

New Research on Treatment for Vitiligo

Why in News?

A recent research's pre-clinical trial in mice has shown that a natural compound derived from gut-friendly bacteria significantly slows down the progression of vitiligo and may restore pigmentation.

- **Recent Findings** - A microbial product administered weekly to vitiligo-prone mice over an 18-week period.
- By the end, pigment loss on the mice's backs was reduced by **74%**.
- The product reduced killer T cells that attack the skin's pigment and increased protective regulatory T cells, which are typically scarce in vitiligo patients.
- This simple microbial compound could work as a standalone therapy or in synergy with existing treatments.
- **Vitiligo** - Vitiligo is a chronic autoimmune disorder that causes white patches to appear on the skin.
- **Symptoms** - The body's defense system begins to attack the pigment-producing cells and causes de-pigmented white patches on the skin.
- It can also affect hair, eyes, and the inside of the mouth.
- It is linked to other health challenges, including for some persons, higher risks of cardiovascular disease, psychological distress, and endocrine disorders.
- **Causes** - A lack of pigment in your skin (melanin) causes vitiligo. Studies indicate that about 30% of vitiligo cases are genetic
- **Risk age groups** - Vitiligo affects all races and sexes equally.
- There are typically two peaks in persons with vitiligo in adolescence, and then, again, during the 40s and 50s.
- It has been found to be more severe in people with darker skin tones, as found in the Indian population.
- Naturally, the visibility of the discoloration in people with darker skin can also amplify stigma and emotional distress.
- **Prevalence** - It is estimated that vitiligo affects **0.5% to 2% of the global population.**
- The prevalence of vitiligo in India has been invariably reported to be between **0.25% and 4%** of dermatology outpatients and up to 8.8% in Gujarat and Rajasthan.
- Vitiligo is **not life-threatening or contagious.**
- **Treatment** - There **isn't a specific medication** to stop vitiligo from affecting your skin but there are certain drugs that can slow the speed of pigmentation loss.

Reference

[The Hindu | Vitiligo](#)



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