

Bengal govt declares black fungus as notifiable disease amid rise in cases

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The West Bengal government has declared mucormycosis or black fungus as a 'notifiable disease' considering the gravity of the situation and following the advice of the union health ministry, an official said on Tuesday.

Citing an order issued by the health department, the official said that it has been made mandatory for a doctor to notify the authority on diagnosing a case of a confirmed or suspected mucormycosis.

The case notification will include sharing of all related information including the patient's personal details, history, examination and investigation findings and also outcome data in case of death, the order said.

The health department has also issued a format for case notification.

The state has recorded two deaths due to black fungus so far and 10 people were under treatment for the disease in the state till Monday.

One suspected case of mucormycosis was also detected from a hospital in Cooch Behar district during the day.

Besides constituting an expert committee to deal with black fungus cases, the state health department has earlier formulated an advisory for the common people.

The advisory mentioned warning signs of the disease such as pain and redness around eyes or nose, fever, headache, coughing and shortness of breath along with vomiting blood and 'altered mental status' - general changes in brain function like confusion, amnesia, loss of alertness and disorientation.

Those having health conditions such as uncontrolled diabetes, suppression of immune system by steroids, prolonged stay in ICU, comorbidities post-transplant and malignancy are prone to be attacked by the fungal disease, it said.

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