**Science and Technology**

**Disease X**

**Context**

The World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, emphasizes the need for a pandemic treaty to prepare for potential future outbreaks, particularly ‘Disease X,’ representing an unknown disease with pandemic potential.

**Disease X**

The term “Disease X” refers to a hypothetical, unknown pathogen that could cause a future epidemic or pandemic. It’s not a specific disease, but rather a placeholder name used by the World Health Organization (WHO) to encourage preparedness for emerging infectious diseases.

**Key Features**

* It’s unknown.
* It’s a real threat and Disease X represents the potential for a particularly serious outbreak.
* The WHO and other organizations are working on developing tools and strategies to respond to Disease X and other emerging threats.
* Disease X is a reminder that we need to be vigilant about the threat of infectious diseases and prepared to respond to new outbreaks quickly and effectively.
* Disease X is not the same as COVID-19. COVID-19 is a known disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Disease X is an **unknown pathogen.**
* There is no vaccine or treatment for Disease X. Because we don’t know what Disease X is, we can’t develop specific vaccines or treatments for it.

The best way to prevent Disease X is to be prepared for emerging infectious diseases in general. This includes things like practicing good hygiene, getting vaccinated against other infectious diseases, and being aware of the latest public health recommendations.