

CEREBRAL PALSY

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WHAT IS IT?

- Cerebral Palsy (CP) is a non-progressive disorder that is caused by damage that occurs to the immature, developing brain most often before birth or within the first month after birth. This presents with secondary musculoskeletal impairments in movement, muscle tone and/or posture while injury to the brain is static.
- Brain injury caused by: lack of oxygen to brain, fetal stroke, maternal intrauterine infections, gene mutations, traumatic head injury, infant infections cause brain swelling.
- Classified using the GMFCS classification scale
 - A five-level, age-categorized system that places children with CP into categories of severity that represent meaningful difference in motor function
- Distribution of impairments: diplegia, hemiplegia, quadriplegia
- Movement abnormality: spastic, dyskinetic, ataxic, mixed
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SPECIAL TESTS



- Clinical diagnosis made when child is not reaching motor milestones and exhibits abnormal muscle tone/differences in movement patterns
- Imaging, blood work, EEGS to rule out other diagnoses
- Follow up necessary to ensure brain injury is non-progressive
- MRI/neuro-imaging

DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS

- Atypical motor trajectories associated with premature birth
- Brain tumors
- Metabolic disorders



TREATMENT EXAMPLES



- Strength, flexibility/ ROM, motor development, mobility
- Focus of treatment changes as child ages to address function and mobility needs
- Positioning, bracing, equipment recommendations
- Goal = increase independence to participate

EXAMPLE QUESTION

A child with cerebral palsy is able to walk using an assistive device as their primary form of mobility. What GMFCS classification level would they be?

1. Level 5
2. Level 2
3. Level 3
4. Level 4



Answer: Level 3

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