

Guillain Barré Syndrome

A severe disorder involving weakness due to peripheral nerve damage caused by the person's immune system.

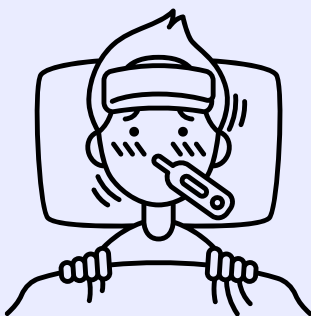
Causes



The exact cause of GBS is unknown. The disorder can appear days/weeks after a respiratory or digestive tract infection. There have also been cases reported following infection with the Zika virus. Some rare occurrences of GBS can result from vaccination or surgery.

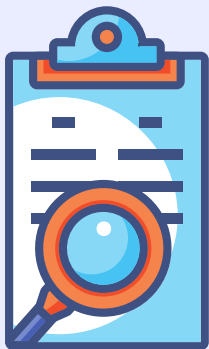
In GBS, your immune system begins attacking the nerves.

Symptoms



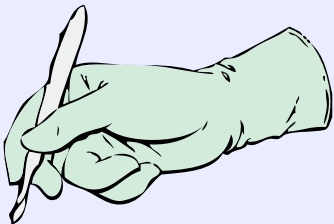
- Prickling sensations
- Weakness
- Unsteady walking or inability to walk
- Difficulty with facial movements
- Inability to move eyes
- Severe pain that may feel achy
- Rapid heart rate
- Low or high blood pressure
- Difficulty breathing

Diagnosis



- Spinal tap (lumbar puncture). A small amount of fluid is withdrawn from the spinal canal in your lower back.
- Electromyography. Thin-needle electrodes are inserted into the muscles
- Nerve conduction studies. Electrodes are taped to the skin above your nerves to measure the speed of nerve signals.

Treatment



- Plasma exchange (plasmapheresis). The liquid portion of part of your blood (plasma) is removed and separated from your blood cells.
- Immunoglobulin therapy. Immunoglobulin containing healthy antibodies from blood donors is given through a vein (intravenously).

Recovery



- Condition tends to progressively worsen for about two weeks
- Symptoms reach a plateau in four weeks
- Recovery begins, usually lasting six to 12 months