

Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS): An Overview

1 Introduction

Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS) is a rare but serious neurological disorder where the body's immune system mistakenly attacks the peripheral nerves. The condition can lead to muscle weakness, numbness, and even paralysis. Recently, an increase in GBS cases has been observed in India, making it essential for pharmacists to understand the disease and guide patients effectively.

2 Epidemiology and Recent Cases in India

- GBS is a rare condition, with an incidence of 1–2 cases per 100,000 people annually.
- Recently, several reports have suggested a rise in GBS cases in India, particularly linked to post-viral infections, including COVID-19, dengue, and chikungunya.
- Some studies have also indicated possible associations with certain vaccinations and gastrointestinal infections (e.g., *Campylobacter jejuni*).

3 Symptoms and Progression

- Early Symptoms:
 - Tingling or numbness in feet/hands
 - Muscle weakness, especially in legs
 - Difficulty walking or maintaining balance
- Progression:
 - Weakness may spread to the arms and upper body
 - Severe cases can lead to paralysis and breathing difficulties
 - Peak severity occurs within 2–4 weeks
- Recovery:
 - Most patients recover over 6 months to a year, though some may have lingering weakness.

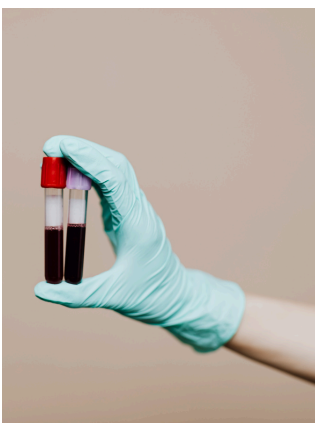
4 Causes and Risk Factors

- Viral infections – Influenza, COVID-19, Epstein-Barr virus
- Bacterial infections – *Campylobacter jejuni* (common cause)
- Vaccination – Rare cases post-vaccination
- Surgical or traumatic events



5 Diagnosis

- Clinical symptoms – Rapidly progressing weakness
- Nerve conduction studies (NCS) – Abnormal nerve function
- Lumbar puncture (CSF analysis) – Elevated protein with normal WBC count



6 Treatment Options

- Plasmapheresis (Plasma Exchange): Removes harmful antibodies
- Intravenous Immunoglobulin (IVIG): Blocks immune-mediated nerve damage
- Supportive care: Ventilation if respiratory muscles are affected, pain management, physiotherapy