

## Cerebral Palsy in Children : Types and its Symptoms

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### Introduction

Cerebral palsy (CP) is a term used to describe a group of disorders that affect a person's ability to move, balance, and maintain posture. Cerebral palsy is the most common childhood motor disability. Soreness or trouble using the muscles is referred to as palsy. CP is associated with abnormal brain development or brain damage, which impairs a person's ability to control their muscles.

CP symptoms differ from person to person. A person with severe CP may require special equipment to walk, or may be unable to walk at all and require lifelong care. A person with mild CP, on the other hand, may walk a little awkwardly but may not require any special assistance. CP does not worsen over time, though the specific symptoms may change over the course of a person's life.

Children with ataxic cerebral palsy may walk with their feet spread apart and with an unbalanced or jerky gait. They may be unable to get their muscles to do other things, such as reach for a fork. Children with CP of any type can have vision, hearing, speech, eating, behaviour, and learning issues [1].

Clumsiness, imprecision, or instability characterise ataxic movements. Gestures are not smooth and may appear jerky or disorganised. Ataxia causes incoordination when a person attempts to perform voluntary movements such as walking or picking up objects.

Every child is affected differently by cerebral palsy. Several children can move around with the help of a walker or brace, while others may be unable to stand or walk. The condition's social and developmental aspects also vary greatly. Hemiplegia is a condition in which one side of the body is affected [2].

Damage to the motor cortex and the pyramidal tracts of the brain, which link up the motor cortex to the spinal cord, causes spastic cerebral palsy. Understanding how well the motor cortex and pyramidal tracts function helps to explain how damage to these systems affects movement in people with spastic CP.

Minor cerebral palsy refers to motor impairments caused by minor brain damage during development. Motor impairments may go unnoticed in the early years of childhood because the damage is not as severe. However, motor impairments in children with mild cerebral palsy may become more apparent as they grow. Fortunately, it is never too late to make a full recovery. Individuals with cerebral palsy can improve their movements even as adults [3,4].

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Different factors can influence how mild cerebral palsy affects movement. Many children's symptoms are so subtle that motor impairments are not visible until the child starts moving around on purpose.

The Gross Motor Function Classification System (GMFCS) is frequently used to determine the severity of a person's cerebral palsy. It is divided into five levels, with level 1 being the mildest and level 5 being the most severe.

GMFCS level 1 is frequently assigned to people with mild cerebral palsy. These people can usually walk and do their daily activities without assistance. Mild CP can go unnoticed and, as a result, untreated for years because they can maintain their independence. Nevertheless, it is critical to understand the symptoms of mild CP in order to prevent complications from developing [5].

Kids with dyskinetic CP typically struggle with walking, balance, coordination, tremors, and object grasping. They struggle to control their arms, hands, feet, and legs. Movement is frequently uncontrollable, ranging from slow to rapid and jerky. Young children may struggle with tongue control, which can lead to feeding issues.

Seizures, ranging from mild to severe, are also a risk for children with mixed cerebral palsy. They may also have swallowing difficulties, putting them at risk of malnutrition [6].

Furthermore, children with mixed CP are at risk of developing mild to severe intellectual disabilities.

## Symptoms

- Social interaction and emotional health issues
- Pain, weakness, and fatigue
- Hearing loss and vision problems
- Delayed development
- Impaired vision
- Drooling
- Incontinence
- Infections
- Learning disabilities
- Dental issues
- Spinal deformities

Remember that each child is unique. While one child may develop a slew of CP symptoms, another may only develop a few.

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