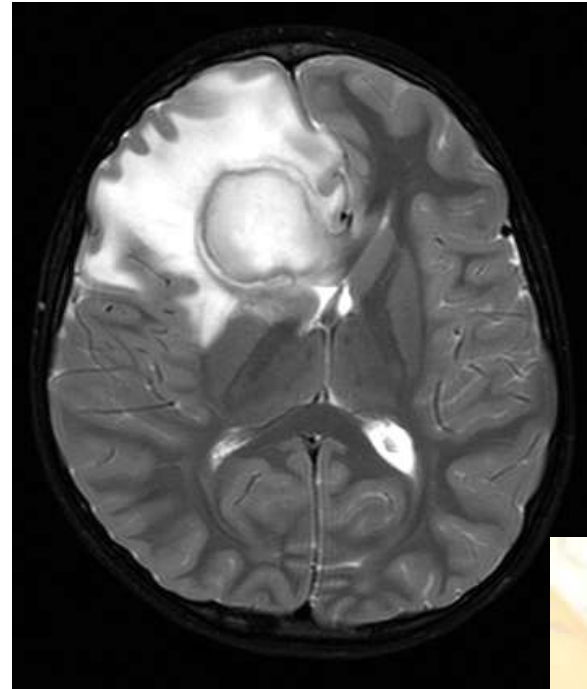


# Microbiology of the ~~central~~ ~~nervous~~ system

PNS

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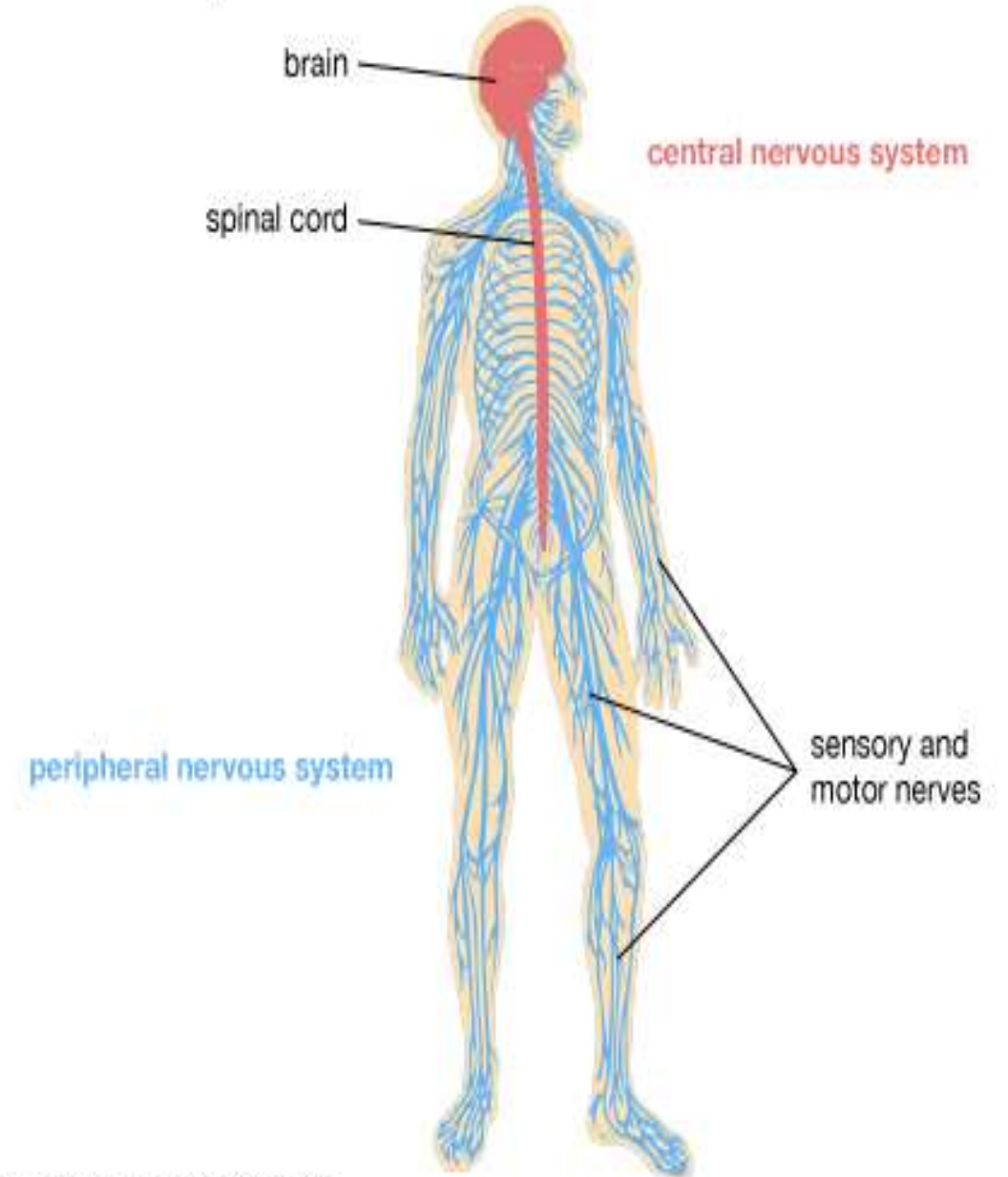


Anas Abu-Humaidan  
M.D. Ph.D.

## Peripheral Nervous System Manifestations of Infectious Diseases

- In general, patients with PNS dysfunction complain of;  
**sensory disturbance**, e.g.  
(-) numbness, loss of sensation, (+) tingling, burning or both.  
Or **motor weakness**, e.g.  
A loss of muscle mass, painful cramps, or fasciculations.  
Or **Autonomic disturbance**  
Or **Both (Motor , sensory, and autonomic)**

### The nervous system



## Peripheral Nervous System Manifestations of Infectious Diseases

- **Infectious** causes are rare compared to **vascular** and primary **inflammatory** or **autoimmune** causes in PNS diseases.
- Infectious causes of peripheral nervous system (PNS) disease are **underrecognized** but potentially treatable.

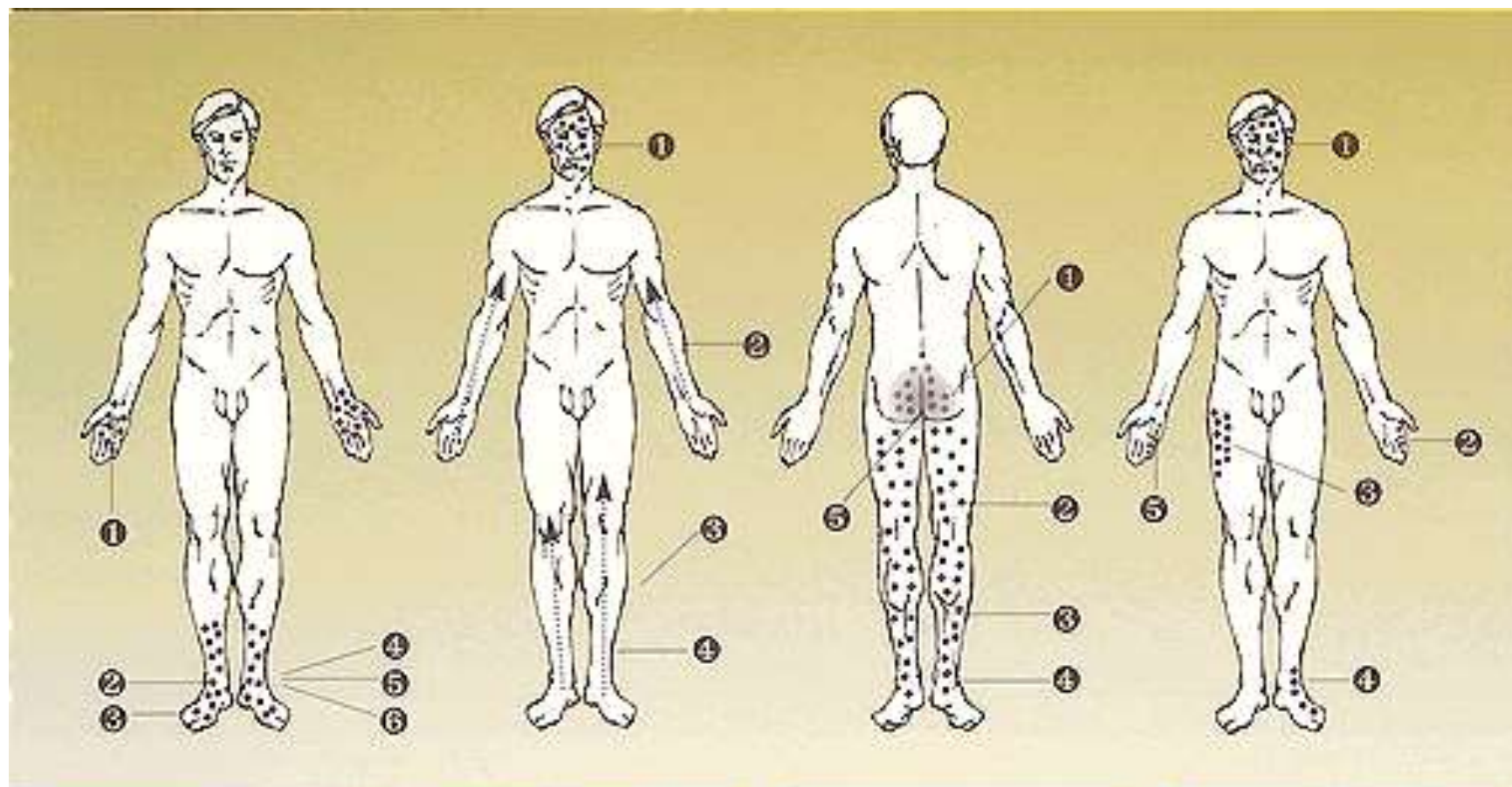
Category	Examples
Traumatic	Incision, compression, stretching
Metabolic	Diabetes, renal failure, hypothyroidism, amyloid
Malignancy	Especially small cell carcinoma of the lung
Drugs	Isoniazid, phenytoin, nitrofurantoin
Toxins	Lead, alcohol
Infections	Leprosy (the commonest cause worldwide), Lyme disease, HIV
Inflammatory	Guillain-Barré, sarcoid
Vascular	Prolonged ischaemia, polyarteritis nodosa, rheumatoid disease
Genetic	Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease, porphyria
Vitamin deficiencies	B1, B6, B12, nicotinic acid

