

The combination will allow lactating mothers to nurse their infants without the risk of transmitting infection

Now, HIV+ women in Maharashtra will get their first shot at [breast feeding](#) their babies without the fear of transmitting the virus. From December 1, the Maharashtra State Aids Control Society (MSACS) will roll out a scheme administering a combination of three drugs, instead of the current practice of the single oral dosage of Nevirapine at delivery and another one post-natal. The medication will start from the 14th week of [pregnancy](#) and is expected to shrink the risk of transmission to a negligible two per cent.



The combination of three drugs – Tenofovir, Lamivudine and Efavirenz, which will be supplied by the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) free of cost, will be administered orally every day until the time the mother stops lactating. The scheme will be launched at B J Medical College with a workshop to which even private gynecologists will be invited. "We have already held discussions with Pune Obstetrics and Gynecological Society (POGS) to come for the workshop," said Dr Ramesh Bhosale, Head of Department, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Sassoon Hospital and B J Medical College.

Transmission of the virus from mother to child can happen when the mother goes into labour or during delivery or through breast feeding. Nevirapine has been able to stem this risk by 15 per cent. "The therapy to be introduced is a pathbreaking one minimising the maternal viral load, enabling these HIV positive women to have healthy babies," Bhosale pointed out. NACO has already rolled out the drugs in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, while

training is on at some other states across the country.

"We have conducting training for all the paramedical staff, Auxillary Nurse Midwives (ANM) from public health centres and other government agencies. There is one more training scheduled for the medical officers on November 25," informed Kalyan Patil, the District programme officer of MSACS. "While currently the mother gets two doses of Nevirapine and the baby is administered one at birth, in the new regime, the child will be given one dose of Nevirapine daily until it is six-week-old," he added.

Source

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