

Cerebral Palsy (CP) is a group of neurological disorders that permanently affects muscle coordination and body movement. It is caused by an injury or non-progressive malformation of the brain that occurs in the developing foetus or during infancy.

CP could be associated with Intellectual Disability in some, but not all, children.

CP affects an estimated 25 lakh people in India, i.e. up to 3 cases per 1000 live births.

CP is not curable. However, early interventions can help reduce the impact of CP on the body and the individual's quality of life.

ce•re•bral/of the brain pal•sy/ lack of muscle control

CLASSIFICATION OF CEREBRAL PALSY

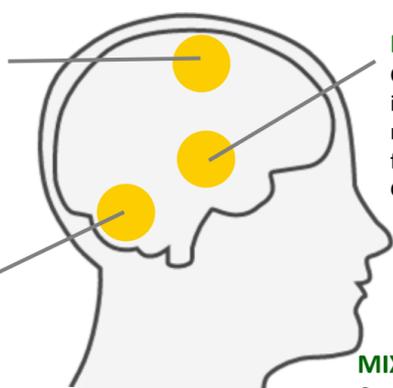
By lack of muscle control

**SPASTIC:** Muscles appear tight and stiff. Arises from Motor Cortex damage. Most common form.

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

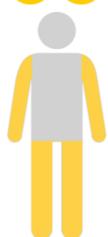
**DYSKINETIC**  
Characterised by involuntary movements. Arises from Basal Ganglia Damage.

**MIXED TYPES**  
Combination damage leading to a mix of the other 3 types.



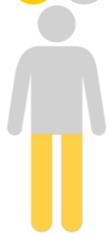
By number of limbs affected

**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.

What is the Issue?



Are you aware that taking a 'care' approach rather than a cure approach, could improve the quality of life of persons with CP?

Although the brain damage which causes CP is permanent, significant gains in locomotion and intellectual ability can be made if persons with CP are treated using a holistic 'care' approach. In India, an acute lack of qualified professionals makes such an approach unlikely. Most children with CP are dealt with solely by physiotherapists. NGOs often step in to provide a wider selection of services, but this does not happen in each case. An initial lack of improvement should not lead to discouragement. The brain is plastic and able to overcome many of its challenges with training. If a child with CP gets the range of services required, he/she can have a much better quality of life.

**An initial lack of improvement should not lead to discouragement. The brain can 'learn' and overcome many challenges with training.**

What needs to be done ?



Ensuring an early diagnosis of CP including type, impairments, and specific needs of the child will help to tackle the fundamental issues affecting the child's quality of life.



Consulting a multi-disciplinary team of health care professionals will produce a customised comprehensive evaluation and treatment plan.



The goal is to improve the child's quality of life through timely and adequate help, and assistive devices.



Emphasis must be placed on each child's ability to productively contribute to his/her own community and family.

To further understand the reasons behind these statistics and their possible solutions, look out for our upcoming issues of Fast Facts by visiting the following links:

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

