Microbiology (GATE-XL -S, Optional)

Unit 1: Historical Perspective

Discovery of microbial world; Landmark discoveries relevant to the field of microbiology; Controversy over spontaneous generation; Role of microorganisms in transformation of organic matter and in the causation of diseases.

Unit 2: Methods in Microbiology

Pure culture techniques; Principles of microbial nutrition; Enrichment culture techniques for isolation of microorganisms; antigen and antibody detection methods for microbial diagnosis; Light-, phase contrast-, fluorescence- and electron-microscopy; PCR, real-time PCR for quantitation of microbes; Next generation sequencing technologies in microbiology.

Unit 3: Microbial Taxonomy and Diversity

Bacteria, Archaea and their broad classification; Eukaryotic microbes: Yeasts, molds and protozoa; Viruses and their classification; Molecular approaches to microbial taxonomy and phylogeny.

Unit 4: Prokaryotic Cells: Structure and Function

Prokaryotic Cells: cell walls, cell membranes and their biosynthesis, mechanisms of solute transport across membranes, Flagella and Pili, Capsules, Cell inclusions like endospores and gas vesicles; Bacterial locomotion, including positive and negative chemotaxis.

Unit 5: Microbial Growth

Definition of growth; Growth curve; Mathematical expression of exponential growth phase; Measurement of growth and growth yields; Synchronous growth; Continuous culture; Effect of environmental factors on growth; Bacterial biofilm and biofouling.

Unit 6: Control of Micro-organisms

Disinfection and sterilization: principles, methods and assessment of efficacy.

Unit 7: Microbial Metabolism

Energetics: redox reactions and electron carriers; Electron transport and oxidative phosphorylation; An overview of metabolism; Glycolysis; Pentose-phosphate pathway; Entner-Doudoroff pathway; Glyoxalate pathway; The citric acid cycle; Fermentation; Aerobic and anaerobic respiration; Chemolithotrophy; Photosynthesis; Calvin cycle; Biosynthetic pathway for fatty acids synthesis; Common regulatory mechanisms in synthesis of amino acids; Regulation of major metabolic pathways.

Unit 8: Microbial Diseases and Host Pathogen Interaction

Normal microbiota; Classification of infectious diseases; Reservoirs of infection; Nosocomial infection; Opportunistic infections; Emerging infectious diseases; Mechanism of microbial pathogenicity; Nonspecific defense of host; Antigens and antibodies; Humoral and cell mediated immunity; Vaccines; passive immunization; Immune deficiency; Human diseases caused by viruses, bacteria, and pathogenic fungi.

Unit 9: Chemotherapy/Antibiotics

General characteristics of antimicrobial drugs; Antibiotics: Classification molecular mechanism of mode of action and resistance; Antifungal and antiviral drugs.

Unit 10: Microbial Genetics

Types of mutation; UV and chemical mutagens; Selection of mutants; Ames test for mutagenesis; Bacterial genetic system: transformation, conjugation, transduction, recombination, plasmids, transposons; DNA repair; Regulation of gene expression: repression and induction; Operon model; Bacterial genome with special reference to *E.coli*; Phage λ and its life cycle; RNA phages; mutation in virus genomes, virus recombination and reassortment; Basic concept of microbial genomics.

Unit 11: Microbial Ecology

Microbial interactions; Carbon, sulphur and nitrogen cycles; Soil microorganisms associated with vascular plants; Bioremediation; Uncultivable microorganisms; basic concept of metagenomics and meta-transcriptomics.