



# Media Scanning & Verification Cell



Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.

Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
6429	23.11.2021	24.11.2021	Delhi	www.timesnownews.com/English <a href="https://www.timesnownews.com/india/article/two-patients-die-from-new-drug-resistant-fungus-strain-at-aiims-delhi/834433">https://www.timesnownews.com/india/article/two-patients-die-from-new-drug-resistant-fungus-strain-at-aiims-delhi/834433</a>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Two patients die from new drug-resistant fungus strain at AIIMS Delhi</b>			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to SSU – Delhi			

*With the COVID-19 virus affecting the immune system, patients have become exceedingly susceptible to fungal infections. Earlier this year, India had reported thousands of mucormycosis or 'black fungus' cases.*

Officials at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) have confirmed that two patients died due to the presence of *Aspergillus lentulus*, a 'pathogen that causes invasive aspergillosis with high mortality rates'. According to a report in the Times of India, the two patients (one in his late 50s and another in his early 40s) were suffering from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), a lung disease that makes it difficult to breathe.

*Aspergillus lentulus*, according to open-source medical literature, is a human pathogen with a high mortality rate that causes infection in the lungs. While cases have been reported from various countries in the past, doctors indicate that these might be the first such incident reported in India with this species of *Aspergillus*.

**Save Water- Save Life, Save a tree- Don't print unless it's really necessary!**

**Disclaimer:- This is a media alert subject to verification.**

Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,  
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India

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Page 1



According to research made available on the National Center for Biotechnology Information website, *A. lentulus* is an *Aspergillus* species that was first noted in 2005. The species, researchers had said, caused invasive disease and was characterised by 'decreased susceptibilities to multiple antifungal drugs'.

*Aspergillus* fungi are prevalent worldwide in soil and decayed matter, and its species are one of the most common agents of invasive infections caused by mould. Spores in the air primarily affect immunocompromised individuals, those suffering illnesses related to blood cancer, individuals who have recently undergone bone marrow or organ transplants etc. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to rage, the fungi have also been linked to those who had previously tested positive for the virus.

With the COVID-19 virus affecting the immune system, patients become exceedingly susceptible to fungal infections. As such, researchers have also documented 'COVID-19-associated pulmonary aspergillosis' cases since the pandemic began. A 2020 research paper shared on the NCBI website also notes that the various treatments used against COVID-19 (such as dexamethasone or tocilizumab) can impair the immune system. According to the researchers, corticosteroid administration, chronic cardiovascular disease, renal failure, diabetes mellitus, and obesity were common characteristics among affected patients.

Other fungal infections have also affected COVID-19 patients in various parts of India. Earlier this year, as the country grappled with the second wave of the pandemic, there had been a surge in Mucormycosis or black fungus cases. The aggressive, life-threatening infection had affected thousands of patients, with many affected individuals passing away.

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The two individuals had also been suffering from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. They died during treatment
- According to research, this species of *Aspergillus* fungi has drug resistant characteristics and has high mortality rates
- Spores in the air primarily affect immunocompromised individuals, those suffering illnesses related to blood cancer or individuals who have recently undergone bone marrow or organ transplants. Corticosteroid administration, chronic cardiovascular disease, renal failure, diabetes mellitus, and obesity have also been observed among patients.

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