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



Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
3670	23.09.2016	23.09.2016	Shimla Himachal Pradesh	www.tribuneindia.com/English http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/himachal/scrub-typhus-deaths-alarm-state/299246.html
Title:	Scrub typhus deaths alarm in Himachal Pradesh			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU-Shimla, SSU-Himachal Pradesh			

The cataclysmic scrub typhus, a mite-borne disease, has claimed 20 lives and afflicted 710 persons across the state for the last three months.

Patients resent that the state health authorities and hospital administration of both IGMC and Dr Rajendra Prasad Medical College and Hospital, Tanda, in Kangra, did not issue advisories on the preventive measures that they could adopt for avoiding the scrub typhus.

Three patients, Neha from Nerwa, Chopal, Anita from Piplughat, Arki, Haridevi from Jadhunta, Bilaspur, died at the IGMC in the past 24 hours. The toll has reached 13 in the IGMC since July that has raised concerns of patients.

"They were under treatment in the hospital and all attempts to save them failed," said Dr Ramesh Chand, senior Medical Superintendent, IGMC. The patients could not be saved because they were brought at an advanced stage in the IGMC.

Similarly, seven patients died due to scrub typhus in the Tanda hospital in the past three months. The four patients belonged to Kullu district.

"The doctors and nurses never told us how this disease could be prevented and what steps we need to take while working in the fields or cutting grass or doing other family chores," rued family members, who have lost their relatives to the disease. The death toll can go up as the disease spreads in September and October.

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

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Health officials are clueless as to why the scrub typhus death toll increases during the months despite the fact that they claimed to have screened over 5,000 suspected patients out of which 714 have tested positive for the disease. Last year, the death toll was 28, said Dr Rakesh Bhardwaj, state disease surveillance officer.

"The advisories have been issued to BMOs and CMOs in advance and testing and medicinal facilities are available in most of the district hospitals as well. We are ascertaining reasons behind the rise in deaths in the post-monsoon phase this season," he added.

Dr Bhardwaj said they had stepped up awareness about the mite-born fever-induced disease by holding radio talks and from various public forums.

He said there was no cluster deaths as patients had been reported from different parts of state.

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