

Spastic cerebral palsy

Spastic [cerebral palsy](#) (CP) is one of the most common types of cerebral palsy. It is characterized by muscle [stiffness](#) or tightness, known as [spasticity](#), which affects [movement](#) and [coordination](#). This type of CP occurs due to damage to the brain's motor control centers, specifically in the areas of the brain that control voluntary muscle movements. The damage typically occurs during fetal development or shortly after birth.

Symptoms

- **Muscle stiffness:** Spasticity causes muscles to be rigid and may lead to abnormal postures or joint deformities.
- **Limited range of motion:** Affected individuals often have trouble with joint movement, which can impact walking, sitting, or other daily activities.
- **Abnormal reflexes:** There might be exaggerated reflexes, like the "Babinski sign," where the big toe curls upward when the sole of the foot is stroked.
- **Gait abnormalities:** Depending on the severity and areas affected, individuals may walk with an abnormal gait, like dragging a foot or walking on tiptoes.

Lower urinary tract symptoms (LUTS) in children with spastic cerebral palsy (CP) are common and can significantly impact the quality of life. These symptoms may include incontinence, urgency, frequency, and nocturia, among others.

Types of Spastic Cerebral Palsy:

1. **Spastic hemiplegia:** Affects one side of the body, usually the arm and leg on the same side.
2. **Spastic diplegia:** Primarily affects the legs, leading to difficulty walking and balance issues.
3. **Spastic quadriplegia:** Affects all four limbs, the trunk, and sometimes the face and mouth, leading to more severe movement impairment.

Causes: - **Brain injury:** The primary cause of spastic CP is an injury to the brain's motor areas during pregnancy, childbirth, or infancy. - **Premature birth:** Babies born prematurely are at a higher risk of developing CP, as their brains may not have fully developed. - **Infections during pregnancy:** Maternal infections like rubella or cytomegalovirus can increase the risk. - **Trauma:** Physical injury to the brain, such as a lack of oxygen (asphyxia), can also cause cerebral palsy.

Treatment: While there is no cure for cerebral palsy, treatment focuses on managing symptoms and improving quality of life. Common treatments include: - **Physical therapy:** Helps improve strength, flexibility, and coordination. - **Occupational therapy:** Assists with daily tasks and fine motor skills. - **Speech therapy:** Aims to improve communication skills if the facial muscles or speech areas are affected. - **Medications:** Muscle relaxants like baclofen or botulinum toxin (Botox) injections may help reduce spasticity. - **Surgical intervention:** In some cases, surgery may be

necessary to release tight muscles or correct bone deformities. - **Assistive devices:** Orthotics, braces, or wheelchairs may be used to improve mobility and independence.

Early intervention is crucial for maximizing the individual's potential and improving overall functioning.

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