## Pathogens With Clinical Implications in the PNS

- **Human immunodeficiency virus**
- **Herpes viruses**
- **Poliovirus**
- *Borrelia burgdorferi*
- *Clostridium tetani*
- *Clostridium botulinum*
- *Mycobacterium leprae*
- *Campylobacter jejuni*

## Viruses With Clinical Implications in the PNS / HIV

- **Human immunodeficiency virus** is a retrovirus that is transmitted primarily by sexual contact and contaminated blood
- Human immunodeficiency virus commonly affects both the CNS and the PNS.
- **Inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy, mononeuropathy multiplex, and polyradiculopathies** are present with varying degrees of immune suppression but usually **early in disease**.
- **Distal symmetric polyneuropathy (DSP)** (usually paresthesias or numbness in a stocking-glove distribution) associated with HIV is the **most common PNS complaint**, affecting up to 30% to 50% of patients with **advanced infection**.
- Two distinct pathophysiologic processes are thought to contribute to the development of HIV DSP: **direct neurotoxicity of the virus** and its products and **neurotoxicity of cART** (combination antiretroviral therapy).



#### Distal symmetric polyneuropathy

- ① Hyperesthesia
- ② Normal strength
- ③ Pain, paresthesia
- ④ Decreased ankle reflexes
- ⑤ Decreased response to pinprick, temperature; increased vibratory thresholds
- ⑥ Contact sensitivity

#### Inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy

- ① Facial nerve paresis
- ② Ascending weakness
- ③ Generalized areflexia
- ④ Mild sensory involvement

#### Progressive polyradiculopathy

- ① Radiating pain in cauda equina distribution
- ② Flaccid paraparesis
- ③ Mild sensory loss
- ④ Areflexia
- ⑤ Sphincter dysfunction

#### Mononeuritis multiplex

- ① Cranial nerve involvement (eg, facial palsy)  
Multiple peripheral nerve involvement
- ② Median nerve involvement
- ③ Meralgia paresthetica
- ④ Peroneal nerve involvement
- ⑤ Ulnar nerve involvement

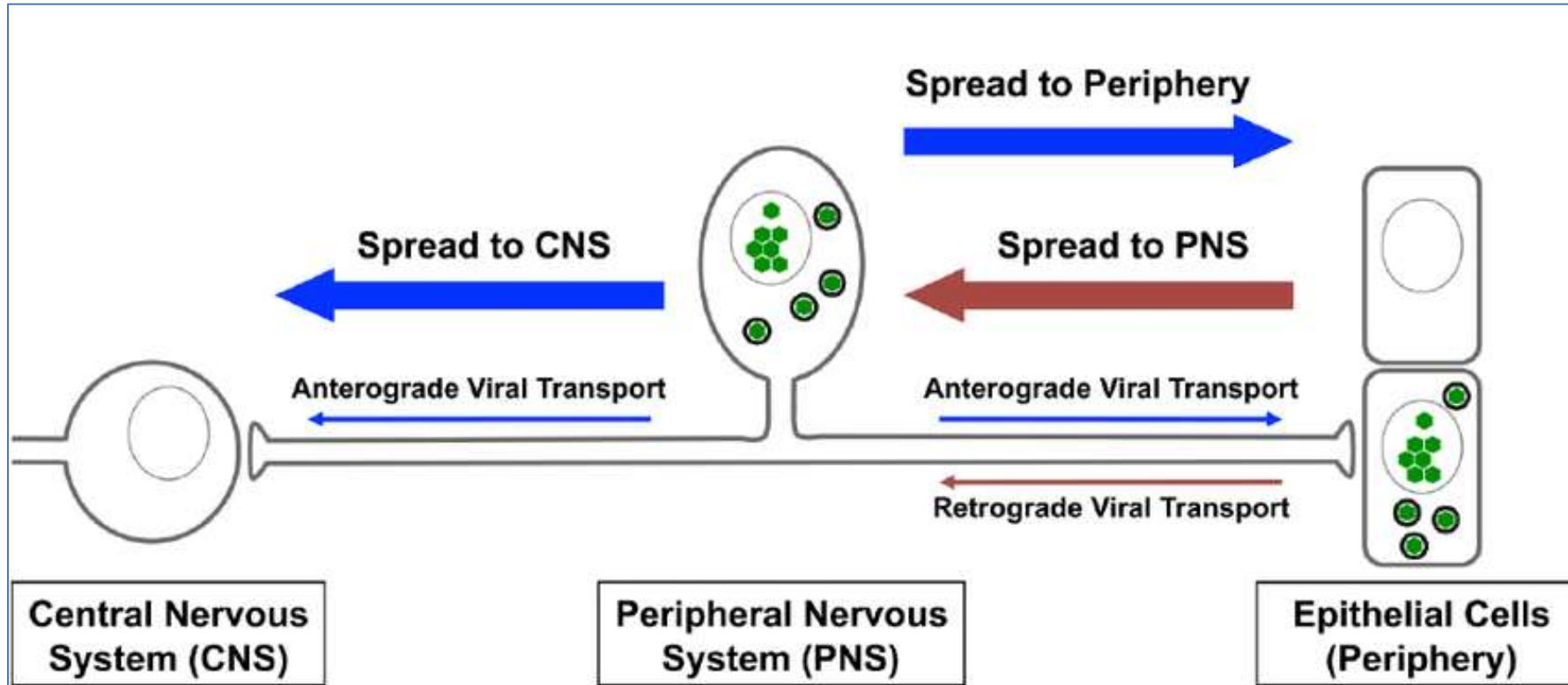
## Viruses With Clinical Implications in the PNS / **Herpes viruses**

- **Herpesviruses** all share a common structure—**relatively large, double-stranded, linear DNA genomes.**
- **Latent, recurring** infections are typical of this group of viruses.

### Human Herpesviruses

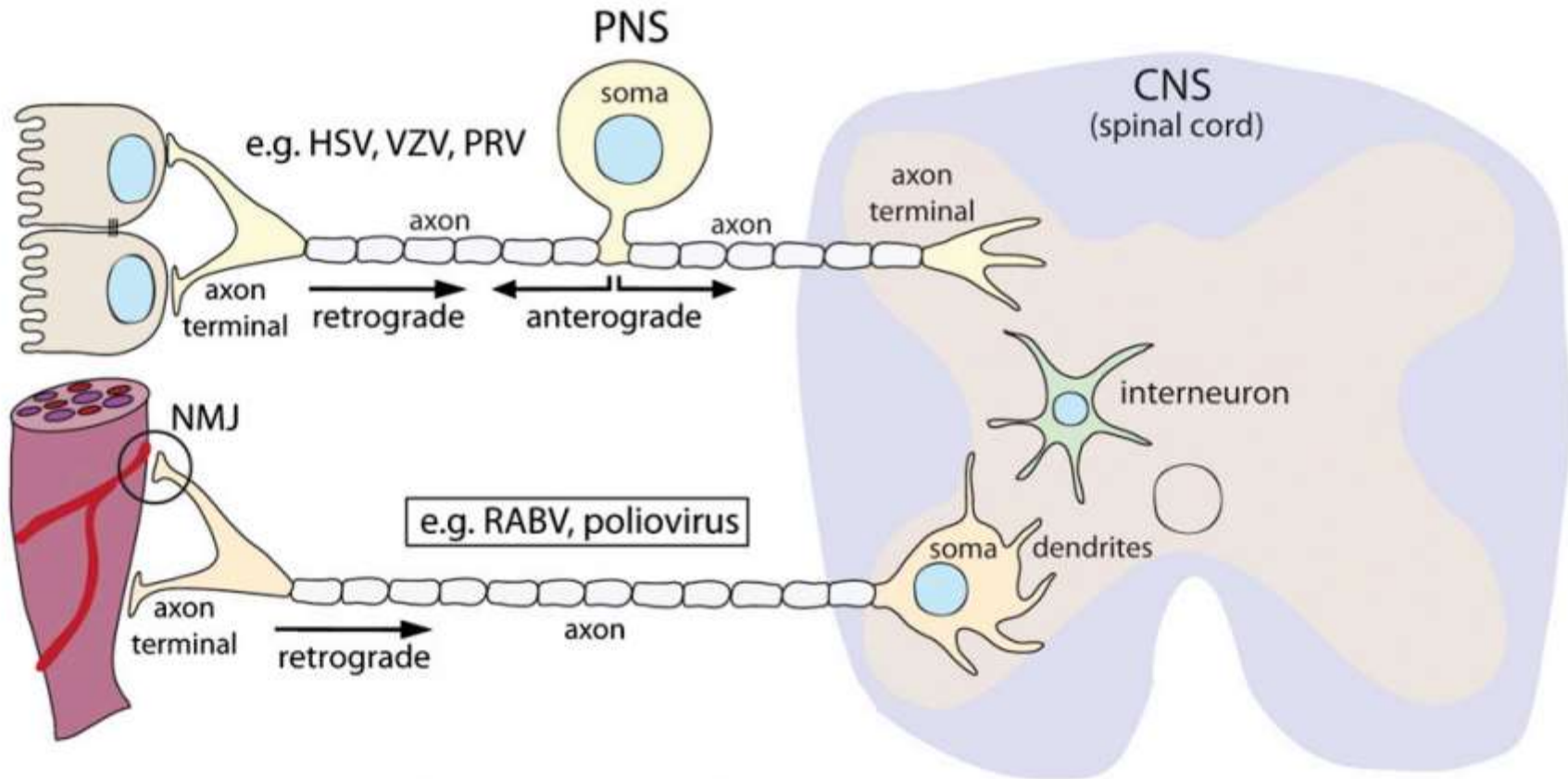
Virus	Subfamily	Disease	Site of Latency
Herpes Simplex Virus I	$\alpha$	Orofacial lesions	Sensory Nerve Ganglia
Herpes Simplex Virus II	$\alpha$	Genital lesions	Sensory Nerve Ganglia
Varicella Zoster Virus	$\alpha$	Chicken Pox Recurr as Shingles	Sensory Nerve Ganglia
Cytomegalovirus	$\beta$	Microcephaly/Mono	Lymphocytes
Human Herpesvirus 6	$\beta$	Roseola Infantum	CD4 T cells
Human Herpesvirus 7	$\beta$	Roseola Infantum	CD4T cells
Epstein-Barr Virus	$\gamma$	Infectious Mono	B lymphocytes, salivary
Human Herpesvirus 8	$\gamma$	Kaposi's Sarcoma	Kaposi's Sarcoma Tissue

