delhi and staged five thematic dance productions.

Her internationally acclaimed contribution to Bharatnatyam is her four instructional books along with audio and video DVDs. She has released a unique educational "Card Game" based on all the classical dance forms. Her "Language of Dance" - 25 episodes DVD was recorded and released by CIET (NCERT) for school children. She has received many prestigious awards from organisations across the globe.

She is the Head of the Bharatnatyam Department at Triveni Kala Sangam, New Delhi.

"Courage is not being afraid, its being afraid and doing it anyways".

Shyamala Jayshankar:
Adventurist and Environmentalist

"The question isn't who is going to let me; it's who is going to stop me".



Adventurist, scuba diver, naturist, environmentalist, outdoorswoman and a successful businesswoman she has turned her love for nature into her life

Shyamala Jay Shankar is an Army child married to Gp Capt Jayshankar. She is an entrepreneur with a strong background in Adventure Sports & Outdoors who lives a passion-fueled and personally enriching life.

She is the Team Head of National Adventure Foundation, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry Chapter. In addition, she owns and operates a Multi Adventure Campsite named Camp Splendour at Thirumoorthy Dam, near Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.

She organises Adventure Sports for Government Aided Programmes, Educational Institutions, State Tourism Departments, Defence Services and Ministry of Youth Affairs at multiple locations in Southern India. She is experienced in Microlight flying and Scuba diving (PADI).

Shyamala is a socially conscious and purpose-driven individual who believes in making a difference and lives in alignment with her values. As a way of giving back to the

society around her, she has created a sustainable livelihood for the village community adjacent to her campsite.



Shyamala has very fond memories of her years in the IAF.

The IAF, she says, shaped her life and in spite of the difficult life style taught her how to smile in adversity and how not to take what life throws at you too seriously. She feels that life in IAF is like being in a university with lessons being learnt and taught through examples all around. Her adventurous spirit found an outlet while being with such a vibrant and exuberant organisation.

“One of the most courageous things you can do is identify yourself, know who you are, what you believe in and where you want to go”.

So walk like a queen. A queen is not afraid to fail.
Also failure is another stepping stone to success.

Inspiration is like the contagious radiations that seep deep into our hearts and move us in ways we never expected them to. These success stories fill the air with motivation and admiration because these Sanginis brought passion & profession together. We at AFWWA believe that our Sanginis are unstoppable once they realise that they deserve better.

And these stories are not over yet...
Interesting chapters of this never-ending saga…
are yet to be discovered…
yet to be shared…
yet to be boasted about…
and yet to be written about…
Yes, every Sangini is as extraordinary and bright…
as everyone else who dreamt big...

So start dreaming! With the trail blazed by these stalwarts, it's time to soar high into the sky and make all your dreams come true. The limelight is yours to grab and we await your arrival with the red carpet laid.



AN ODE TO A SANGINI

We always remember the Slogan – 'Touch the Sky with Glory'
What we often overlook is the role of "the Sangini" without whom it is an incomplete story

Married to an Air Force Officer in her hay days
She sails out on a lifelong expedition, adventurous in many ways

Leaving her parents, folks and roots, forgetting about her belongings
She moves on to join a soldier, an unknown gentleman with unfamiliar bearings

Her dependence based on one information, one logic and only hope
That an Air Force Officer is a warrior with least demands and is unlikely to be a man difficult to cope

Her knowledge source, her information bank, her friend circle gossip
All indicate towards a life full of suspense, tough living, remote locations though a known flagship

But with all uncertainties, limitations, challenges yet the glamour
The 'woman with substance' takes a plunge and joins the Man Friday for ever

She is now an Air Force Lady, a combatant's better half, a woman behind an Iron Man
She is yet to be indoctrinated for her role as a 'Superwoman to a Spiderman'

She is the star to him, his life support system, his jewel in the crown
Great responsibilities await her arrival, to set the things right in his life without a frown

She is now the whole and sole to take over the reins of his 'Ghar-Grahasty'
To become his friend, philosopher and bride, his partner, his intimate trusty

He becomes dependent on her and throws all his tantrums
She is fully prepared, had her coaching by the parents and is not inclined to be in doldrums

She gets accustomed to temporary one room shelters with ease
Manages households, neighbours, boss's wife and learns to cook with minimum grease

Gets used to parties, kitties, AFWWA and bonfire
Does not allow eyebrows to be raised and fingers to be pointed with ire

He, at times, is amazed finding her cool with problems
She, however, is ever evolving, dealing with complications while humming anthems

She handles the man, his work schedule, his appetite, his likes and dislikes
Does not expect much in return but a subtle acknowledgement and a gesture without spikes

