



Norovirus

Why in News

Recently, a **highly contagious virus named Norovirus** has been detected in Kerala.

Key Points

▪ About:

- It is a group of viruses that leads to **gastrointestinal illness**.
- It causes **inflammation of the lining of the stomach and intestines**, in addition to severe vomiting and diarrhoea.
- Norovirus is **resistant to many disinfectants and can heat up to 60°C**. Therefore, merely steaming food or chlorinating water does not kill the virus. The virus can **also survive many common hand sanitisers**.

▪ Transmission:

- A person can be infected with **different varieties of norovirus several times in their lives**, but developing immunity to one type doesn't provide protection against other varieties.
- The virus can be transferred **from an infected to a healthy individual through contaminated surfaces or food**.
- The virus can primarily be **transmitted from oral-faecal**.
 - Disease outbreaks typically occur aboard cruise ships, in nursing homes, dormitories, and other closed spaces.

▪ Vulnerable Group:

- The virus can affect people **across all age groups** but is known to cause **serious symptoms in children, the elderly and people with comorbidities**.

▪ Symptoms:

- Diarrhoea, Vomiting, Stomach ache, Gastrointestinal problems etc are the symptoms.

▪ Treatment:

- While there is no specific treatment available to cure the virus, generic medications for diarrhoea and vomiting can help cure the disease.

▪ Status:

- There are 685 million cases annually, of which 200 million are detected among children younger than five years.
- Nearly 50,000 children die every year due to diarrhoea caused by the virus.

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