## Viruses With Clinical Implications in the PNS / Herpes viruses

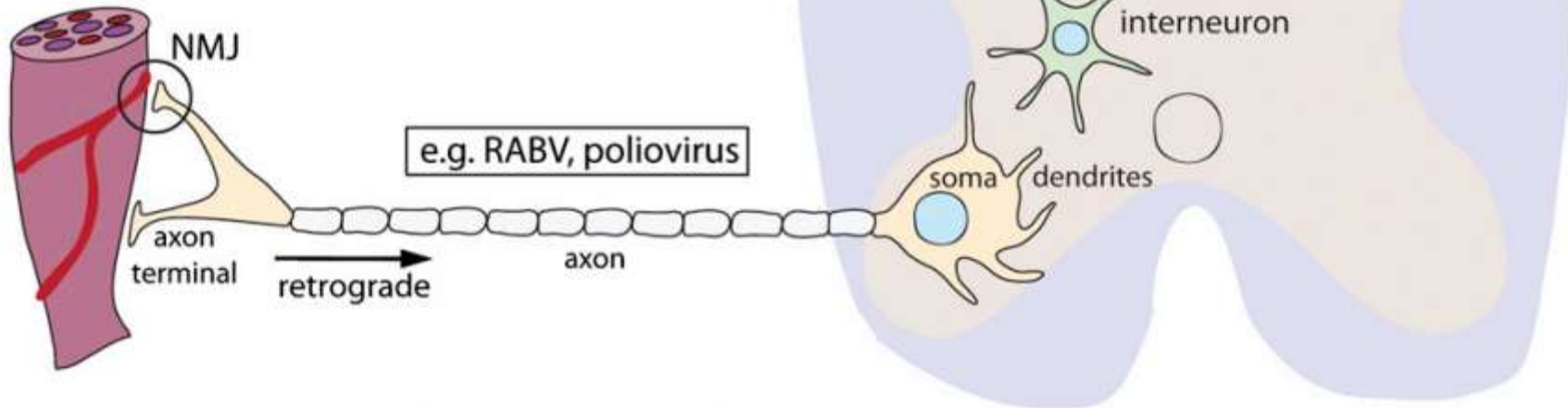


Directional spread of alphaherpesvirus infection in the mammalian nervous system. In their hosts, alphaherpesvirus infections typically initiate at peripheral sites, such as mucosal epithelia. Next, viral particles enter at the termini of sensory neurons of the peripheral nervous system (PNS). These particles are transported long distances along axons in the retrograde direction towards cell bodies, where the genomes are deposited in the nucleus to establish lifelong latency. Following reactivation from latency, new viral particles are assembled and transported towards sites of egress. Typically, infections spread in the anterograde direction back out towards the periphery. This is essential for spread between hosts. Infection may also spread trans-neuronally, from the PNS to the central nervous system (CNS). Spread of alphaherpesvirus infection into the CNS is associated with lethal encephalitis.

**A**

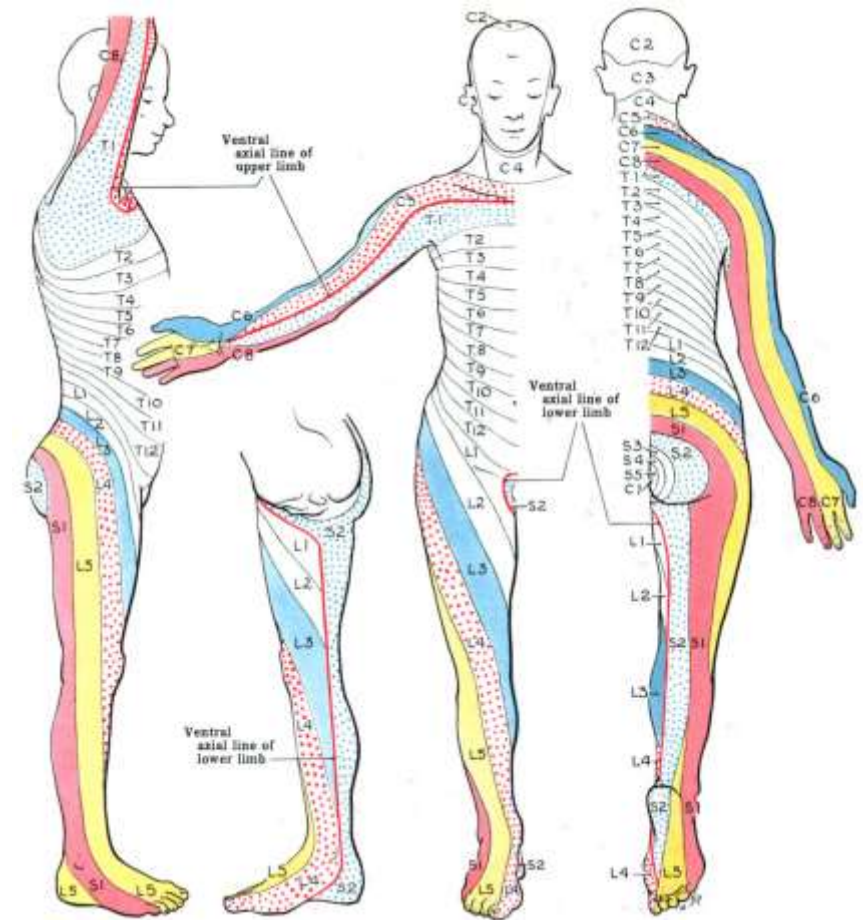


**B**



# Viruses With Clinical Implications in the PNS / Herpes viruses/ **Varicella-zoster virus (VZV)**

- VSV causes varicella and herpes zoster



shingles



Varicella (Chickenpox)

Dermatomes of the Upper and Lower Limbs

## Viruses With Clinical Implications in the PNS / Herpes viruses/ **Varicella-zoster virus (VZV)**

- Primary infection with VZV typically occurs in childhood and is characterized by a skin rash that forms small, itchy blisters, which eventually scab over.
- The **varicella vaccine** was introduced in 1995 and has significantly decreased the number of cases and complications. It prevents about 70% to 90% of infections and 95% of severe disease. Routine immunization of children is recommended.
- **Reactivation** of VZV occurs primarily in the **elderly** patients and **immunosuppressed**.
- The most commonly reported PNS complication is **postherpetic neuralgia**, which is a dermatomal distribution pain following shingles.

- Post-herpetic neuralgia (PHN) is a **chronic neuropathic pain condition that persists 3 months or more following an outbreak of shingles**. Diagnosis of VZV neuropathy is **primarily clinical**
- Multiple types of pain including a **constant deep, aching, or burning pain; a paroxysmal, lancinating pain; hyperalgesia** (painful stimuli are more painful than expected); and **allodynia** (pain associated with typically non-painful stimuli).
- The pharmacological treatment of PHN may include a variety of medications including alpha-2 delta ligands (**gabapentin and pregabalin**), other anticonvulsants (carbamazepine), tricyclic antidepressants (amitriptyline, nortriptyline, doxepin), topical analgesics (5 % lidocaine patch, capsaicin) tramadol, or other opioids
- **Early treatment of VZV infection is recommended** with antiviral agents such as **acyclovir**, valacyclovir, and famciclovir for 7 days.

