

## International News and Updates

### Experts Warn Against Using Ivermectin to Treat Covid-19.

Multiple health groups are [warning](#) physicians not to prescribe the drug Ivermectin to treat or prevent Covid-19. The antiparasitic drug has been hyped on social media outlets as a successful antidote to Covid-19, despite their being no evidence that it is effective. Health groups are warning that Ivermectin can be highly toxic and can cause neurological side effects and even death.

### 7000 Steps a Day Can Reduce Risk of Early Death.

According to a [new study](#), middle aged people who walked 7000 steps per day had a 50% to 70% lower risk of dying from all causes when compared to people who took fewer steps each day. Interestingly, walking more than that i.e. the often advised '10,000 steps a day' did not further reduce the risk.

### COVAX Forecasts 25% Fewer Vaccines Than Expected.

The WHO's vaccine sharing program, COVAX forecasts that they will have [25% fewer vaccines](#) to distribute to low income countries between now and the end of the year than previously expected. This is due to both manufacturing constraints and an increasing number of rich countries now stockpiling jabs for their booster dose campaigns. As a major beneficiary of the COVAX program, Pakistan's inoculation drive will be adversely affected by this set back.

### Preventing Long Term Effects of Traumatic Brain Injury – A New Study.

[Researchers have identified](#) a specific molecule in a part of the brain called the thalamus that plays a key role in secondary effects of traumatic brain injury, such a sleep disruption, epileptic activity and inflammation. The study showed that an antibody treatment could prevent these negative outcomes.

### Remote Mental Health Care Is Here to Stay.

The pandemic saw the rise of telehealth services across the world and although people are starting to get back to in-person routines, [experts claim](#) that tele-mental health is here to stay and will infact expand substantially given the growing demand and the sharp rise in mental health issues resulting from the pandemic itself. Many tech groups are now investing in purpose built software to expand and further improve the space.

## Local News and Updates

### **Pakistan's First Full-Stack Digital Healthcare Platform Raises \$1.6 Million.**

Ailaaj, Pakistan's first full stack digital healthcare platform which offers end to end patient care services has [announced](#) raising \$1.6 million. The funding was led by the renowned JS Group and the Fazal Din Group. Ailaaj aims to provide diagnosis from doctors, delivery of medication, corporate health & wellness and lab tests – all integrated into one platform.

### **Vaccinations of 15-17 Age Group Starts Today.**

The NCOC has [announced](#) that it will begin the vaccinations of adolescents in the 15-17 age group from today (Monday). They will all be given the Pfizer vaccine which will be administered free of cost. Since this age group does not have CNIC cards, they are required to carry their Form B with them.

### **Pakistan to Procure 10 Million Sputnik V Doses.**

The Pakistani ambassador to Russia has said that Pakistan [intends to purchase](#) at least 10 million doses of the Sputnik V vaccine from Russia. Additionally, talks are ongoing between the two countries on producing the Russian jab in Pakistan.

### **Rapid PCR Test Fees Reduced at Airport.**

The Civil Aviation Authority has [announced](#) that the fee for the rapid PCR test for passengers travelling to the UAE has been fixed at Rs. 5000/-. It is unclear whether the fee reduction applies to all international airports where the facility is being offered, or just Islamabad airport.

### **Lufthansa To Resume Pakistan Flights After 13 Years.**

The German Ambassador [has said](#) that German carrier, Lufthansa is planning to resume weekly flights to Pakistan after a 13 year absence and its officials are coming to Pakistan to discuss the technicalities.