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In welcome news for doctors and patients, life-saving drug albumin is to be back in the market within 30 days. The declaration from the Maharashtra Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) comes close on the heels of authorities writing to the Union ministry about the shortage of the drug earlier this week.

The drug, which is extracted from plasma of human blood, is being said to be in short supply due to unavailability of the same. The Maharashtra FDA was waiting for a go ahead from the Union ministry for importing plasma for production of medicines.

"Albumin is extracted by two players of which one is Reliance Life Sciences. The company has got a go ahead for the import by the Union ministry and the medicine will be available in the stores within 30 to 35 days which includes production time," said H.S. Kamble, FDA commissioner.

In the absence of the drug, the doctors are using plasma to stabilise the condition of patients, which according to them carries threat. "The plasma during the manufacture of albumin undergoes processing through a number of ways. This purifies the blood, making it free of antigens," said Dr Suhas V, Abhyankar, consultant plastic surgeon, Masina Hospital and Cooper Hospital.

Dr Prakash Jiandani, director of critical care, Wockhardt Hospital added, "The use of plasma was being made by the doctors 15 to 20 years ago and it is not at all a hundred per cent substitute for patients as the threat of infections looms."

Apart from Reliance Life Sciences, Gujarat-based company Intas manufactures the medicine which is used for conditions like liver diseases, kidney failure, burns and malnourishment.