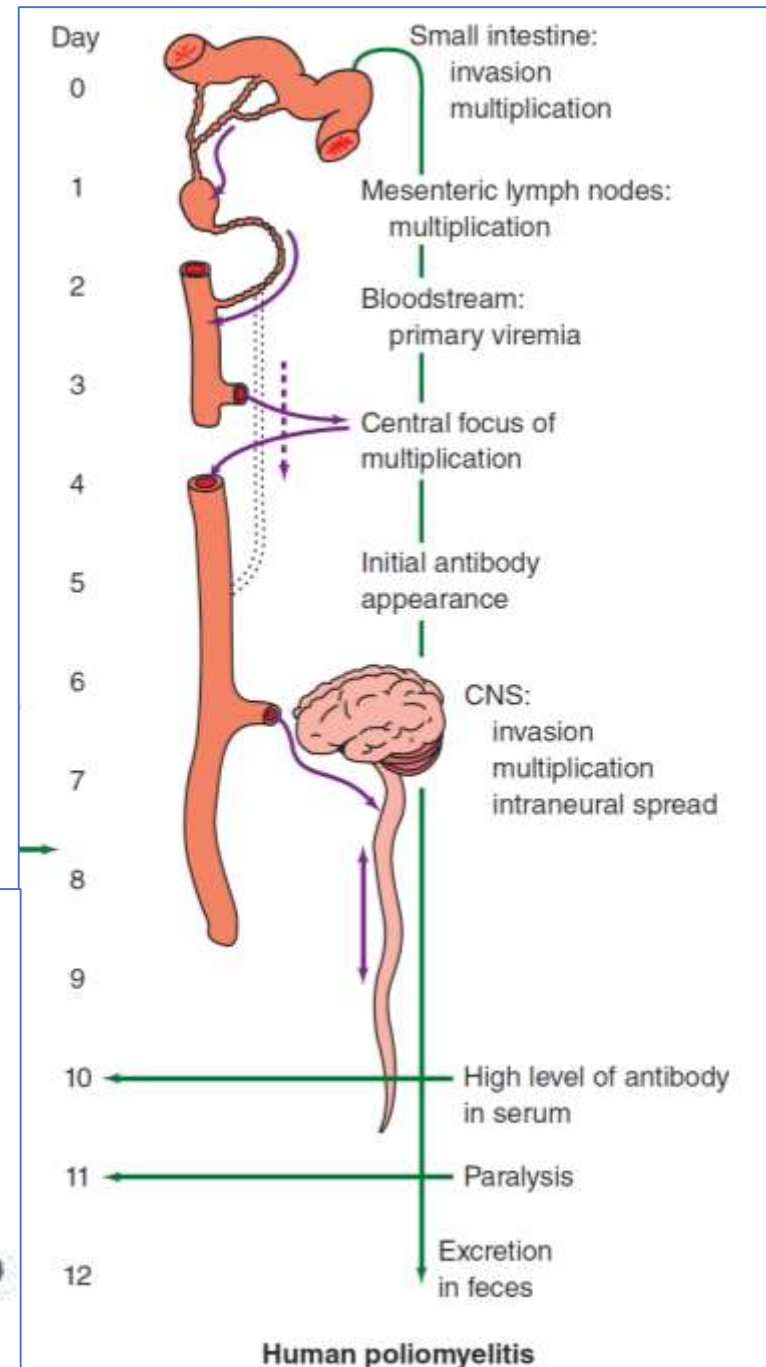
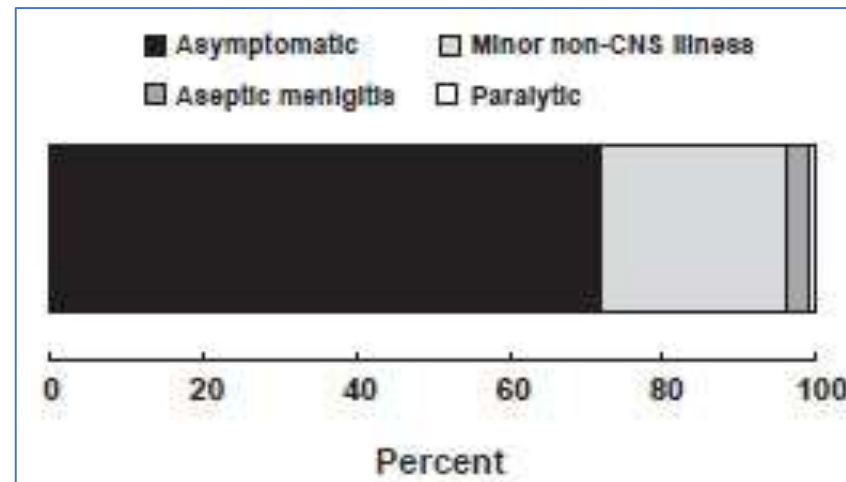
A 62-year-old man reported acute left retro-orbital pain of one week's duration. Physical examination revealed no abnormalities. Three days later, double vision developed, and the next day a rash appeared on the forehead. On repeated examination, it was noted that the patient had swelling of the left upper eyelid, conjunctival congestion, restricted abduction of the left eye, which is diagnostic of a left sixth cranial nerve palsy (right, center, and left gaze; Panels A, B, and C, respectively), and binocular horizontal diplopia. The rash was distributed over the left frontal area. The rest of the eye examination, including extraocular movements, visual acuity, visual field, pupillary evaluation, and funduscopy, was normal. The blood glucose level, erythrocyte sedimentation rate, and C-reactive protein level were normal. A computed tomographic scan of the paranasal sinuses and orbits showed thickened mucosa of the sinuses but was otherwise unremarkable. A diagnosis of herpes zoster ophthalmicus was made.

The patient was treated with gabapentin and acyclovir for one week. Six weeks later, he had minimal residual diplopia, with no postherpetic neuralgia. It is important that this diagnosis be made early, to minimize complications such as corneal ulceration and uveitis, which may threaten vision.



## Viruses With Clinical Implications in the PNS / Poliovirus

- **Poliovirus**, a member of the enterovirus family **causes polio** or **infantile paralysis**.
- Up to 72% of all polio infections in children are asymptomatic
- Fewer than 1% of all polio infections in children result in flaccid paralysis.
- Diagnosis is through viral recovery from stool, or through rising antibody titre in blood.
- In 2012, **only** 223 confirmed cases of polio were reported globally due to widespread vaccination programmes.



Bacteria with Clinical Implications in the PNS / *Borrelia burgdorferi*

- **Lyme disease**, the multisystem infectious disease caused by the tick-borne spirochete ***Borrelia burgdorferi***, causes a broad variety of peripheral nerve disorders, including single or multiple **cranial neuropathies**, painful **radiculopathies**, and diffuse polyneuropathies.
- **Clinical presentation, history, and serology** are important in diagnosis.
- **Doxycycline** is given to adults with suspected Lyme disease.



*Ixodes* ticks (deer tick)



