



Painkiller Meftal and DRESS Syndrome

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Why in News?

Recently, the **Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC)** has issued a drug safety alert about **Meftal**, the common painkiller, saying its constituent, mefenamic acid, triggers severe allergic reactions like the **DRESS syndrome**, which affects internal organs.

What is DRESS Syndrome?

- **DRESS syndrome** (Drug Rash with Eosinophilia and Systemic Symptoms) is a severe allergic reaction affecting around 10% of individuals, **potentially deadly** and caused by certain medications.
- It is also known as **Drug-Induced Hypersensitivity Syndrome (DIHS)**.
- It is characterized by **skin rash, high fever, swollen lymph nodes** and complications in internal organs.

What is the Use and Associated Side Effects of Meftal?

- **Uses:**
 - Meftal is commonly used as **non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID)**.
 - It is widely used in India for multiple purposes, including relieving [menstrual pains](#), **headaches, muscle and joint pain**, and is even prevalent among **children for high fever**.
- **Associated Side Effects:**
 - Prolonged use of drugs like **Meftal** may increase the risk of [stomach ulcers](#), **bleeding** and related complications.
 - Meftal has been associated with potential adverse effects on the [cardiovascular system](#).
 - Some experts have flagged **renal complications** as a potential side effect of **Meftal**.

What is Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC)?

- IPC is an **Autonomous Institution** of the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**.
- IPC was created to set standards for drugs in India. Its basic function is to regularly update the **standards of drugs** commonly required for the **treatment of diseases** prevailing in this region.
- It publishes official documents for improving the **Quality of Medicines** by way of adding new and updating existing monographs in the form of **Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP)**.
 - It further promotes the **rational use of generic medicines** by publishing the National Formulary of India.
- IPC also provides **IP Reference Substances (IPRS)** which act as a fingerprint for identification of an article under test and its purity as prescribed in IP.

