Delhi's Plasma Bank

Why in news?

The Delhi government will set up a plasma bank for coronavirus patients at the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS).

What is a plasma bank?

- The Plasma banks will extract and store plasma from people who have recovered from Covid-19.
- They will give this plasma to someone suffering from the disease.
- The bank is being started keeping in mind the experiences of many who struggle to arrange plasma for their loved ones.

At what stage is the therapy in Delhi?

- Delhi was among the first few states to get ICMR approval to conduct trials with plasma therapy, which is still at trial stage.
- Once a person contracts the virus, the blood produces antibodies and certain cells remember the antigen.
- These cells will produce antibodies when they come in contact with the same virus again.
- The plasma trial is examining if the plasma containing antibodies from recovered patients is beneficial to others as well.
- The CP therapy is not as effective on critical patients, but those with moderate symptoms appear to be responding well.

What are the results of the trial?

- In a controlled study conducted on patients at Lok Nayak Hospital, administration of the therapy was found to be safe.
- The results have also been shared with ICMR.
- While some patients were administered convalescent plasma (CP), the others were administered fresh frozen plasma (FFP).
- CP is extracted from a Covid patient who has recovered.
- FFP is extracted from a person who has no exposure to the disease.
- During the trial, it was found those who were given CP showed more improvement than those who were administered FFP.

Why is CP better than FFP?

- CP was administered to those whose respiratory rate had soared to 35.36 breaths per minute. [Normal rate is 12 to 20 breaths per minute.]
- Post administering plasma, the respiratory rate improved substantially.
- These results were better than the results seen in patients who were administered regular FFP.
- The duration of stay in the hospital was also reduced in those given CP.

Who can be a donor?

- A healthy person between the age group of 18-60 years with no co-morbidities could be a donor.
- The patient should have recovered at least three weeks before donating and tested negative for Covid-19 twice.

Source: The Indian Express

