

Baricitinib and Sotrovimab- new drugs approved by WHO for COVID

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In news– Recently, the World Health Organization (WHO) has recommended two drugs, baricitinib and sotrovimab, for treatment of Covid-19.

About Baricitinib-

- It is **part of a class of drugs called Janus kinase (JAK) inhibitors** that suppress the overstimulation of the immune system.
- It is also used to **treat rheumatoid arthritis.**
- It has been **“strongly recommended” by WHO for patients with severe or critical Covid-19** in combination with corticosteroids.
- **It is an oral drug,** and provides an alternative to other arthritis drugs called Interleukin-6 receptor blockers, recommended by WHO in July 2021.
- It is an immunomodulator, an alternative to tocilizumab: either of these drugs is given to patients who have severe Covid-19, are clinically progressing on steroids and have high inflammatory markers.
- It is **given to control hyper inflammation, which usually starts between days 7 and 14** of COVID-19.

About Sotrovimab-

- Sotrovimab, developed by GlaxoSmithKline with US partner Vir Biotechnology Inc, **is an investigational monoclonal antibody for use in treating conditions caused by coronavirus.**
- The WHO has **conditionally recommended its use for treating mild or moderate Covid-19 in patients** who are

at high risk of hospitalisation.

- These include patients who are older, are immunocompromised, and have underlying conditions like diabetes, hypertension and obesity, and are unvaccinated.
- It can be used in mild illness with patients of both Delta and Omicron at risk of high progression.
- The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) too has approved an emergency use authorization (EUA) for the therapy for the treatment of mild to moderate Covid-19 in patients above 12 years.
- Sotrovimab is an alternative to casirivimab-imdevimab, a monoclonal antibody cocktail recommended by WHO in September 2021.