Lung fibrosis

Why in news?

An article published in **Lung India** indicates that pulmonary fibrosis is reported in vast number of post-Covid-19 survivors.

What is pulmonary fibrosis?

- It is the inflammation of the tissue around the air sacs of the lungs leading to fatigue and shortness of breath.
- The lungs become stiff and the ability of oxygen to enter the blood circulation diminishes.

How serious is the threat from lung fibrosis?

- It usually occurs in elderly people but it is now common among Covid-19 patients.
- While the majority of patients affected by Covid-19 virus will stabilise or improve over time, some will progress to advanced lung fibrosis.
- Hence large numbers of fibrosis cases may potentially result from the pandemic.

Which patients are like to develop long-term pulmonary abnormalities?

- It is too early to determine it.
- In the case of a 45-year-old non-smoker ,who was in ICU with severe Covid-19 ARDS progressed to end stage fibrotic lung disease within 28 days, despite receiving steroids.
- However, those with moderate or severe disease, with persisting symptoms or radiological abnormalities, would require further investigation.

How can anti-fibrotic drugs prevent and treat of post-Covid fibrosis cases ?

- Anti-fibrotic drugs are believed to be useful in patients with acute severity of interstitial lung disease (ILD)
- Apart from drugs, focus should be on supportive management as well —

giving home oxygen therapy, chest physiotherapy (breathing exercises under supervision) and good nutrition.

- Patients with the most severe ARDS are most likely to end up in fibrosis & they require prolonged ventilation with high oxygen requirements along with anti-fibrotics steroids.
- It is essential that post-Covid recovery clinics must extensively follow up on patients up to a total duration of 36 months to better understand the natural course of the disease.

Source: The Indian Express

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering