

BioSpect

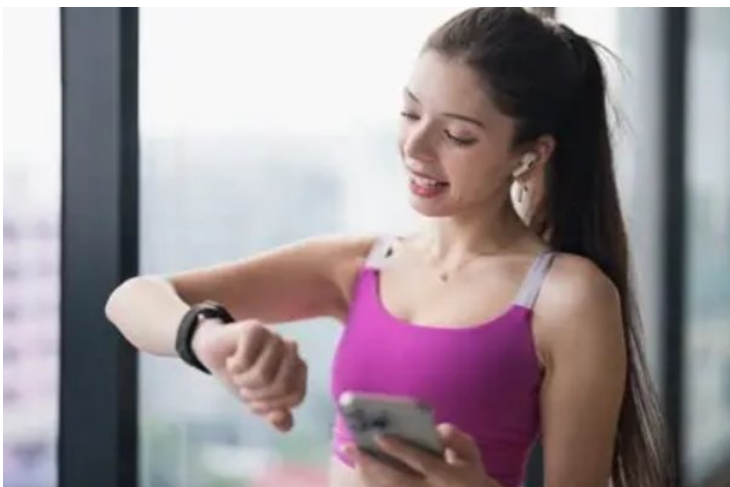
the business of Bio

24 years of leveraging the business of Bio
www.biospectrumindia.co

Pharma's Next Big Market Isn't Ageing India It's Gen Z: Sheetal Sapale

22 May 2026 | Views | By Narayan Kulkarni

Nearly 26 per cent of India's population already influencing healthcare consumption patterns



The Indian Pharmaceutical Market (IPM) can no longer afford to view Gen Z merely as a future consumer base — it must recognize them as the defining healthcare audience of the next two decades. With nearly 26 per cent of India's current population falling within the 15–30 age bracket, Gen Z is already shaping consumption patterns, digital healthcare adoption, preventive wellness trends, and therapy preferences across the country.

The generations broadly include the Greatest Generation (born between 1901–1927), the Silent Generation (1928–1945), Baby Boomers (1946–1964), Generation X (1965–1980), Millennials (1981–1996), Gen Z (1997–2012), followed by Gen Alpha and Gen Beta. Each generation has contributed differently to India's healthcare and pharmaceutical consumption patterns based on their stage of life, lifestyle, and disease burden.

Unlike Baby Boomers and Generation X — who currently dominate chronic therapy consumption due to rising incidences of diabetes, cardiac disorders, hypertension, and oncology-related conditions — Gen Z is emerging as a behaviour-driven healthcare consumer. Their choices are influenced by digital platforms, peer communities, fitness culture, preventive healthcare awareness, appearance consciousness, and mental wellness priorities.

In a presentation on “Decoding Gen Z,” Sheetal Sapale, Vice President – Commercial at Pharmarack Technologies, stated that Gen Z represents a strategic long-term opportunity for the Indian Pharmaceutical Market, as their aspirations, lifestyle choices, and digital-first behaviour will influence future therapy adoption and healthcare engagement models. She noted that understanding Gen Z today will help pharmaceutical companies build more relevant products, communication strategies, and patient engagement channels for tomorrow's healthcare ecosystem.

The demographic importance of Gen Z becomes even more significant when viewed against India's long-term population transition. By 2036, Gen Z will largely fall into the 25–40 age bracket, entering peak earning and family-building years. By 2046, they will move into the 35–50 age group, similar to where Generation X stands today — becoming one of the largest contributors to pharmaceutical and healthcare spending.

As India moves toward becoming a developed nation by 2047, experts believe the country's demographic structure will increasingly resemble that of developed economies, where healthcare demand shifts from infectious disease management toward preventive care, chronic lifestyle management, wellness, and healthy aging.

“For the Indian Pharmaceutical Market, this shift presents both a challenge and an opportunity. Companies that align early with Gen Z's evolving expectations — through digital healthcare integration, wellness-focused therapies, preventive health positioning, and omnichannel engagement strategies — are expected to gain a significant competitive edge in the coming decades” concludes Sheetal Sapale.

Narayan Kulkarni

Narayan.Kulkarni@mmactiv.com