

Guillain-Barre syndrome (GBS)

July 15, 2021

In news- The US Food and Drug Administration has warned that the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccines may increase the risk of Guillain-Barre syndrome.

Key updates-

- The syndrome is most likely to appear within 42 days of vaccination.
- It was mainly reported in men, many of whom were 50 or older.
- This is not the first vaccine that has been linked to Guillain-Barré, although the risk appears to be tiny.
- A large swine flu vaccination campaign in 1976 led to a small uptick in the incidence of syndrome.

About Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS)-

- Guillain-Barré is a rare neurological illness in which the **body's immune system attacks nerve cells** in the peripheral nervous system (PNS).
- It can cause muscle weakness and paralysis.
- Although the symptoms often pass within weeks in some cases, the condition can cause permanent nerve damage.
- If the nerves are damaged, muscles will not be able to respond to the signals they receive from the brain.
- It is most **common in adults over 50.**
- The cause of Guillain-Barré syndrome is unknown but is typically triggered by an infectious illness, such as gastroenteritis (irritation of the stomach or intestines) or a lung infection.
- There's no cure for the condition, but treatment can help reduce the severity of symptoms and shorten the duration of the illness.