Erythema migrans

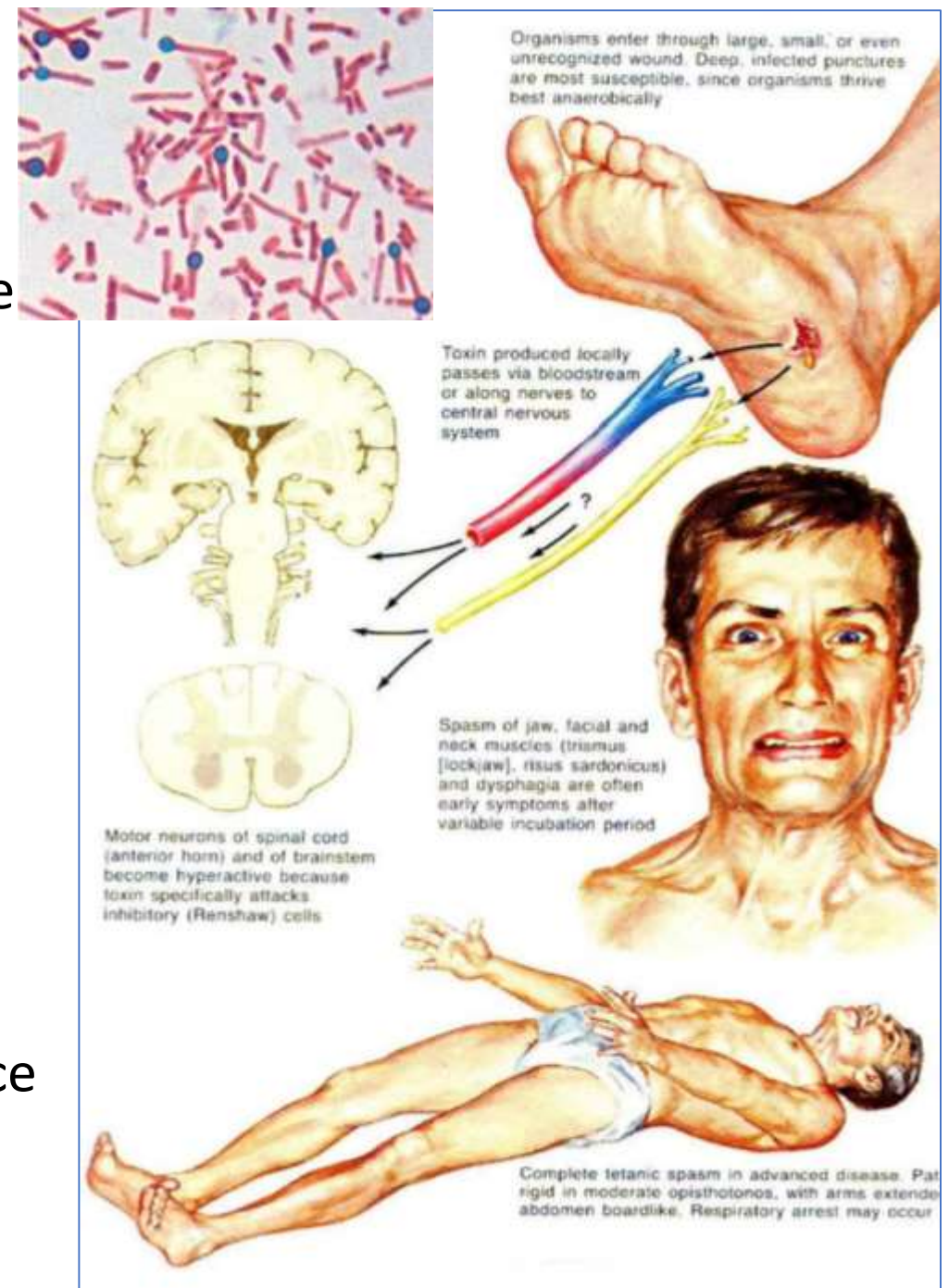


*Borrelia burgdorferi*

In early summer, an 82-year-old right-handed woman from Western Massachusetts developed right-sided upper back pain that radiated down the right arm in the setting of fever, myalgias, generalized fatigue, and erythema migrans just under the right clavicle. She was given a course of doxycycline for presumed Lyme but discontinued it after 3 days. Her pain worsened, and although she did have a pulsatile headache and meningismus, the back pain was much more prominent, progressing to mild weakness in a C6 distribution. She also developed a left-sided cranial nerve VII palsy. She received 4 weeks of IV ceftriaxone for presumed CNS Lyme. Her pain regimen included fentanyl transdermal patch 25

## Bacteria with Clinical Implications in the PNS / *Clostridium tetani*

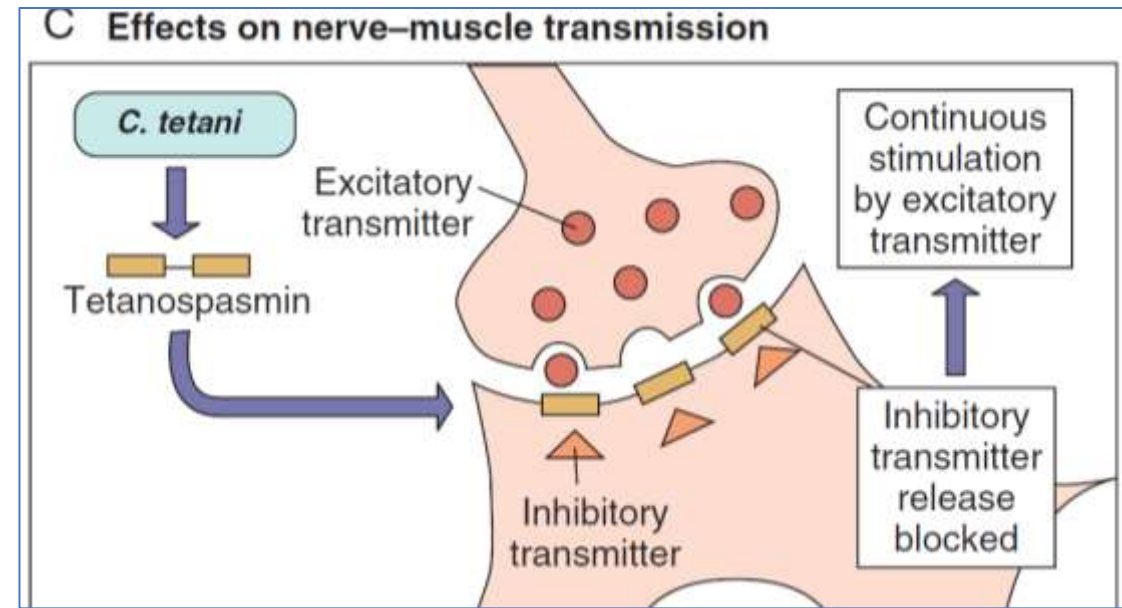
- *C. tetani* is a **spore-forming**, anaerobic, Gram positive rod that causes tetanus.
- *C. tetani* produces **tetanospasmin**.
- Tetanospasmin **inactivates proteins that regulate release of the inhibitory neurotransmitters** glycine and gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA). This leads to unregulated excitatory synaptic activity in the motor neurons, resulting in **spastic paralysis**.
- Disease is relatively rare because of the high incidence of **vaccine-induced immunity**.



Bacteria with Clinical Implications in the PNS / *Clostridium tetani*



Involvement of the masseter muscles (trismus or **lockjaw**) is the presenting sign in most patients. The characteristic **sardonic smile** that results from the sustained contraction of the facial muscles.

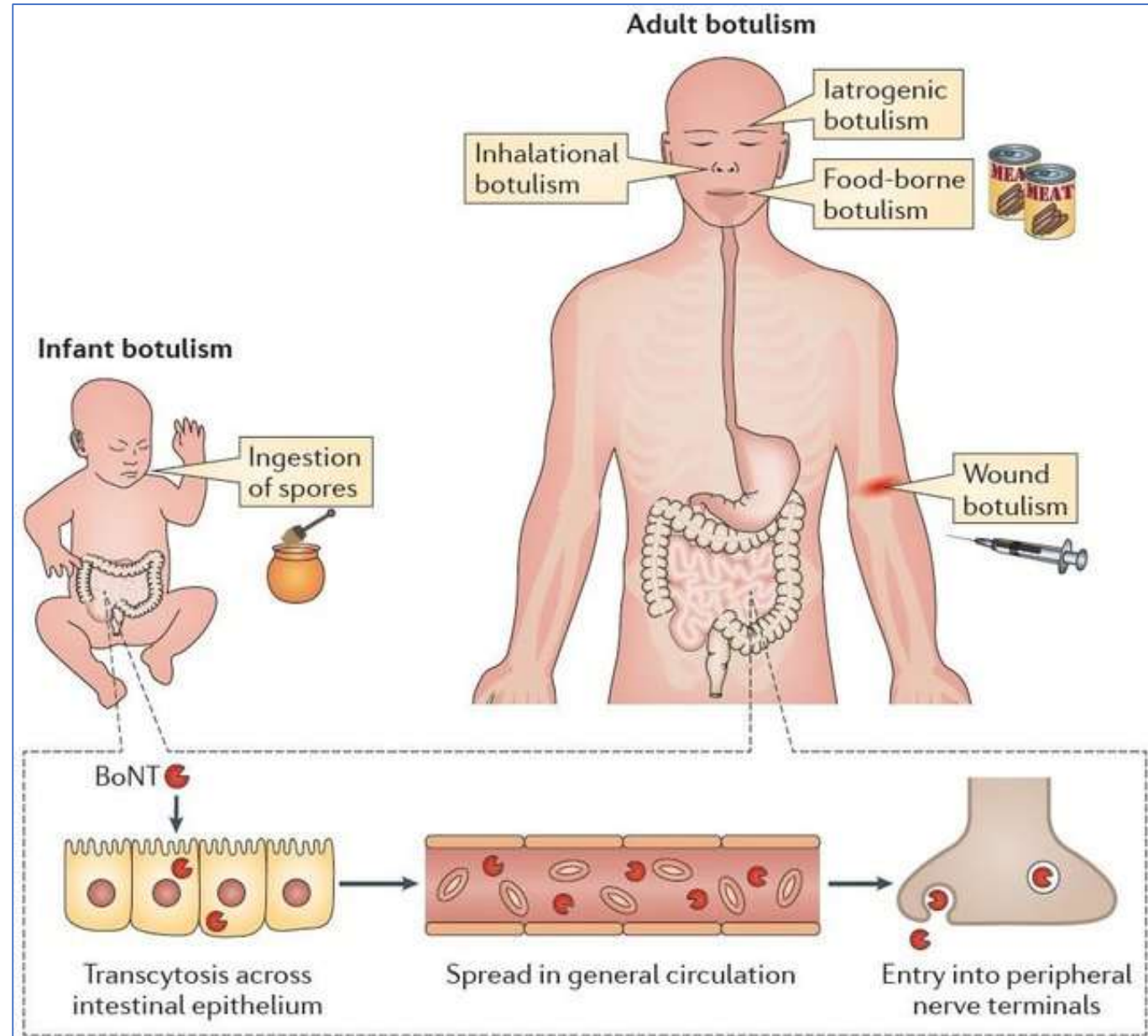


unregulated excitatory synaptic activity in the motor neurons, resulting in **spastic paralysis**. **Generalized tetanus** is the most common form.

