



Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic Fever

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Why in News?

As Europe experiences [heatwaves](#) and [wildfires](#), concerns are mounting about the spread of viruses typically associated with warmer climates. Alert has been sounded about the **Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic fever (CCHF)** an infection **spread by ticks**.

What is CCHF?

▪ About:

- CCHF is a viral haemorrhagic fever **transmitted by ticks and contact with viremic animal tissues**.
- It poses a threat to public health due to its potential for **epidemics, high case fatality ratio (10-40%)**, according to the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#), and difficulty in prevention and treatment.

▪ CCHF Symptoms and Cure:

- Symptoms include **fever, muscle ache, dizziness, headache, abdominal pain, and mood swings**.
- There is **no vaccine available**, and treatment primarily focuses on symptom management.
- The antiviral **drug ribavirin has shown potential benefits** in treating CCHF infections.

▪ Transmission:

- CCHF virus is primarily transmitted through tick bites or **contact with infected animal blood or tissues during and after slaughter**.
- **Human-to-human transmission** can occur through **close contact with infected individuals or improper sterilization** of medical equipment.

▪ Prevention and Control of CCHF:

- Controlling CCHF in animals and ticks is difficult due to unnoticed **tick-animal-tick cycle and widespread tick vectors**.
- Measures can be taken to ensure that **animals remain tick-free for 14 days in a quarantine station before slaughter**.
- There are no vaccines available for use in animals.
- The only way to reduce infection in people is by **raising awareness of the risk factors and educating people** about the measures they can take to reduce exposure to the virus.
- Wear protective clothing (long sleeves, long trousers) and light-colored clothing to allow easy detection of ticks on clothes.
- Avoid close physical contact with CCHF-infected people.
- Wear gloves and protective equipment when taking care of ill people.

▪ Spread of CCHF:

- Initially **endemic to Africa, the Balkan countries, the Middle East, and parts of Asia**, CCHF has been spreading northward and westward in Europe.
- Reported cases have emerged in Spain, Russia, Turkey, and the UK.

▪ Climate Change and Disease Spread:

- Climate change plays a role in the expansion of pathogens into new territories.
- Warmer temperatures and altered habitats allow ticks and other insects to thrive in

- previously unsuitable regions.
- Changes in water habitats and animal migration patterns contribute to disease spread.

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