

# Congenital disorder

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Or [congenital disease](#) is a condition existing at birth and often before birth, or that develops during the first month of life (neonatal disease), regardless of causation. Of these diseases, those characterized by structural deformities are termed "congenital anomalies" and involve defects in or damage to a developing fetus.

Abnormal or anomalous formation or structure; deformity.

Examples: [Cephalocele](#)

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, is a condition present at birth regardless of its cause. Birth defects may result in disabilities that may be physical, intellectual, or developmental. The disabilities can range from mild to severe.

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A birth defect is a problem that happens while a baby is developing in the mother's body. Most birth defects happen during the first 3 months of pregnancy. One out of every 33 babies in the United States is born with a birth defect.

A birth defect may affect how the body looks, works or both. Some birth defects like cleft lip or neural tube defects are structural problems that can be easy to see. To find others, like heart defects, doctors use special tests. Birth defects can vary from mild to severe. Some result from exposures to medicines or chemicals. For example, alcohol abuse can cause fetal alcohol syndrome. Infections during pregnancy can also result in birth defects. For most birth defects, the cause is unknown.

Some birth defects can be prevented. Taking folic acid can help prevent some birth defects. Talk to your doctor about any medicines you take. Some medicines can cause serious birth defects.

Babies with birth defects may need surgery or other medical treatments. Today, doctors can diagnose many birth defects in the womb. This enables them to treat or even correct some problems before the

baby is born.

## Examples

Spina bifida

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