

Neurological (and related) Conditions

Acquired Brain Injury (ABI)

Any injury to the brain that was acquired as a result of or from the point of birth, whether disease or trauma based, negatively effecting the expected normal functioning of the brain.

Agnosia

Loss of the ability to interpret sensory stimuli, such as sounds or images.

Anoxia

A condition caused by a total lack of oxygen in the blood or tissues of the body. This condition is preceded by hypoxia.

Anxiety

Everyone experiences anxiety during their lives, it is characterised by feeling uncertain, tense, uncomfortable, nervous etc. Short term anxiety can be useful and can enhance performance e.g. during exams. However in some people feelings of anxiety can be overwhelming, persistent, and can have a detrimental affect on their daily lives.

Aphasia

Partial or total loss of the ability to articulate ideas or comprehend spoken or written language, resulting from damage to the brain caused by injury or disease.

Apraxia

Total or partial loss of the ability to perform coordinated movements or manipulate objects in the absence of motor or sensory impairment.

Asperger's Syndrome

A life-long developmental disorder, usually of childhood, characterized by impairments in social interactions and repetitive behaviour patterns.

Autism

A persistent developmental disorder characterized by severe deficits in social interaction and communication, by an extremely limited range of activities and interests, and often by the presence of repetitive, stereotyped behaviours.

Autonomic Dysfunction

Broad term that describes any disease or malfunction of the autonomic nervous system which usually regulates involuntary action, as of the intestines, heart, glands, etc.

Bipolar Disorder

A psychiatric diagnosis that causes unusual shifts in mood, energy, activity levels, and the ability to carry out day-to-day tasks.

Brain Injury (see also Acquired and Traumatic brain injury)

A statutory definition of "brain injury" is: any injury to the brain regardless of age at onset, whether mechanical or infectious in origin, including brain trauma, brain damage and traumatic head injury, the results of which are expected to continue indefinitely, and may constitute substantial impairment(s) for the individual, and which directly results in any one or more of the following: attention impairment, cognition impairment, language impairment, memory impairment, conduct disorder, motor disorder or any other neurological dysfunction.

Cerebral Arteriosclerosis

Hardening of the arteries of the brain, sometimes resulting in an organic mental disorder, such as dementia. Also known as multiple infarct dementia.

Cerebral Atrophy

Cerebral atrophy is a common feature of many of the diseases that affect the brain. Atrophy of any tissue means loss of cells. In brain tissue, atrophy describes a loss of neurons and the connections between them. Atrophy can be generalized, which means that all of the brain has shrunk; or it can be focal, affecting only a limited area of the brain and resulting in a decrease of the functions that area of the brain controls.

Cerebral Palsy
An umbrella term encompassing a group of non-progressive motor conditions that cause physical disability in human development, chiefly in the various areas of body movement.
Charcot-Marie-Tooth Disease
Inherited disorder of nerves (neuropathy) that is characterized by loss of muscle tissue and touch sensation, predominantly in the feet and legs but also in the hands and arms in the advanced stages of disease. Also known as Inherited Genetic Motor and Sensory Neuropathy.
Chorea
Various disorders of the nervous system marked by involuntary, jerky movements, especially of the arms, legs, and face, and by uncoordination.
Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
A variably debilitating disorder generally defined by persistent fatigue unrelated to exertion, not substantially relieved by rest, and accompanied by the presence of other specific symptoms for a minimum of six months.
Depression
There are a number of different types of depression but most are normally indicated by persistent or regularly recurring feelings of sadness, low spirits and of being 'depressed'. Everyone experiences these feelings at some points during their lives, a diagnosis of depression is made when these feelings are persistent, re-occur regularly and/or begin to interfere with the persons everyday life. There are varying degrees of depression but at its most severe it can prevent the person from carrying on with their everyday life and can be life threatening.
Dyslexia
Dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty which mainly affects the development of literacy and language related skills.
Dyspraxia
Dyspraxia is generally recognised to be an impairment or immaturity of the organisation of movement. Associated with this may be problems of language, perception and thought.
Dystonia
Dystonia is a neurological movement disorder, in which sustained muscle contractions cause twisting and repetitive movements or abnormal postures. The disorder may be hereditary or caused by other factors such as birth-related or other physical trauma, infection, poisoning (e.g., lead poisoning) or reaction to pharmaceutical drugs, particularly neuroleptics.
Encephalitis
Encephalitis is an inflammation of the brain. The inflammation is a reaction of the body's immune system to infection or invasion. During the inflammation, the brain's tissues become swollen. The combination of the infection and the immune reaction to it can cause headache and a fever, as well as more severe symptoms in some cases.
Encephalomyelitis
Inflammation of both the brain (encephalitis) and spinal cord (myelitis). Similar to encephalitis. The lesions, however, include a significant involvement of the spinal cord. Many of the causes are viral as they are in encephalitis. Again the post inflammation brain injury can be apparent and varying levels of paralysis due to the spinal cord lesions damage.
Epilepsy
A tendency to have recurrent seizures. A seizure is caused by a sudden burst of excess electrical activity in the brain, causing a temporary disruption in the normal message passing between brain cells, resulting in the brain's messages becoming halted or mixed up.
Huntington's Disease
A rare inherited disease of the central nervous system characterized by progressive dementia, abnormal posture, and involuntary movements. The typical age of onset is between 30 and 50 years. Also called Huntington's chorea.

