

Ivermectin

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In news: The union health ministry has recommended Ivermectin in Covid-19 treatment.

About its rampant usage-

- Ivermectin is an **antiparasitic**, but there is no discernible evidence of how effective it is in combating the COVID pandemic.
- The **drug was not mentioned in the Union health ministry's medical guidelines** in 2020.
- In 2021 beginning as the second wave hit, the guidelines underwent modifications and drugs like hydroxychloroquine and antibiotics like azithromycin were no longer recommended and Ivermectin was introduced.
- The **April 2021 directives** from the Centre recognised the low evidence of Ivermectin therapy and mentioned that it **"may be" used for those with mild cases and in home isolation.**
- Some state governments have advocated the use of Ivermectin for COVID-19 treatment and as a **prophylaxis (preventive medication).**
- However, agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the European Medicines Agency have warned against its use due to insufficient data.
- Currently, around 12 intervention trials focusing on the use of Ivermectin in treatment and prevention of COVID-19 are registered with **The Clinical Trials Registry, India** and are at various stages of completion.

About Ivermectin-

- Ivermectin is FDA-approved antiparasitic used to treat many types of parasite infestations like **head lice,**

scabies, river blindness (onchocerciasis), strongyloidiasis, trichuriasis, ascariasis, and lymphatic filariasis.

- It was discovered in 1975 and came into medical use in 1981 and is on the **World Health Organization's List of Essential Medicines.**
- In veterinary medicine, it is used to prevent and treat heartworm and acariasis, among other indications.
- It can be taken by mouth or applied to the skin for external infestations.

Common side effects include fever, itching, and skin rash when taken by mouth, and red eyes, dry skin, and burning skin when used topically for head lice