- Diagnosis of tetanus is usually based on **physical exam, immunization history, and clinical presentation** while less emphasis is placed on laboratory testing.
- **Admission to the ICU is highly recommended.** Unnecessary procedures and manipulations should be avoided. The patient should be in a quiet room with low traffic. Some patients may even require mechanical ventilation.
- Per current recommendations, human **tetanus immune globulin should be given as soon as tetanus is suspected** at a dose of 3000 to 6000 units. Antimicrobial therapy is typically metronidazole as the preferred treatment for tetanus with penicillin G as an option for second-line therapy with a treatment duration of 1 week to 10 days. It is important to note that antimicrobial therapy plays a relatively minor role in the management of tetanus and of primary importance is **wound debridement and toxin mitigation.**

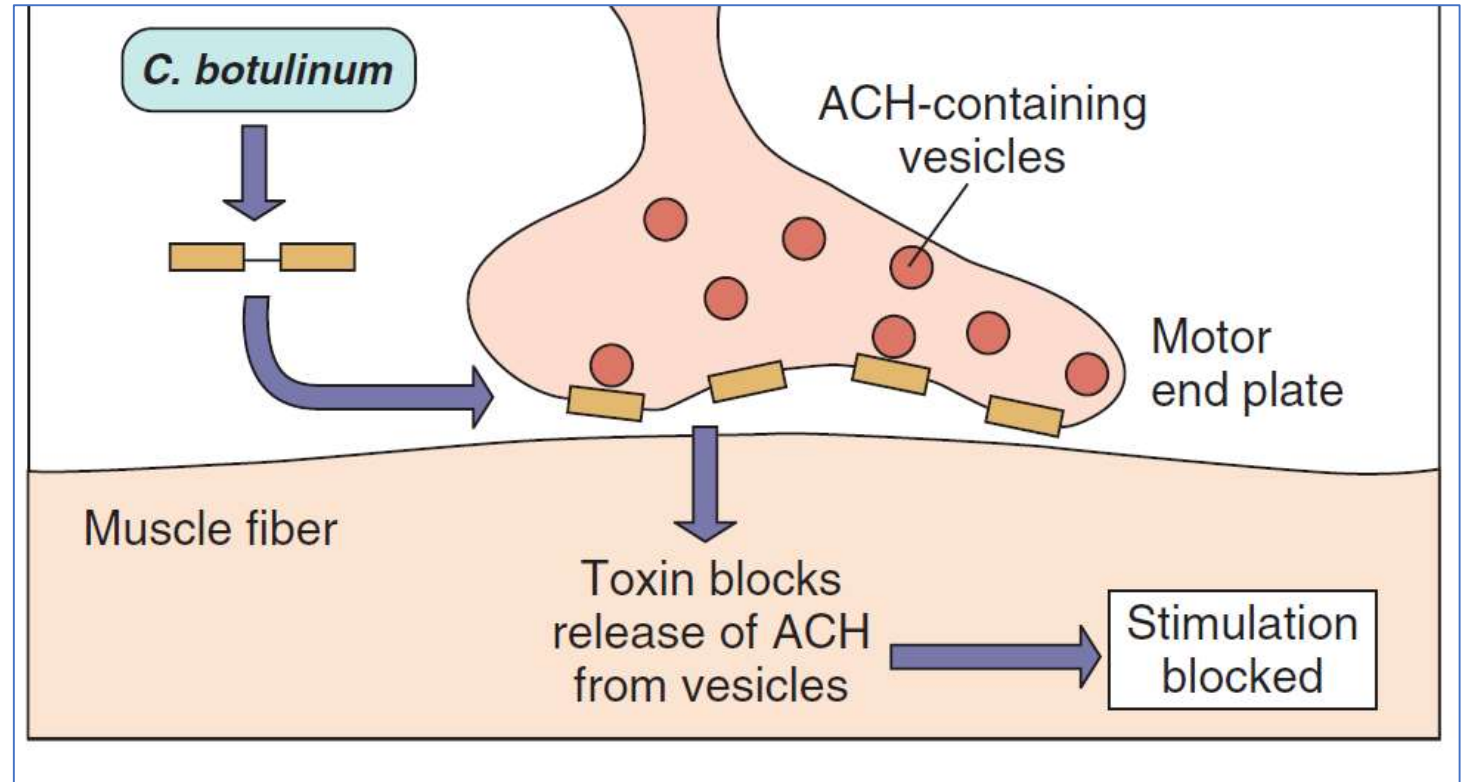
## Bacteria with Clinical Implications in the PNS / *Clostridium botulinum*

- *C. botulinum* is a **spore-forming**, anaerobic, Gram positive rod that causes tetanus.
- Patients with **foodborne botulism** (most are associated with consumption of home-canned foods) typically become weak and dizzy 1 to 3 days after consuming the contaminated food. **Bilateral descending weakness of the peripheral muscles** develops in patients with progressive disease (flaccid paralysis), and death is most commonly attributed to **respiratory paralysis**.
- **Infant botulism:** Associated with consumption of foods (e.g., honey, infant milk powder) contaminated with botulinum spores and ingestion of spore-contaminated soil and dust. In contrast with foodborne botulism, this disease is caused by neurotoxin produced in vivo by *C. botulinum* colonizing the GI tracts of infants.



Bacteria with Clinical Implications in the PNS / *Clostridium botulinum*

- The botulinum neurotoxin remains at the neuromuscular junction, The botulinum endopeptidase then **inactivates the proteins that regulate release of acetylcholine**, blocking neurotransmission at peripheral cholinergic synapses. The resulting clinical presentation of botulism is a **flaccid paralysis**.



- **Initial diagnosis is based on clinical symptoms.** Laboratory confirmation is done by demonstrating the presence of botulinum toxin in serum, stool, or food, or by culturing *C. botulinum* from stool, or a wound
- **Supportive care and the use of antitoxin** have been effective in the treatment of botulism from food-borne, intestinal, and wound exposure. However, the effectiveness of antitoxin in the treatment of inhaled *C. botulinum* has not been proven.

Botulism is a neuroparalytic illness characterized by symmetric, descending flaccid paralysis of motor and autonomic nerves, always beginning with the cranial nerves.

Signs and symptoms in an adult may include:

- Diplopia (double vision)
- Blurred vision
- Ptosis (drooping eyelids)
- Slurred speech
- Dysphagia (difficulty swallowing)
- Dry mouth
- Muscle weakness



## Botulism in Infants

We don't know how most babies with infant botulism came into contact with *C. botulinum* spores, but we do know that these spores can be found in honey. Do not feed honey to children younger than 12 months because it has been linked to some cases of infant botulism.

- Infection with *C. jejuni* is a common cause of **bacterial gastroenteritis**. *Campylobacter* infections are **zoonotic** (mainly Contaminated poultry)
- ***C. jejuni*** is now considered as a **major triggering agent of Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS)**.
- Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) is an immune-mediated demyelinating polyneuropathy of PNS characterized by acute or subacute **symmetrical ascending motor weakness, areflexia, and mild-to-moderate sensory abnormalities**

Microbiological finding	No. (%)	95% CI, %
Stool pathogen isolated <sup>a</sup>	168 (30.6)	27–35
<i>Shigella</i> species	84 (15.3)	12–19
<i>Salmonella</i> species	32 (5.8)	4–8
<i>Campylobacter</i> species	34 (6.2)	4–8
STEC	14 (2.6) <sup>b</sup>	1–4
Other enteropathogens <sup>c</sup>	9 (1.6)	1–3

**NOTE.** STEC, Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli*.

<sup>a</sup> Three patients' stool specimens yielded 2 enteropathogens; each *Shigella* plus 1 each *Plesiomonas* or *Salmonella* species or *E. coli* O111.

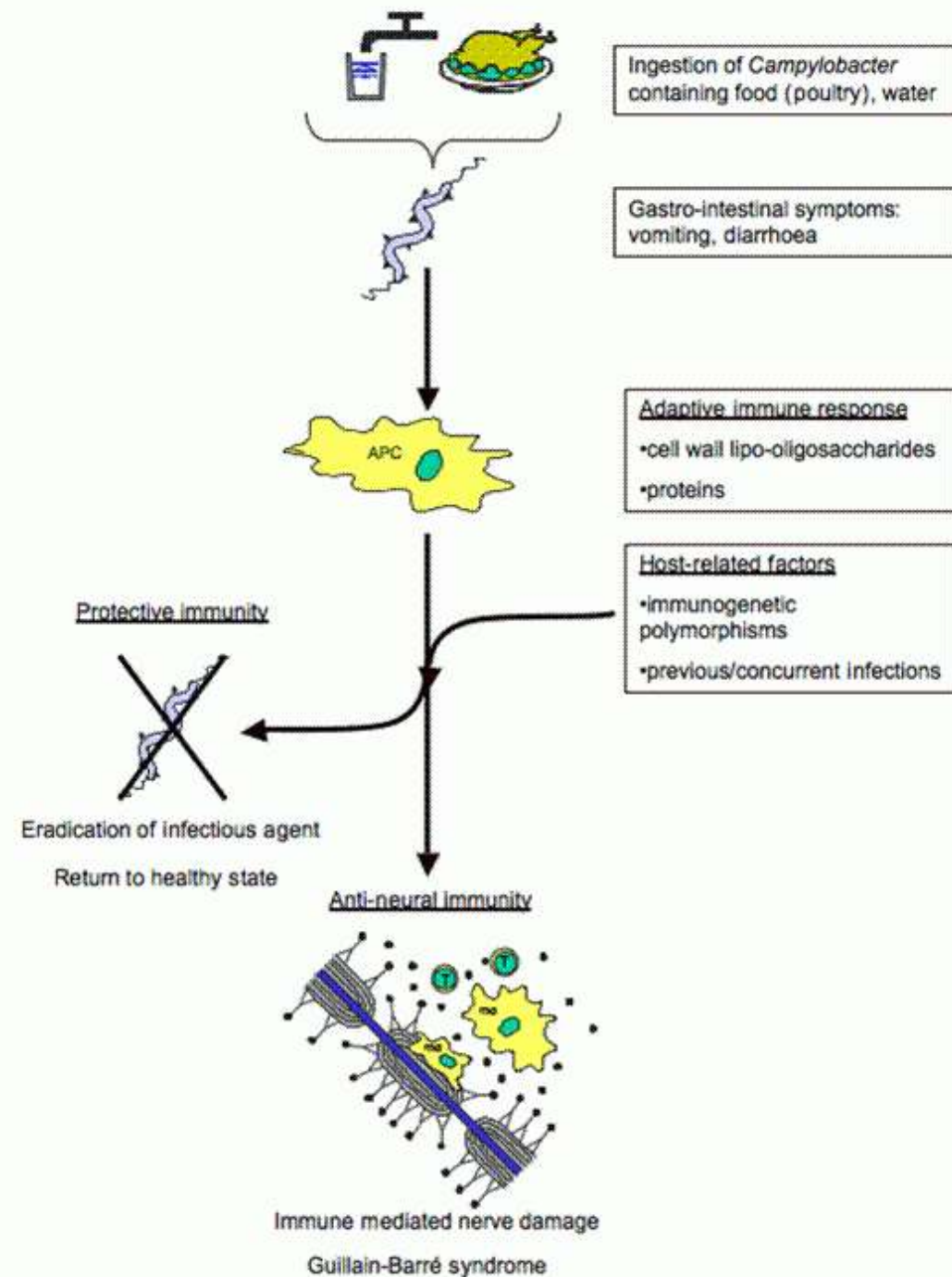
<sup>b</sup> Includes 6 confirmed and 8 possible STEC cases.

