



Combating Filariasis

Why in News?

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has launched a nationwide **Mass Drug Administration (MDA) campaign** aimed at ending filariasis disease.

- India aims **to eliminate filariasis by 2027**, three years ahead of the global target.
- **High-burdened areas** are Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.

What is Filariasis?

- **About:**
 - Filariasis is a parasitic infection caused by microscopic, **thread-like worms known as filariae**. It is spread by the bite of infected mosquitoes, and it affects millions of people in tropical and subtropical regions worldwide.
- **Causes and Transmission:**
 - **Lymphatic filariasis** is caused by **infection with parasites classified as nematodes (roundworms)** of the family Filariodidea.
 - There are 3 types of these thread-like filarial worms:
 - Wuchereria bancrofti, which is responsible for 90% of the cases,
 - Brugia malayi, which causes most of the remainder of the cases,
 - Brugia timori, which also causes the disease.
- **Symptoms:**
 - Lymphatic filariasis infection involves asymptomatic, acute, and chronic conditions.
 - In chronic conditions, it leads to **lymphoedema (tissue swelling) or elephantiasis (skin/tissue thickening) of limbs** and hydrocele (scrotal swelling).
- **Treatment:**
 - The **World Health Organization (WHO)** recommends three drug treatments to accelerate the global elimination of lymphatic filariasis. The treatment, known as **IDA**, **involves a combination of ivermectin, diethylcarbamazine citrate and albendazole**.
 - The plan is to administer these drugs for two consecutive years. **The life of the adult worm is hardly four years, so it would die a natural death without causing any harm to the person.**

What are the Related Initiatives?

- [WHO's New Roadmap for 2021-2030](#)
- [Global Programme to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis.](#)
- [National Symposium on Lymphatic Filariasis.](#)
- [National Health Mission](#)

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