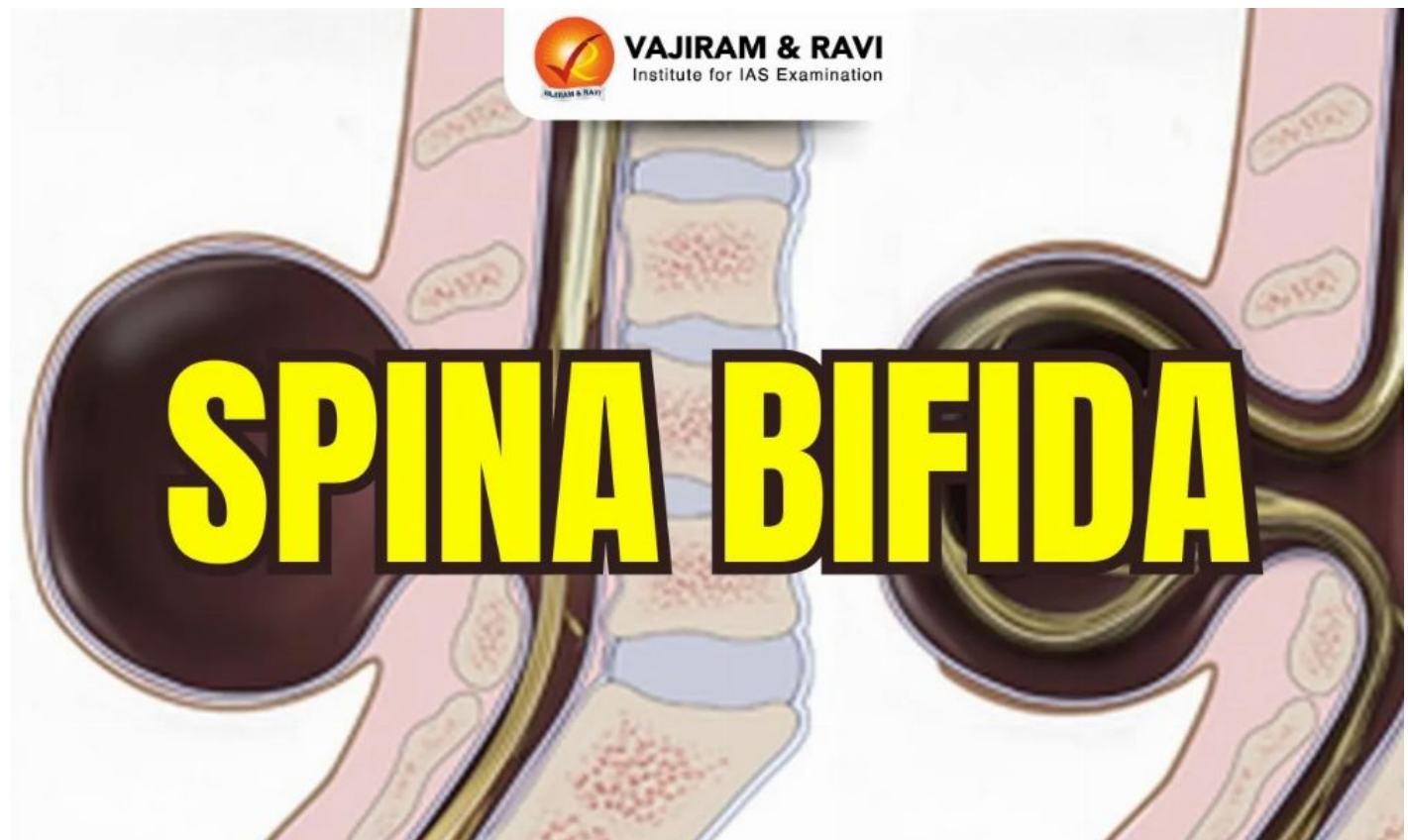


Spina Bifida

January 5, 2026 • vajiramandravi.com



Spina Bifida Latest News

Many countries across the world have initiated programmes to create awareness to prevent Spina Bifida through folic acid supplementation but India is yet to do so.

About Spina Bifida

- It is a **birth defect of the spinal cord** that causes serious childhood paralysis.
- It occurs when the **spine and spinal cord** of a fetus do not fully develop during the **embryonic period**.
- The condition occurs during **early pregnancy**, and can range from mild to severe.
- **Causes:** The **cause is not known**. It's thought that a combination of **genetic, nutritional** and environmental risk factors causes the condition.
- **Types of Spina Bifida**
 - **Myelomeningocele:** It is the **most serious** form of the condition.
 - In this type, part of the **spinal cord and nerves** are **exposed through a sac** at the opening of the gap in the spine.

- **Meningocele:** It is a **less common type** of spina bifida that occurs when the meninges, or the **protective membranes** around the **spinal cord**, push out through the opening in a fluid-filled sac.
- **Spina bifida occulta:** It is the **mildest form** of the condition in which one or more of the vertebrae not forming properly, resulting in a small gap.
- **Symptoms:** Bowel and bladder issues, **back pain, weakness** or lack of movement in the legs and **loss of sensation in the legs**.
- **Prevention:** It can be prevented **largely by having folic acid in the early weeks of pregnancy**.
- **Treatment:** There **is no cure for the condition**; however, treatment options are available to manage symptoms.

Source: TH

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