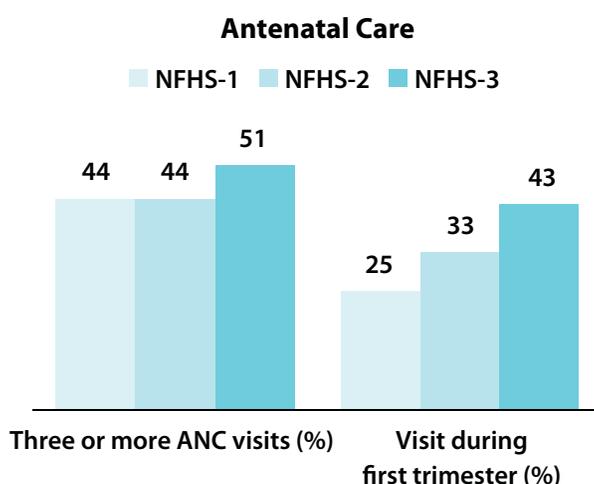


## Women Lack Quality Care during Pregnancy and Childbirth

- Almost one in four women (23 percent) who gave birth in the five years before NFHS-3 received no antenatal care (ANC), ranging from one percent or less in Kerala, Goa and Tamil Nadu to 66 percent in Bihar. In addition to Bihar, at least 40 percent of pregnant women did not get any antenatal care in Jharkhand, Arunachal Pradesh, and Nagaland.
- There has been an increase over time in the percentage of children born in the last 3 years whose mothers received antenatal care in the first trimester, as recommended, and whose mothers received ANC at least 3 times for their most recent birth (see figure).

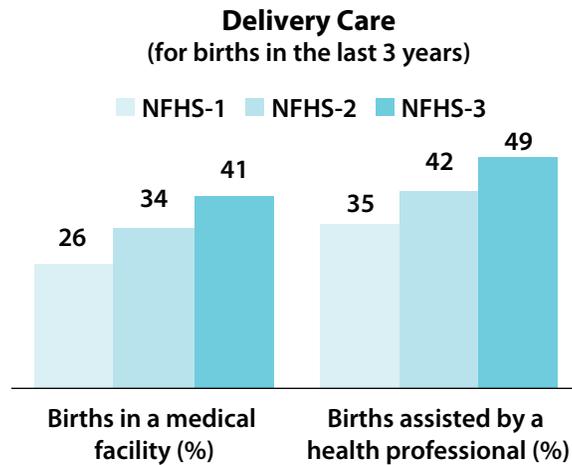


- The quality of antenatal care needs improvement. Only 65 percent of women received iron and folic acid supplements during pregnancy, and only 23 percent took the supplements for at least 90 days, as recommended. In addition, only 4 percent of expectant mothers took a deworming drug during pregnancy. Failure to take an iron supplement and deworming drugs increases the risk of anaemia, a major problem for mothers and children in India.

An ultrasound test was carried out on almost one in four recent pregnancies. Wealthier, highly educated women and pregnant women with no living sons are much more likely to have an ultrasound test than other women. Women who underwent ultrasound during pregnancy were more likely to give birth to boys, indicating that ultrasound testing was carried out for sex selection in many cases.

## Home Births Decreasing but Still Common

- Almost 40 percent of recent births took place in health care facilities, up from 26 percent in NFHS-1 and 34 percent in NFHS-2. Home births are still the norm, however. Seventy-two percent of women who gave birth at home said going to a health care facility is unnecessary, and 26 percent said it is too expensive.



- Delivery of births by a health care professional is increasing. In NFHS-3, 49 percent of births were assisted by a health professional, compared with 35 percent in NFHS-1 and 42 percent in NFHS-2. Still, NFHS-3 found that 37 percent of deliveries were assisted by a traditional birth attendant, and 16 percent were delivered by a relative or other untrained person.
- Only 37 percent of mothers had a postnatal checkup within 2 days of birth, as recommended.

**For more information about maternal health, please see Chapter 8 in the NFHS-3 final report.**