She molds herself, her whims and fancies, her desires and aspirations
Seldom makes fuss of the MES furniture, forgotten promises and her real desperations

She brings up his children, tidies up his drawing room, manages his finances well
She believes in conflict resolution and never waits for his Mess Bill to be a bombshell

She is the home maker, guru for his children and messenger of love
She binds the family, remains to be the force-majeure and a companion hand-in-glove

She now becomes a part of Air Force, his soul mate, his partner in thick and thin
She is 'virtually' subject to Air Force Act, an Air Warrior's kin, whether in Srinagar or in Cochin

His regular moves on postings, courses or attachments
She is omnipresent with her charm, her diligence and her firm commitments

She knows when to enjoy, when to mourn and when to be serious
Under her surveillance, the children and their father alike, dare not behave outrageous

She is always managing two and a half fronts, her in-laws, her parents and 'cholesterol'
Uses different philosophy to manage relations, while she never fails to enthrall

One who chooses to work manages home, office, social evenings, all together
Does not allow anyone to miss her, whether 'near & dear', peer group or the neighbour

Many of them prefer to teach at Air Force Schools, mainly as a charity
As educationists, they usually excel while leaving aside vanity

Few others devote themselves to the 'Umeed' Schools for the differently abled children
They offer a Great social service to the needy wards of their Air Force brethren

Nonetheless, our lady is firmly on her man's side in his growth, rise and in attaining higher echelons
She is the silver lining, his strength, his lifeline, his protons and his neutrons

Her intelligence, presence of mind, situational awareness and self-protection suites
Her mini-treasure, stacked away for the rainy days, often saves him in his pursuits

She becomes an integral part of AFWWA, whether at local, regional or central levels
Joins hands with other 'Sanginis' with pleasure and with commitment to resolve quarrels

She is inseparable from all the activities, could be ceremonial or demi-official
She adds flavour, value and purpose to all celebrations, whether institutional or social

She is the symbol of Women Power in the largest democracy
She is the reincarnation of Goddess Durga & Lakshmi, with no fallacy

Let us all acknowledge the role of an 'Air Force Wife' as a divine creation
She is the pride of IAF though truly grounded, deserving all the possible admiration

AVM Arunava Sengupta VSM (Retd)

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Commitment of a Lifetime

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- Settling into AF Family is written by Mrs Prachi Bhattacharya W/o Wg Cdr Kaushik Bhattacharya

Nurturing the Seed of Life

Recommended Reading Material

- Dr Spock’s Pregnancy Guide
- What to Expect When You Are Expecting?
- Expecting Better

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A Guiding Beacon

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Heralding the Second Innings

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Content Contributors for Magazine

Sangini - Wind Beneath the Wings

Name of Sangini	Spouse Name	Unit
Mrs Maria Duckworth	Air Mshl RJ Duckworth	Air HQ
Mrs PV Padmaja Subhash	AVM P Subhash Babu (Retd)	-
Mrs Shashwati Ghosh	AVM PK Ghosh	Air HQ
Mrs Ashima Vaidya	Air Cmde R Vaidya	AFCME
Mrs Swapna Tammeneni	Gp Capt. T. Srinivasulu SC	AF Stn Devlali

Commitment of a Lifetime

Name of Sangini	Spouse Name	Unit
Mrs Smitha Nandakumar	Gp Capt AP Nandakumar	AFTC
Mrs Sunayna Ghoshal	Gp Capt NK Vastsya	220 Sqn AF
Mrs Deepika Singh	Gp Capt Sandeep Singh SC	23 WG
Sqn Ldr Bindu Pillai (Retd)	Gp Capt Vijay Menon	AFAC
Mrs Sharon Sharma	Gp Capt W Vas	2230 Sqn
Mrs Preeti Malhotra	Wg Cdr Bharat Malhotra	8 WG

Name of Sangini	Spouse Name	Unit
Mrs Supriya Giroti Dhar	Sqn Ldr Mrityunjay Dhar	81 Sqn
Mrs Lavanya	Sgt Ashok Kumar	2207 Sqn
Mrs Vanan Rachna	Sgt Manikanta	601 SU

Nurturing the Seed of Life

Name of Sangini	Spouse Name	Unit
Wg Cdr (Dr) Madhulika Jain (Retd)	-	-
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Holistic Health

