Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS)

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Health*

Why in news?

Recent research in September 2026 has provided new insights into the causes and symptoms of hEDS, including associations with hormone levels and sleep-related disorders.

- **Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS)** – It is a group of conditions that affect the connective tissue of the human body, typically loosening or weakening it.
- Connective tissue supports and provides flexibility to the skin, tendons, ligaments, bones, blood vessels, and organs.
- EDS is generally inherited and is commonly associated with hypermobility, meaning one's joints can move past their normal range of motion.
- But hypermobile EDS, or hEDS, which often comes with a higher risk of bruising and injury, is only the most common among the 13 types of EDS, some of which are very rare.
- In fact, one of the rare forms of the condition, vascular EDS, can be life-threatening.

- **Causes –** EDS is caused by certain *genetic changes* and is generally passed down to children by their parents.
- These genetic changes affect how one's body makes and uses collagen, a protein that gives structure and strength to joints, skin, blood vessels, and other tissues.
- However, in some people, it can *occur randomly due to genetic mutations* with no family history of the condition.
- **Types of EDS**

Types	Features/Symptoms
Hypermobile EDS (hEDS)	It is the most common form. Hypermobile joints, pain, extreme fatigue, easy bruising, digestive and bladder issues.
Classical EDS	Less common type Mainly affects the skin; very stretchy, fragile skin, bruises easily or splits easily, slow wound healing, noticeable scars
Vascular EDS	Rare but serious, affects one's internal organs; Fragile blood vessels and organs, risk of internal bleeding, bowel rupture, pregnancy complications, and lung collapse.
Kyphoscoliotic EDS (kEDS)	It is also rare & affects spinal curvature and causes joint hypermobility and loose joints.

- **Diagnosis** – Most people with EDS are diagnosed through physical, not genetic, testing.
- Some of the rarer forms of EDS may be diagnosed through genetic testing.
- **Treatment** – There is *no cure for EDS*, but symptoms, especially those of hEDS, can be managed through
    - Physiotherapy and muscle-strengthening exercises
    - Pain management
    - Treatment for digestive or related symptoms
    - Avoiding activities that put excessive stress on joints, such as heavy weightlifting or contact sports
    - Engaging in lower-impact activities like swimming and Pilates
    - For some, however, the symptoms can be disabling.

Reference

The Hindu | Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering