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Task force to monitor Monkey Pox

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The Central Government has constituted a task force in the wake of monkeypox cases in India to monitor and provide guidance on the expansion of diagnostic facilities and to explore vaccination for the infection in the country.

The team will be headed by **Dr. V.K. Paul**, member (Health), NITI Aayog.

Monkeypox is a **zoonotic disease** caused by the **monkeypox virus**, which belongs to the same family of viruses that causes smallpox.

The disease is **endemic in regions like West and Central Africa** but lately, cases have been reported from non-endemic countries too

The most **common symptoms** of monkeypox include fever, headache, muscle aches, back pain, low energy, and swollen lymph nodes.

Monkeypox **spreads from person to person** through close contact with someone who has a monkeypox rash, including through face-to-face, skin-to-skin, mouth-to-mouth or mouth-to-skin contact, including sexual contact.

Monkeypox **can spread to people when they come into physical contact with an infected animal**. Animal hosts include rodents and primates.

While instances of people with monkeypox infecting animals have not been documented, it is a potential risk.

Symptoms normally resolve on their **own without the need for treatment**. If needed, medication for pain (analgesics) and fever (antipyretics) can be used to relieve some symptoms.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 18,000 cases have been reported from 78 countries.

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