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AIIMS to Set up Multiple Sclerosis Clinic

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First multiple sclerosis clinic will be opened at AIIMS, for better diagnosis and treatment of the disease.

- Although disease is deemed to be more prevalent in the West, but the number of cases is on the rise in India.
- Young adults in the age group of **20-40 years**, specially **females** are most vulnerable to Multiple sclerosis.
- In India, there is a great need for increased awareness, large-scale epidemiological studies, dedicated MS clinics, optimum rehabilitation services.

About Multiple Sclerosis

- MS is an **immune-mediated disease** in which the body's **immune system mistakenly attacks myelin** (fatty substance that surrounds and insulates the nerve fibers), nerve fibers, and the specialized cells that make myelin in the central nervous system.
- It affects the **central nervous system**, especially the brain, spinal cord, and optic nerves.

Symptoms: Since symptoms are common, people don't often recognise the disease early and often takes many years for someone to be diagnosed, as it is impossible to determine a specific cause or trigger.

- Muscle weakness and Numbness
- Bladder problems: A person may have difficulty emptying their bladder or need to urinate frequently or suddenly
- Loss of bladder control is an early sign of MS
- Bowel problems
- Fatigue, Dizziness
- Damaged nerve fibers in the spinal cord
- Blurred or double Vision problem

- Emotional changes and depression, Cognitive loss

Causes: The exact cause of the disease is unknown and it could be a combination of:

- Genetic factors: Susceptibility may pass down in the genes.
- Smoking and Stress
- Vitamin D and B12 deficiency
- Environmental factors: Poor hygiene possibly develops protective immunity. This might explain the higher frequency of MS in the Parsi population of India who have higher standards of hygiene and better sanitary conditions at home.

Diagnosis: Can be diagnosed with **blood tests and MRI**.

Treatment: MS doesn't require any surgical treatment and can be cured through drugs and medicines.