

Cerebral Palsy is:

- A number of disorders of the developing brain affecting body movement, posture and muscle coordination.
- Caused by damage to one or more specific areas of the brain, usually occurring during fetal development; before, during or shortly after birth; during infancy; or during early childhood.
- Not a disease, not progressive, nor communicable.

U.S. Statistics:

- It is estimated that 764,000 children and adults in the U.S. manifest one or more of the symptoms of cerebral palsy.
- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), each year about 10,000 babies born in the United States will develop cerebral palsy¹.
- 1,200 - 1,500 preschool age children are also recognized to have cerebral palsy each year.
- A 2009 CDC study found that the average prevalence of CP in 2004 was 3.3 per 1,000. The prevalence was significantly higher in boys than in girls overall (male/female ratio, 1.4:1)².

Types of Cerebral Palsy:

- **Spastic Cerebral Palsy:** characterized by muscle stiffness and permanent contractions
- **Athetoid or Dyskinetic Cerebral Palsy:** characterized by uncontrolled, slow, writhing movements
- **Ataxic Cerebral Palsy:** characterized by poor coordination and balance

Is Cerebral Palsy Curable?

At this time, there is no cure for the developmental brain damage that causes cerebral palsy. Training and therapy, however, can help improve muscle function and coordination. Studies have found that children who receive early intervention services such as physical and occupational therapy and other support services are more likely to lead a more typical and improved quality of life. Parents, families, professionals and caregivers of children ages zero to five, newly diagnosed with a disability or developmental delay, can visit www.MyChildWithoutLimits.org for an online resource and community.

¹Centers For Disease Control and Prevention: Cerebral Palsy.
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/dd/ddcp.htm> (May 2010).

²Arneson C, Durkin M, Benedict RE, Kirby RS, Yeargin-Allsopp M, Van Naarden Braun K, Doernberg N. Brief Report: Prevalence of Cerebral Palsy: Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, Three Sites, United States, 2004. *Disability and Health* 2008;2:45-48.