

Constraint Induced Therapy Program

Helping children increase motor activity



What is constraint induced therapy?

Constraint induced therapy (CIT) is a motor therapy program for children with limited motor function in one of their arms.

The therapy program provides intensive training of the arm with limited motor function. This is done while the non-affected arm is constrained with a long arm cast.

CIT involves using the affected arm often, repeating the same motion over and over, while shaping the desired movement. The research shows that this has increased the awareness and quality of movement required for two-handed activities.



Which children can be helped by CIT?

CIT helps children with an affected arm as a result of:

- Brachial plexus injury
- Brain tumor
- Cerebral palsy
- Stroke
- Traumatic brain injury
- Other conditions that cause limited motor function in one arm

The program is designed for children who are able to cooperate and follow directions during one-on-one and group therapies.

Constraint Induced Therapy Program

To make an appointment for your child with the Constraint Induced Therapy Program:

- Contact your child's doctor for a referral.

For more information:

- Constraint Induced Therapy Program
206-987-2113
Monday – Friday
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- www.seattlechildrens.org

About CIT sessions

Sessions are:

- Designed for 1 to 4 children
- Organized into 4 age groups – preschool, school-age, pre-teen and teen
- Held for 1 to 2 hours a day, Monday through Friday, for 3 weeks

Occupational therapists (OTs) direct the therapeutic group activities.

Additional types of therapies that may be used during CIT include:

- Occupational therapy in the pool
- Art therapy
- Music therapy
- Sessions with therapy dogs

You might be given a list of activities that you can do with your child at home.



Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child's nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.



Seattle Children's has a comprehensive CIT program that is fun and engaging. We saw a dramatic increase in the use of the affected side by the end of the first week. Three weeks of constraint induced therapy did more to increase our daughter's use of her right hand than a year of other therapies.

- Mother of a former patient

Seattle Children's offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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