<sup>c</sup> *Vibrio* (4), *Yersinia* (4), *Plesiomonas* (1) species.

Microbiological findings among US emergency department patients presenting with 549 episodes of bloody diarrhea at 11 EMERGENCY ID NET sites.

Bacteria with Clinical Implications in the PNS / *Campylobacter jejuni*/ diagnosis and management

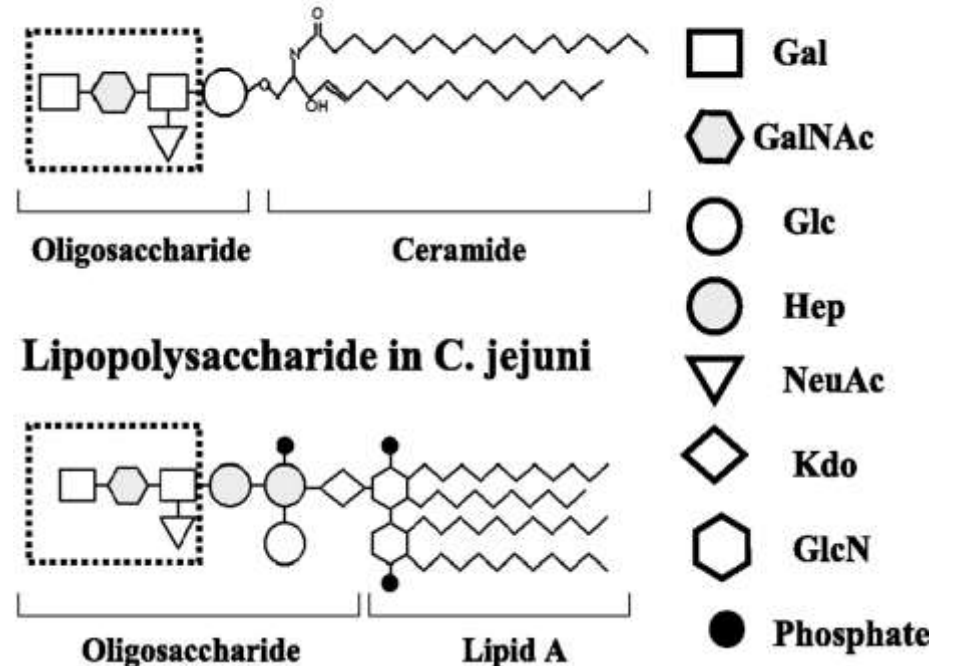
- Molecular mimicry between sialylated lipooligosaccharide structures on the cell envelope of these bacteria and ganglioside epitopes on the human nerves that generates cross-reactive immune responses results in autoimmune-driven nerve damage.
- A **presumptive identification** of isolates is based on growth under selective conditions (**microaerophilic**), typical microscopic morphology (**curved, gram-negative rods**).
- While most *C. jejuni* infections are **self-limiting**, occasionally a more invasive illness can occur that requires effective antimicrobial therapy



Bacteria with Clinical Implications in the PNS / *Campylobacter jejuni*/ diagnosis and management

- Treatment of GBS is required for managing severely paralysed patients who need intensive care and ventilator support and to minimize the nerve damage. Treatments such as **plasma exchange and intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIg)** are indicated for patients who are unable to walk independently while corticosteroids are largely ineffective in GBS

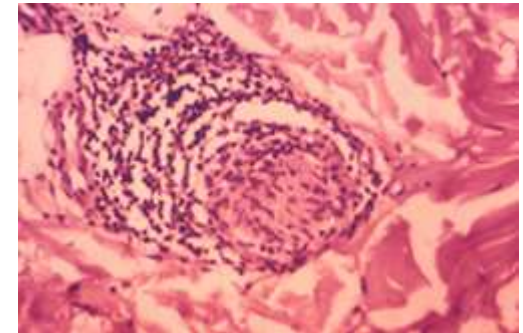
**GM1 ganglioside in nerve cell membrane**



- **Leprosy** جذام (Hansen's disease) is one of the most common causes of nontraumatic peripheral neuropathy in the developing world.
- The causative agent, ***Mycobacterium leprae***, has a predilection for **Schwann cells**, where the organism multiplies unimpeded by organism-specific host immunity, resulting in destruction of myelin, secondary inflammatory changes, and destruction of the nerve architecture.
- The World Health Organization (WHO), in 2009, informed that 17 countries (including India, and Brazil) reported more than 1000 new cases, performing 94% of the new globally detected.



- The disease mainly affects the **skin**, the **peripheral nerves**, mucosal surfaces of the **upper respiratory tract and the eyes**
- Symptoms mainly affect the skin, nerves, and mucous membranes (e.g one or a few **hypopigmented or hyperpigmented skin macules** that exhibit loss of sensation (**anesthesia**) due to infection of the peripheral nerves supplying the region.
- *M. leprae* is morphologically indistinguishable from *M. tuberculosis*. The diagnosis is confirmed by **skin or nerve biopsy and acid fast staining**
- Hansen's disease is treated with multidrug therapy (MDT) using a combination of antibiotics depending on the form of the disease





Spinalonga on Crete, Greece, one of the last leprosy colonies in Europe, closed in 1957.