Hydrocephalus

A usually congenital condition in which an abnormal accumulation of fluid in the cerebral ventricles causes enlargement of the skull and compression of the brain, destroying much of the neural tissue.

Hypoxia

Condition in which tissues of the brain are starved of oxygen, causing diffuse and significant brain injury.

Intrusive obsessive thoughts

Unwelcome involuntary thoughts, images, or unpleasant ideas that may become obsessions, are upsetting or distressing, and can be difficult to manage or eliminate. Intrusive thoughts, urges, and images are of inappropriate things at inappropriate times, usually falling into three categories: inappropriate aggressive thoughts, inappropriate sexual thoughts, or blasphemous religious thoughts. Most people experience these thoughts when they are associated with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and depression.

Korsakoff's syndrome

A syndrome of severe mental impairment characterized by loss of coordination, disorientation, and memory loss for which the patient compensates by confabulation. It is associated with thiamine deficiency, often caused by chronic alcoholism. Also called Korsakoff's psychosis.

Learning Difficulties

A classification including several disorders in which a person has difficulty learning in a typical manner, usually caused by an unknown factor or factors. The unknown factor is the disorder that affects the brain's ability to receive and process information. This disorder can make it problematic for a person to learn as quickly or in the same way as someone who isn't affected by a learning disability. Learning disability is not indicative of intelligence level, rather, people with a learning disability have trouble performing specific skills or completing tasks if left to figure things out by themselves, or if taught in conventional ways. A learning disability cannot be cured or fixed, however, with the right support and intervention, people with learning disabilities can succeed in school and go on to be successful later in life.

Learning Disability

Any of various cognitive, neurological, or psychological disorders that impede the ability to learn, especially one that interferes with the ability to learn mathematics or develop language skills. Also called learning disorder.

Locked-In syndrome

A condition in which a patient is aware and awake but cannot move or communicate verbally due to complete paralysis of nearly all voluntary muscles in the body except for the eyes. Total locked-in syndrome is a version of locked-in syndrome where the eyes are paralysed as well.

Meningitis

Inflammation of the meninges, the tissue that surrounds the brain or spinal cord. The inflammation may be caused by infection with viruses, bacteria, or other micro-organisms, and less commonly by certain drugs. Bacteria produce the most dangerous forms and symptoms develop rapidly; vomiting, then severe bursting headache, then stiff neck; young children may have convulsions. Condition can be life threatening. Often people who survive meningitis have varying forms of brain injury from the swelling and infection.

Motor Neurone Disease

Described as a progressive neurodegenerative disease that is usually life limiting. The central nervous system is full of nerve cells called motor neurons. These neurons control voluntary muscle movement. People who have this disease will slowly start to lose control of their voluntary muscle movement. A typical symptom of the disease is atrophy and muscle weakness throughout the body.

