Cellulitis

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Health*

Why in News?

An observational study about cellulitis was published in The International Journal of Lower Extremity Wounds.

- **Cellulitis –** It is a common ***bacterial skin infection***.
- **Caused by –** Streptococcus & staphylococcus bacteria.
- **Contagiousness –** Usually, it is ***not contagious*** (not spread between people), except in rare cases of open wounds and skin-to-skin contact with an infected person's open wound.
- **Common Sites –** It can affect the tissues beneath the skin, the face, arms, hands and fingers. It usually affects the legs, feet and toes and also affects just one side of the body.
- **Risk Factors –** A person with skin wounds, compromised immune systems, poor skin hygiene, occupational exposure (field jobs, manual labour), diabetes mellitus and smoking.
- **Age & occupation trends –** It was commonly seen in men, in the working age group, mainly in field jobs, mean age of around 36 years.
- **Symptoms –** It includes
    - Pain, tenderness, oedema (swelling), warmth,
    - Discolouration (red, purple or slightly darker than your usual skin colour) that may look like a rash.
    - Fluid-filled blisters, the skin surface looks lumpy or pitted, like an orange's skin,
    - Fever, chills, fatigue.
- **Treatment –**
    - Most cases are managed with ***oral antibiotics***, for severe infections may require ***hospitalisation*** and IV antibiotics.
    - **Home treatments** - include warm compresses to reduce swelling, elevating the leg to improve blood flow, use of compression socks and gentle walking to reduce discomfort.
    - **Additional advice** - Rest and avoiding contact with the affected area helps prevent irritation and worsening of symptoms.
- **Preventing reversions –**
    - Maintain good skin hygiene,
    - Wash hands regularly with soap and warm water,
    - Cleaning and trimming finger and toenails

- Wearing clean clothes and
- Keeping small wounds clean, etc.

References

1. The Hindu | Cellulitis
2. Cleveland Clinic | Cellulitis

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