

1. [Good news! Drug cocktail of diabetes, hypertension can treat cancer](#) – **Business Standard**

A team of researchers has found that a combination of a diabetes medication and hypertension (high blood pressure) drugs can effectively combat cancer cells.

The study, published in Science Advances, also reported that specific cancer cells respond to this combination of drugs.

The findings indicate the cocktail of these two drugs is effective in a wide range of cancers.

2. [USFDA raises concern over drug for diabetic dyslipidemia](#) – **The Times of India**

Drug Saroglitazar, marketed by Cadila Healthcare for treatment of diabetic dyslipidemia, has been pulled up by the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) for "misleading claims". The drug has been under a cloud in India with doubts being raised about its safety and efficacy. In a December 21 letter to the company, the USFDA has reportedly said that the "broad statements" made by the company in a promotional video that the drug for treating diabetic dyslipidemia is "world's first" is misleading.

An article in reputed medical journal Lancet, shared exclusively with TOI last year, made a scathing attack on the weak regulation of drug approval process in India. The article mentioned how drugs, including Saroglitazar, were aggressively being marketed in the country without adequate evidence of its safety and efficacy.

3. [Rubella, pneumonia now in vaccine cover](#) – **The Economic Times**

Pushing forward in its drive against vaccine-preventable diseases, the government is set to introduce two new vaccines — against pneumonia and rubella — under its universal immunisation programme in early 2017. Besides, it has also decided to ramp up coverage of rotavirus vaccine, which was rolled out earlier this year, to include five states by the end of March 2017.

The move assumes significance as it is expected to reduce deaths by almost 20-25% among children under five years of age. India's current under-five mortality rate is around 45 deaths per 1,000 live births, which means around 1.26 million children aged below five years die in the country every year.

4. [52% public hosps fall short on infra](#) – **The Times of India** – **The Times of India**

A total 52% public health care units in Maharashtra have failed the infrastructure rating system recently introduced by the Union health ministry.

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5. [Vitamins drive drug launches](#) – Business Standard
6. [Hopes of pharma sector shattered](#) – The Hindu
7. [New panel to shortlist names for AIIMS Director on January 6](#) – Indian Express

State- and municipal body-run hospitals in the state have fared poorly on several grading parameters that included insufficient number of doctors or paramedics, lack of laboratory technicians or unavailability of separate toilets for men and women.

5. [Vitamins drive drug launches](#) – Business Standard

Drug companies are increasing their focus on the over-the-counter (OTC) segment and the last 24 months have seen 648 new initiatives in vitamins and nutritional supplements among the 6,828 new drug launches.

Vitamins were followed closely by anti-infectives (520) and pain relievers (465), according to the All India Organisation of Chemists and Druggists (AIOCD).

New initiatives contributed Rs 615 crore to the overall vitamins market of Rs 9,231 crore. These outdid new initiatives in anti-diabetics (Rs 611 crore), cardiology (Rs 233 crore), gastroenterology (Rs 220 crore), respiratory (Rs 194 crore), pain (Rs 211 crore), neurology (Rs 232 crore), dermatology (Rs 307 crore) and gynaecology (Rs 220 crore).

D G Shah, secretary-general of the Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance, said with price caps posing uncertainties for pharmaceutical companies, many were turning their focus on the OTC market, and vitamins were a key component.

6. [Hopes of pharma sector shattered](#) – The Hindu

When 2016 began, the pharma industry in the State hoped to get an impetus in exports following promises to set up campus of Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India (Pharmexcil), National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER) and develop second pharma city

Almost a year later the industry is in deep despair as the proposals have remained on the paper. Not a single major investment has come to the region during the year. Moreover, its demand for removal of Minimum Alternate Tax for units which came up in Special Economic Zone or reducing it from 20 to 7 per cent and doling out of sops for the new-born Andhra Pradesh has fallen on deaf ears.

7. [New panel to shortlist names for AIIMS Director on January 6](#) – Indian Express

A newly-constituted five-member panel will meet here next week to shortlist the names out of the 53 candidates who have applied for the post of Director of AIIMS, a favoured public institution for medical education. The committee comprises Principal Scientific Adviser to the prime minister, R Chidambaram; Secretary in Department of Health Research Soumya Swaminathan; Director General of Health Services (DGHS) Jagdish Prasad; and Vice Chancellor of Delhi University Yogesh Tyagi.