Name of Sangini	Spouse Name	Unit
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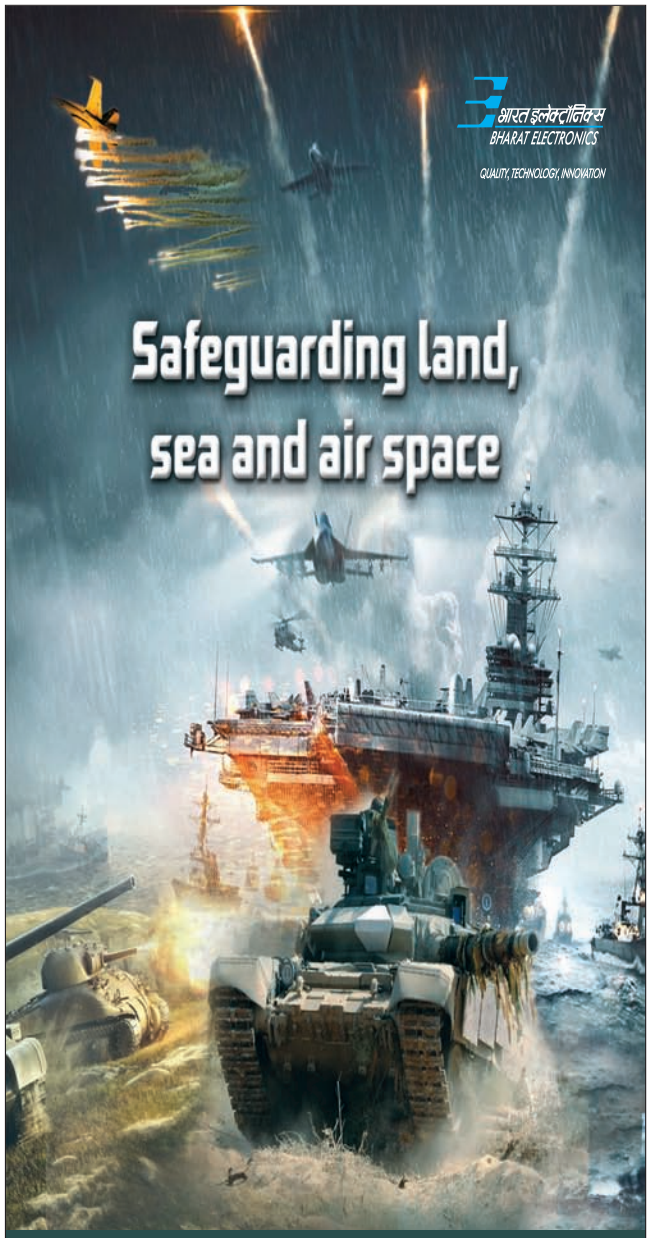
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Sangini- A Resilient Warrior

Name of Sangini	Spouse Name	Unit
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Mrs Rakhi Singh	Gp Capt AK Singh	2 AFSB, Mysuru
Mrs Charu Yadav	Wg Cdr AK Yadav	ATS Belgaum
Mrs Pooja Prashar	Sqn Ldr Nitin Sharma	112 HU Yelahanka

