

# Tocilizumab

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**In news-** Hyderabad-based pharma company Hetero has received emergency use authorisation (EUA) from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) for restricted use of its generic version of Tocilizumab in India.

## **About the drug-**

- The drug would be made available in India by the end of September under the **brand name Tocira**.
- **Tocilizumab is originally an immunosuppressive drug, used for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis** and systemic juvenile idiopathic arthritis, a severe form of arthritis in children.
- It was jointly **developed by Osaka University and Chugai**, and was licensed in 2003 by Hoffmann-La Roche.
- Tocilizumab, which is a **biosimilar version of Roche's Actemra/RoActemra** cuts the risk of death among patients hospitalised with severe COVID-19 along with shortening the recovery time and reducing the need for mechanical ventilation.
- Hence the drug has been facing a global shortage as the highly contagious COVID-19 Delta variant has driven up cases in several countries.
- It was granted an EUA for the treatment of COVID-19 in the United States in June 2021.
- Now in India, the medical practitioners would be able to **use the drug for treating Covid-19 in adults who receive systemic corticosteroids, and even those who require supplemental oxygen, non-invasive or invasive mechanical ventilation, or extracorporeal membrane oxygenation**.
- It will be marketed by Hetero's associate company Hetero Healthcare in India.