Multiple Sclerosis
A chronic, typically progressive disease involving damage to the sheaths of nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord, whose symptoms may include numbness, impairment of speech and of muscular coordination, blurred vision, and fatigue.
Muscular Dystrophy
Any of a group of progressive muscle disorders caused by a defect in one or more genes that control muscle function and characterized by gradual irreversible wasting of skeletal muscle.
Myalgic Encephalomyelitis
A syndrome characterized by debilitating fatigue and a combination of flu-like symptoms such as sore throat, swollen lymph glands, low-grade fever, headaches, and muscle pain or weakness. Also called chronic fatigue immune dysfunction syndrome.
Myopathy
A disease of the muscle or muscle tissue causing damage to the tissues and therefore reduced function of the muscles.
Narcolepsy
Narcolepsy is a chronic disorder of the central nervous system characterized by the brain's inability to control sleep-wake cycles. At various times throughout the day, people with narcolepsy experience irresistible and sudden bouts of sleep, which can last from a few seconds to several minutes.
Neuromuscular Disorder
Neuromuscular disorders affect the nerves that control voluntary muscles. Voluntary muscles are the ones you can control, like in the arms and legs. Nerve cells, also called neurons, send messages that control these muscles and when the neurons become unhealthy or die, communication between the nervous system and muscles breaks down, resulting in muscle weakness and wasting away. The weakness can lead to twitching, cramps, aches, pains, and joint and movement problems. Sometimes it also affects heart function and your ability to breathe. Muscular Dystrophy is an example of a neuromuscular disorder.
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, OCD, is an anxiety disorder and is characterized by recurrent, unwanted thoughts (obsessions) and/or repetitive behaviors (compulsions). Repetitive behaviors such as handwashing, counting, checking or cleaning are often performed with the hope of preventing obsessive thoughts or making them go away. Performing these "rituals," however, provides only temporary relief, and not performing them markedly increases anxiety.
Parkinson's Disease
A progressive nervous disease occurring most often after the age of 50, associated with the destruction of brain cells that produce dopamine and characterized by muscular tremor, slowing of movement, partial facial paralysis, peculiarity of gait and posture, and weakness.
Pervasive developmental disorder
Any of several disorders, such as Autism and Asperger's syndrome, characterized by severe deficits in many areas of development, including social interaction and communication, or by the presence of repetitive, stereotyped behaviours.
Pick's disease
Pick's disease, is a rare neurodegenerative disease that causes progressive destruction of nerve cells in the brain. Symptoms include loss of speech (Aphasia), and dementia.
Poliomyelitis
More commonly known as Polio, a disease caused by virus infection of the central nervous system, leading to muscle paralysis and movement disorder of lower limbs. It used to be known as infantile paralysis.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Post-traumatic stress disorder is a severe anxiety disorder that can develop after exposure to any event which results in psychological trauma. This event may involve the threat of death to oneself or to someone else, or to one's own or someone else's physical, sexual, or psychological integrity, overwhelming the individual's ability to cope.

Psychosis

Psychosis is a term that is used to describe a mental condition where somebody is unable to distinguish between reality and their imagination. Psychosis is not a condition in itself. It is a symptom of other conditions. The most common cause of psychosis is a mental health condition such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.

Rett syndrome

An inherited developmental disorder observed only in females that is characterized by a short period of normal development, followed by loss of developmental skills (particularly purposeful hand movements) and marked slowing of physical activity (psychomotor retardation).

Schizoaffective Disorder

Schizoaffective disorder is a psychiatric diagnosis that describes a mental disorder characterized by recurring episodes of elevated or depressed mood that alternate with, or occur together with, distortions in perception.

Stroke

Stroke is the rapidly developing loss of brain function(s) due to disturbance in the blood supply to the brain. This can be due to ischaemia (lack of blood flow), a blockage (thrombosis, arterial embolism), or haemorrhage (leakage of blood). As a result, the affected area of the brain is unable to function, which might result in an inability to move one or more limbs on one side of the body, inability to understand or formulate speech, visual impairments often in one eye.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

An external impact, accident or trauma that was acquired some time since the point of birth, causing injury to the brain, negatively effecting the expected normal functioning of the brain. For example, a common cause of TBI is collisions when on a motorcycle, which can cause significant trauma to the brain.