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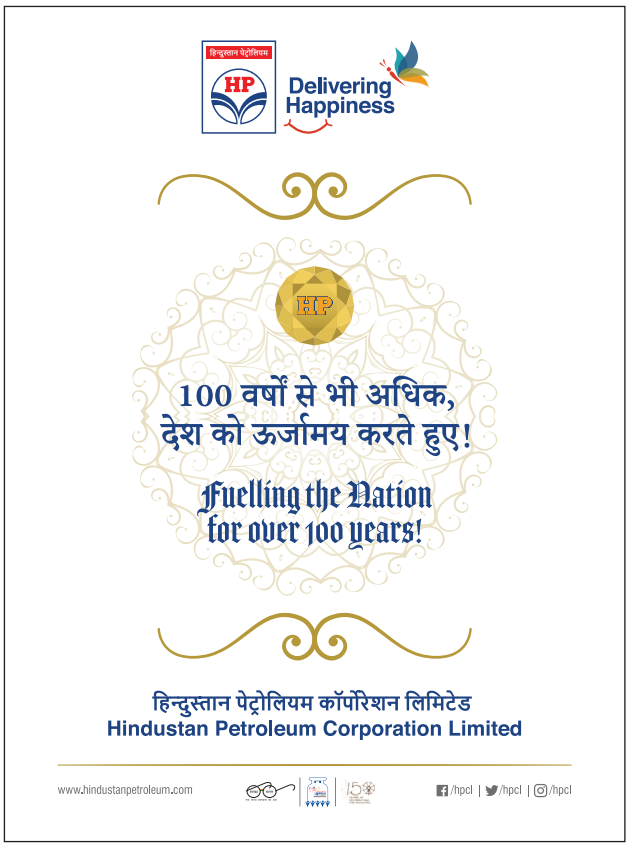
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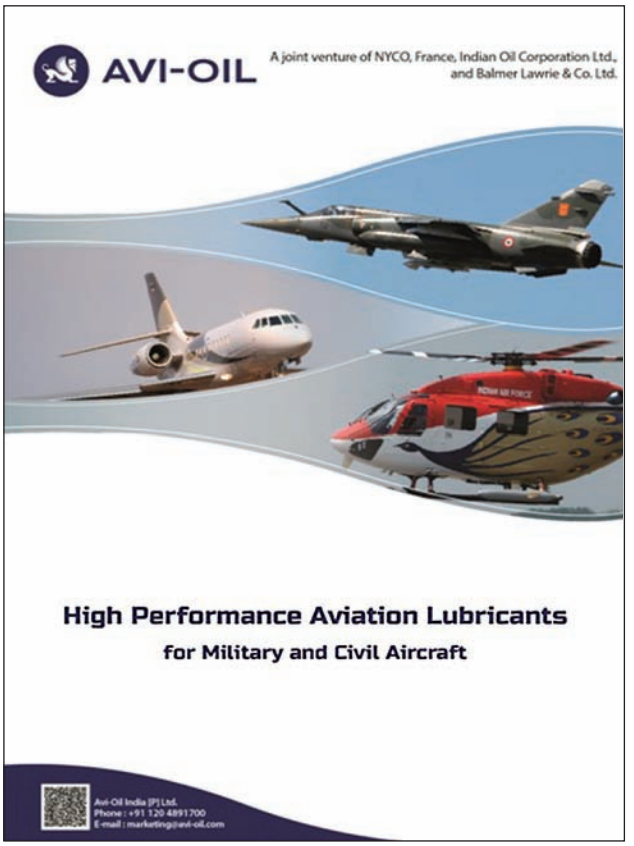
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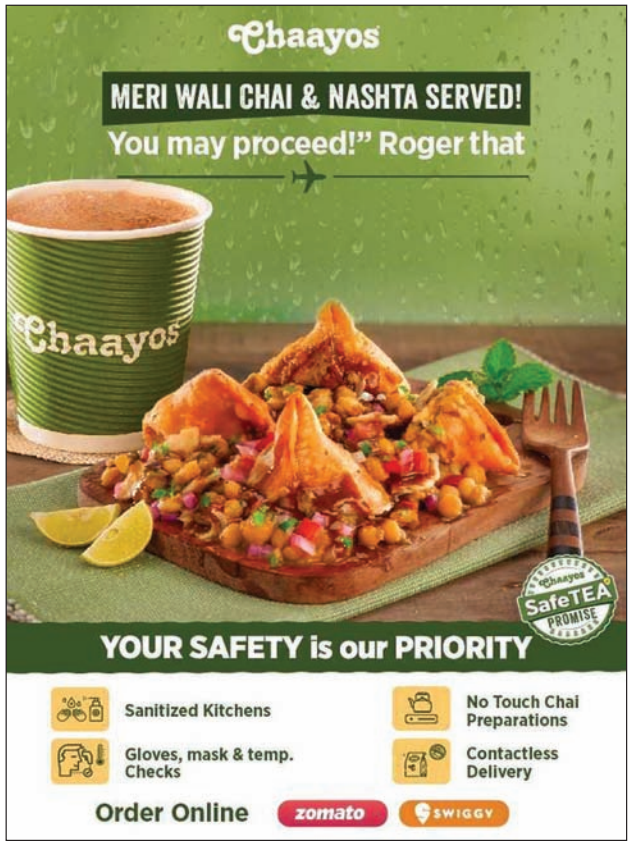

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New Delhi: 110010, Contact no.: 0987153268

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Redemption outlet details overleaf. * Terms & Conditions overleaf.

20%
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Discount Coupons

Terms & Conditions:

- This voucher is redeemable only against cash purchase / invoice value of gold & diamond jewellery at Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Showrooms in India.
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- This voucher cannot be exchanged for cash.
- This voucher includes making charge and local taxes of the jewellery being purchased.
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- This voucher is not a legal tender.
- This voucher is not applicable for purchase of gold coins / silver ornaments / watches, bullion and solitaire.

Terms and conditions apply.

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- This voucher cannot be redeemed for cash and is non-transferable.
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- Offer valid on purchase of minimum Products/Salon Services value of Rs. 500 or above.
- Offer Valid till stocks last.

