



HUMAN METAPNEUMO VIRUS: SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

NEWS: Union Health Ministry monitors HMPV outbreak in China, says situation not alarming yet

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

India monitors China's surge in Human Metapneumovirus cases, a respiratory virus affecting children and elderly, with no cases reported domestically.

Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV)

HMPV, discovered in 2001, is a Pneumoviridae family virus causing respiratory infections, particularly in vulnerable groups like children and the elderly. It spreads via respiratory secretions and contaminated surfaces, with supportive care as the primary treatment.

WHAT DO WE KNOW

What is human metapneumovirus?

Human metapneumovirus (hMPV) is a viral infection that typically leads to symptoms resembling those of the common cold

Symptoms: Cough, fever, runny or blocked nose, sore throat, wheezing, shortness of breath, and rashes

How is hMPV contracted?

It is caused by a virus which belongs to same viral family as those responsible for RSV, measles, and mumps

Transmission mode:

- Coughing and sneezing
- Physical contact such as shaking hands, or hugging
- Touching contaminated objects or surfaces, such as phones, doorknobs, etc

Treatment: Currently, there are no antiviral treatments for hMPV



Discovery

- **Year:** Identified in 2001.
- **Family:** Pneumoviridae, closely related to Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV).

Affected Groups

- **High-risk populations:** Young children, Older adults, Individuals with weakened immune systems.

Symptoms

- **Mild symptoms:** Cough., Fever, Nasal congestion.
- **Severe symptoms:** Shortness of breath, Bronchitis, Pneumonia.

Transmission

- **Modes:** Respiratory secretions (e.g., coughing, sneezing), Close personal contact. Contaminated surfaces.

Incubation and Duration

- **Incubation period:** 3–6 days.
- **Duration of illness:** Varies based on severity.

Seasonality

- **Active periods:** Winter, Spring.

Treatment

- **Antiviral drugs:** None currently available.
- **Management:** Supportive care (e.g., hydration, oxygen therapy in severe cases).

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/hmpv-alleged-outbreak-in-china-union-health-ministry-says-closely-monitoring-cases-no-cause-for-concern-right-now/article69058243.ece>