

What is Cerebral Palsy?

Cerebral palsy is a physical disability that affects movement and posture.

It is the most common physical disability in childhood.

17 million people with cerebral palsy worldwide

7,000 people with cerebral palsy in New Zealand

You can help advance our knowledge and research into cerebral palsy by joining a Cerebral Palsy Register. Find out more at cpregister.com

1 in 500

New Zealand babies is diagnosed with cerebral palsy. There is no known cure.



MOTOR TYPES

SPASTIC: 70-80%.
Most common form. Muscles appear stiff and tight. Arises from Motor Cortex damage.



DYSKINETIC: 6%.
Characterised by involuntary movements. Arises from Basal Ganglia damage.

MIXED TYPES:
Combination damage.

ATAXIC: 6%

Characterised by shaky movements. Affects balance and sense of positioning in space. Arises from Cerebellum damage.

PARTS OF THE BODY

Cerebral palsy can affect different parts of the body

QUADRIPLEGIA/ BILATERAL:



Both arms and legs are affected. The muscles of the trunk, face and mouth are often also affected.

DIPLEGIA/ BILATERAL:



Both legs are affected. The arms may be affected to a lesser extent.

HEMIPLEGIA/ UNILATERAL:



One side of the body (one arm and one leg) is affected

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

The gross motor skills (e.g. sitting and walking) of children and young people with cerebral palsy can be categorised into 5 different levels using a tool called the Gross Motor Function Classification System (GMFCS) developed by CanChild in Canada.



GMFCS Level I

GMFCS Level II



GMFCS Level III

GMFCS Level IV

GMFCS Level V

Source: Professor H K Graham, Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, Australia

MANUAL ABILITY

At least two thirds of children with cerebral palsy will have movement difficulties affecting one or both arms. Almost every daily activity can be impacted.



Eating

Dressing

Writing

Catching a ball

ASSOCIATED IMPAIRMENTS

Children with cerebral palsy may also have a range of physical and cognitive impairments.

1 in 3

is unable to walk



1 in 4

is unable to talk



3 in 4

experience pain



1 in 4

has epilepsy



1 in 4

has a behaviour disorder



1 in 2

has an intellectual impairment



1 in 10

has a severe vision impairment



1 in 4

has bladder control problems



1 in 5

has sleep disorder



1 in 5

has saliva control problems