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Discount Coupons

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02. The Offer shall be valid for a limited period commencing from 1st November 2020 till 30th June 2021 or earlier as per the sole discretion of the entity.
03. This Offer is promoted for honoring the families of Indian Airforce by offering them discount coupons entitling 15% discount on the MRP value of select adidas merchandise at Participating stores. The coupons would be enclosed in "Sangini" magazine (2020-21 edition) published by Air Force Wives Welfare Association.
04. The validity of the coupons is from November 1, 2020 till June 30, 2020. Only one coupon shall be applicable on a single invoice.
05. This offer is not applicable on purchase of accessories and fitness equipment.
06. This Offer cannot be clubbed with any other offer or promotion simultaneously running at the Participating stores.
07. The offer is non-transferable and under no circumstance will the gratification under this Offer shall be exchanged or settled in cash.
08. The Offer shall be subject to usual force majeure events and on occurrence of such event, the Offer may be withdrawn at the discretion of adidas
09. By participating in the offer, each Participant represents and warrants that he/she is legally competent to enter into binding contracts under applicable laws. By taking part and/or entering into the offer, the Participant Warrants that all information provided by the Participant regarding its name, age, state, city, address, phone number, etc., is true, correct, accurate and complete and that the Participant is authorized to provide such information and consents to the use of such information, including inter-alia personal data, by adidas , its affiliates, consultants, business partners, agents and/or its event management company for marketing and promotional purposes or otherwise sending communication materials to the Participant, through including but not limited to, direct mailers, emails, short messaging service and/or telephone calls. For such purpose, Participant shall be deemed to have given his/her consent to the transfer of all or any personal data to any location within or outside India.
10. Offer shall be void where prohibited by law. Failure by adidas to enforce any of its right at any stage does not constitute a waiver of those rights.
11. Entity reserves the right to withdraw/suspend/cancel this Offer or amend the terms and conditions of this Offer without prior notice at any time without assigning any reason thereof.
12. Entity shall not be liable for non-fulfillment of any terms of this Offer in full or in part due to any reason beyond entity's control.
13. Any person taking advantage of this offer does so on complete acceptance of the terms and conditions.
14. Dispute, if any, in respect of the Offer should be sent in writing to the entity at adidas India Marketing Pvt. Ltd., The Arena, Plot No. 53, Sector 32, Institutional Area, Gurugram – 122001 (Haryana). However, the existence of dispute, if any, shall not constitute a claim against the entity.
15. The decision of the Management of the entity in relation to the above Offer and any matter incidental thereto shall be final and binding on the Participant/Customer. Disputes, if any, shall be subject to Courts of Delhi Jurisdiction only.

Terms and Conditions

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02 The Offer shall be valid for a limited period commencing from 1st November 2020 till 30th June 2021 or earlier as per the sole discretion of the entity.
03 This Offer is promoted for honoring the families of Indian Airforce by offering them discount coupons entitling 15% discount on the MRP value of select Reebok merchandise at Participating stores. The coupons would be enclosed in "Sangini" magazine (2020-21 edition) published by Air Force Wives Welfare Association.
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08 The Offer shall be subject to usual force majeure events and on occurrence of such event, the Offer may be withdrawn at the discretion of Reebok
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12 Entity shall not be liable for non-fulfillment of any terms of this Offer in full or in part due to any reason beyond entity's control.
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- The voucher is valid on purchase of fresh stock and not on sale, discounted or promotional products
- No two vouchers & offers can be clubbed together
- The voucher presented must be original
- The holder of the voucher is deemed to be the owner of the voucher
- The voucher should be redeemed in full, partial redemption is not allowed
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- This voucher is valid til (30, June. 2021), and can be redeemed only at Duke Exclusive Showrooms in Punjab, Haryana & New Delhi.
- This voucher is non-refundable and cannot be exchanged for cash in part or full and is valid for a single transaction only.
- This voucher is **not valid during sale** or in conjunction with any special promotion and any points cannot be availed or redeemed while using this voucher.
- Strictly no extension of the expiry date from the date of issue will be allowed.
- The management retains the right to reject any voucher that has been tampered with or found in any way unacceptable.
- We are not responsible if a Gift Voucher is lost, stolen, damaged or destroyed and no replacement will be provided in these circumstances.
- Not applicable for online Purchase.
- Only applicable in states like Punjab, Haryana & New Delhi and valid only on Exclusive outlets of Duke

Offer valid till 30th June 2021

AIR FORCE WIVES WELFARE ASSOCIATION

वायु शक्ति संगिनी

SANTUSHTI CONCEPT SHOP

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 15% Discount.
- Minimum order value Rs. 2000/-.
- Voucher valid till 30th June 2021.

Santushti Shopping Complex, New Willingdon Camp, Opposite Hotel Ashok Samrat, Race Course, New Delhi-110003