Nivolumab

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

Why in News?

The Delhi High Court allowed Indian pharma company Zydus Lifesciences to manufacture and sell a 'biosimilar' version of a global drug, Nivolumab.

- Nivolumab is a ***monoclonal antibody drug*** which acts by enhancing the immune response to fight cancerous cells.

  Monoclonal antibodies are lab-produced antibody molecules that can restore, enhance, modify or mimic our immune systems, used for targeted cellular action.

- **Type** - It is similar to another ***immunotherapy*** monoclonal drug called Pembrolizumab.
- Unlike chemotherapy, immunotherapy targets the cancer cells alone without affecting the healthy cells.
- **Working -** Nivolumab blocks the PD-1 receptor, restoring the immune system's ability to recognize and destroy cancer cells.
- It can be prescribed in multiple scenarios, after primary treatment such as surgery; when the cancer has spread to other cells and organs; or when chemotherapy or radiotherapy is given before surgery to reduce the size of the tumors.
- **Dosage -** The most commonly used adult schedules of Nivolumab at present advises 240 mg every two weeks or 480 mg every 4 weeks.
- **Applications** - It is effective against a range of cancers like lung, renal, head and neck, melanoma, urothelial, oesophageal and gastric cancers.
- Nivolumab, sold under the brand name Opdivo outside India, and Opdyta in India, has seen significant commercial success.

Reference

[The Indian Express | Nivolumab]