
World Cerebral Palsy Day
6 October

Cerebral Palsy

Risk and Diagnosis

Cerebral palsy (CP) is a group of permanent disorders of the brain that affect movement and coordination. These disorders are caused by non-progressive injury to the brain before birth, during birth or in the early years of life. CP affects about 2 to 3 in 1,000 live births and is the most common cause of childhood disability in the United States. It can affect people of all ages and can be mild to severe in nature.

Risk Factors:
- Premature birth
- Infection of the baby in the womb (intrauterine infection)
- Birth injury
- Injuries sustained during the birth process
- Injuries suffered after birth

Diagnosis:
CP is diagnosed based on the presence of motor or movement problems and delays in motor development. The diagnosis is made by a pediatrician, neurologist, or developmental pediatrician. The diagnosis is typically made after observing signs of CP in babies and children.

Signs of CP:
- Difficulty with movement
- Poor coordination
- Poor balance
- Delayed development
- Inability to move certain parts of the body

Types of CP:
- Spastic CP: the most common type, characterized by muscle stiffness and difficulty with movement
- Ataxic CP: characterized by unsteady movement and poor balance
- Dyskinetic CP: characterized by slow, writhing movements of the hands and face
- Mixed CP: a combination of spastic, ataxic, and dyskinetic CP

Management:
The management of CP is focused on improving function, reducing pain and spasticity, and preventing complications. Treatment options may include physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and medication.

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