Developmental Disabilities

URL of this page: http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/developmentaldisabilities.html

Developmental disabilities are severe, long-term problems. They may be physical, such as blindness. They may affect mental ability, such as learning disorders. Or the problem can be both physical and mental, such as Down syndrome. The problems are usually life-long, and can affect everyday living.

There are many causes of developmental disabilities, including

- These cause conditions such as Down syndrome and Rett syndrome.
- Prenatal exposure to substances. Drinking alcohol when pregnant can cause fetal alcohol spectrum disorders.
- Certain viral infections during pregnancy
- Preterm birth

Often there is no cure, but treatment can help the symptoms. Treatments include physical, speech, and occupational therapy. Special education classes and psychological counseling can also help.

**NIH: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development**

**Start Here**


**Overviews**

- Developmental Disabilities [http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/dd/default.htm] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

**Latest News**


**Diagnosis/Symptoms**


**Treatment**

Prevention/Screening


Coping

- Also available in Spanish [http://familydoctor.org/familydoctor/es/kids/parenting/caring-for-a-person-who-has-mental-retardation-or-developmental-disabilities-mrdd.printerview.html]

Specific Conditions

- Intellectual Disability [http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/dd/ddmr.htm] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Related Issues

- Also available in Spanish [http://nichcy.org/espanol/publicaciones/cartas]
- If You're Concerned - Act Early [http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/concerned.html] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) [http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/learning/iep.html] (Nemours Foundation)
- Also available in Spanish [http://kidshealth.org/parent/en_espanol/recuperacion/iip_ascii.html]
- Overview of Early Intervention [http://nichcy.org/babies/overview] (National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities)
- Also available in Spanish [http://www.hscfoundation.org/aboutus/publications/partnering_with_schools_spanish_guide.pdf]
- Also available in Spanish [http://kidshealth.org/parent/en_espanol/recuperacion/speech_therapy_esp.html]
• Taking Your Child to a Therapist [http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/finding_therapist.html] (Nemours Foundation)
  Also available in Spanish [http://kidshealth.org/parent/en_espanol/emociones/finding_therapist_esp.html]

Videos
• Baby Steps: Learn the Signs. Act Early [http://www.cdc.gov/CDCTV/BabySteps/] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Clinical Trials
• ClinicalTrials.gov: Mental Retardation [http://clinicaltrials.gov/search/open/condition=%22Mental+Retardation%22] NIH (National Institutes of Health)

Genetics

Research

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)
• Article: Neurodevelopmental outcome in extremely preterm infants at 2.5 years after... [http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23632725?tool=MedlinePlus]

Directories

Organizations
• Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/aidd/]
• Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [http://www.cdc.gov/]
  Also available in Spanish [http://www.cdc.gov/spanish/]
• National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities [http://nichcy.org/]
• National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke [http://www.ninds.nih.gov] NIH
  Also available in Spanish [http://espanol.ninds.nih.gov]

Law and Policy
• Americans with Disabilities Act - ADA Home Page [http://www.ada.gov] (Department of Justice)
  Also available in Spanish [http://nichcy.org/espanol/discapacidades/categorias]
• Services in School for Children with Special Needs: What Parents Need to Know
Statistics

Children
- Kids’ Quest on Disability and Health [http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/kids/] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Seniors
- Older Adults and Their Aging Caregivers [http://www.aaid.org/content_181.cfm] (American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities)

Patient Handouts
  Also available in Spanish [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/spanish/ency/article/001533.htm]
  Also available in Spanish [http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/001523.htm]

You may also be interested in these related encyclopedia pages:

You may also be interested in these related MedlinePlus topics:

The primary NIH organization for research on Developmental Disabilities is the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke [http://www.ninds.nih.gov/]

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