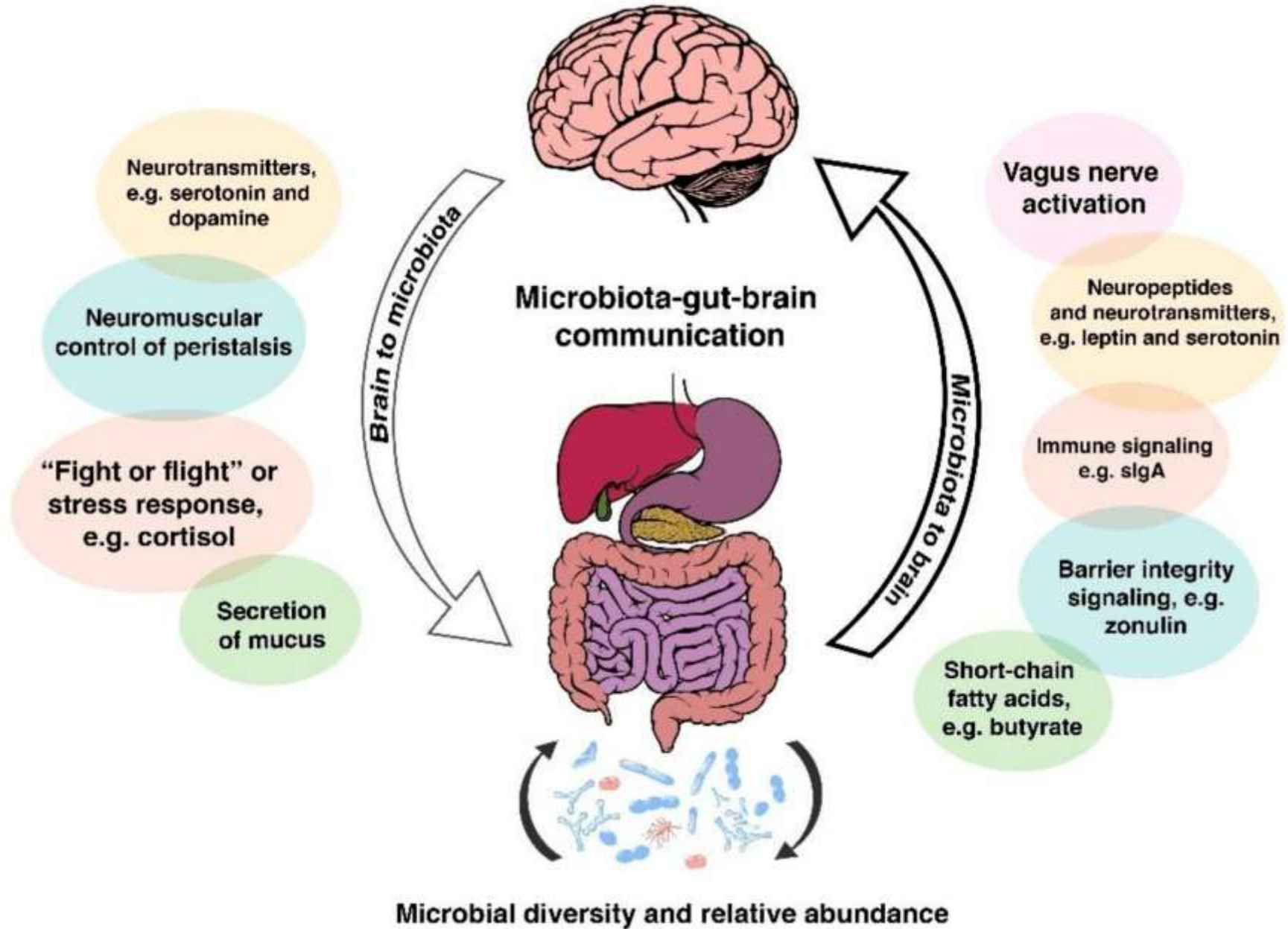


**Leprosy has affected humanity for thousands of years. Leper colonies** or houses became widespread in the Middle Ages, particularly in Europe and India, and were often run by monastic orders. Historically, leprosy has been greatly feared because it causes visible disfigurement and disability, was incurable, and was commonly believed to be highly contagious. A leper colony administered by a Roman Catholic order was often called a lazarus house, after Lazarus, the patron saint of people affected with leprosy.

## The Gut-Brain axis

- The gut-brain axis (GBA) consists of bidirectional communication between the central and the enteric nervous system, linking emotional and cognitive centers of the brain with peripheral intestinal functions. Gut microbiota seem to influence these interactions.
- **Symbiotic microbes** have been shown to regulate **nutrition** and **metabolism** and are critical for the development and function of the **immune system**. More recently, studies have suggested that **gut bacteria can impact neurological outcomes**--altering behaviour and potentially affecting the onset and/or severity of nervous system disorders.
- Most of the data have been acquired using technical strategies consisting in **germ-free animal models, probiotics, antibiotics, and infection studies**.
- In clinical practice, evidence of microbiota-GBA interactions comes from the **association of dysbiosis (abnormal microbiota) with central nervous disorders** (i.e. autism, anxiety-depressive behaviors) and functional gastrointestinal disorders.

# The Gut-Brain axis



## The Gut-Brain axis

### From gut microbiota to brain:

- Production, expression and turnover of neurotransmitters (i.e. serotonin, GABA) and neurotrophic factor (BDNF)
- Protection of intestinal barrier and tight junction integrity
- Modulation of enteric sensory afferents
- Bacterial metabolites
- Mucosal immune regulation

### From brain to gut microbiota:

- Alteration in mucus and biofilm production
- Alteration in motility
- Alteration of intestinal permeability
- Alteration in immune function

Strong evidence suggests that gut microbiota has an important role in bidirectional interactions between the gut and the nervous system. It interacts with CNS by regulating brain chemistry and influencing neuro-endocrine systems associated with stress response, anxiety and memory function. Many of these effects appear to be strain-specific, suggesting a potential role of certain probiotic strains as novel adjuvant strategy for neurologic disorders. In addition, the effects of CNS on microbiota composition are likely mediated by a perturbation of the normal luminal/mucosal habitat that can also be restored by the use of probiotics and possibly by diet. In clinical practice, an example of this interaction is **constituted by Functional gastrointestinal disorders , in particular IBS, now considered a microbiome-GBA disorder.**

## Pathogens With Clinical Implications in the PNS

- **Human immunodeficiency virus**
- **Herpes viruses**
- **Poliovirus**
- *Borrelia burgdorferi*
- *Clostridium tetani*
- *Clostridium botulinum*
- *Mycobacterium leprae*
- *Campylobacter jejuni*

## 1. Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) – HIV-Associated Neuropathy

### Scenario:

A 40-year-old HIV-positive man presents with **burning pain, tingling, and numbness in his feet** that gradually spread upward. He also reports weakness in his legs. His CD4 count is **120 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>**, and he has not been adherent to antiretroviral therapy.

### Key Questions:

- What type of neuropathy is associated with HIV?
- How does HIV directly or indirectly damage the PNS?
- What is the role of ART in managing this condition?

**Diagnosis: HIV-associated distal sensory polyneuropathy (DSP)**, a result of **direct viral effects** and **immune activation** leading to axonal damage.

## 2. Herpes Viruses – Herpes Zoster (Shingles) & Ramsay Hunt Syndrome

### Scenario:

A 58-year-old man develops **severe burning pain** along the **left side of his forehead**, followed by a **vesicular rash** in the same region. A few days later, he reports **difficulty closing his left eye and asymmetric facial weakness**.

### Key Questions:

- Which herpes virus is responsible for these symptoms?
- How does this virus affect the PNS?
- What complications can arise if untreated?

**Diagnosis: Herpes Zoster (Shingles) with Ramsay Hunt Syndrome** (if affecting facial nerve, CN VII), caused by **Varicella-Zoster Virus (VZV) reactivation** in the dorsal root or cranial nerve ganglia.

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/ramsay-hunt-syndrome/symptoms-causes/syc-20351783>

### 3. Poliovirus – Acute Flaccid Paralysis

#### Scenario:

A **6-year-old unvaccinated boy** presents with a **sudden-onset fever, headache, and neck stiffness** followed by **progressive weakness in his right leg**. Over the next 24 hours, his weakness worsens, and he develops **loss of deep tendon reflexes**.

#### Key Questions:

- How does poliovirus affect the PNS?
- What part of the nervous system is primarily targeted?
- How is this condition prevented?

**Diagnosis: Poliomyelitis**, caused by **Poliovirus**, which **targets anterior horn motor neurons** leading to **asymmetric flaccid paralysis**.

#### **4. Borrelia burgdorferi – Lyme Disease with Facial Palsy**

##### **Scenario:**

A 35-year-old man who recently returned from a camping trip presents with **bilateral facial weakness, fatigue, and joint pain**. He recalls a **bullseye-shaped rash (erythema migrans)** that appeared three weeks ago.

##### **Key Questions:**

- What is the most common cranial nerve involved in Lyme neuroborreliosis?
- How does Borrelia burgdorferi cause neuropathy?
- What antibiotic therapy is recommended?

**Diagnosis: Lyme neuroborreliosis with bilateral facial palsy, caused by Borrelia burgdorferi, which can invade peripheral nerves and cause cranial neuropathy.**

## 5. Clostridium tetani – Tetanus

### Scenario:

A **25-year-old construction worker** is brought to the ER with **jaw stiffness, difficulty swallowing, and painful muscle spasms**. His symptoms started a few days after he **stepped on a rusty nail**.

### Key Questions:

- How does the tetanus toxin affect neurotransmission?
- What is the characteristic symptom of severe tetanus?
- What treatments are available?

**Diagnosis: Tetanus**, caused by **Clostridium tetani**. Its toxin **tetanospasmin** blocks **GABA and glycine release**, leading to **spastic paralysis**.

## 6. Clostridium botulinum – Botulism

### Scenario:

A **3-month-old infant** is brought to the hospital with **poor feeding, weak cry, and generalized muscle weakness**. The parents report giving the baby **honey** a week ago.

### Key Questions:

- What is the mechanism of botulinum toxin?
- Why is this condition more common in infants?
- What treatment is required?

**Diagnosis: Infant Botulism**, caused by **Clostridium botulinum**, whose **botulinum toxin blocks acetylcholine release**, causing **flaccid paralysis**.

## **7. Mycobacterium leprae – Leprosy with Peripheral Neuropathy**

### **Scenario:**

A **50-year-old man from a tropical region** presents with **numbness and tingling in his hands**, along with **thickened, hypopigmented skin lesions**. He also has **claw-like deformities** of his fingers and toes.

### **Key Questions:**

- How does *Mycobacterium leprae* damage peripheral nerves?
- What are the two major forms of leprosy?
- What is the best treatment approach?

**Diagnosis: Leprosy (Hansen's Disease)**, caused by *Mycobacterium leprae*, which **invades Schwann cells**, leading to **demyelination and neuropathy**.

## 8. *Campylobacter jejuni* – Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS)

### Scenario:

A **29-year-old man** presents with **progressive weakness in both legs**, which worsened over **three days** and ascended to his arms. He had **diarrhea** two weeks prior. Examination reveals **absent reflexes and bilateral weakness**.

### Key Questions:

- What is the immune-mediated mechanism behind GBS?
- How is *Campylobacter jejuni* involved?
- What are the treatment options?

**Diagnosis: Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS), post-infectious neuropathy, triggered by *Campylobacter jejuni*, which causes molecular mimicry leading to autoantibody-mediated demyelination.**

## Further reading:

- Peripheral Nervous System Manifestations of Infectious Diseases.  
*Neurohospitalist*. 2014
- The gut-brain axis: interactions between enteric microbiota, central and enteric nervous systems.  
*Annals of Gastroenterology* . 2015