

Constraint Induced Therapy Program

Helping children increase motor activity

What is constraint induced therapy?

Constraint Induced Therapy (CIT), also known as Constraint Induced Movement Therapy (CIMT), promotes use of a weaker arm by restricting use of the stronger arm, often in a cast or mitt. Research shows CIT improves awareness and quality of movement 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

At Seattle Children's we have two separate programs, CIT Summer Camps and Modified CIT (mCIT)

CIT Summer Camp

- This program is designed for children who are able to cooperate and follow directions in a group setting without constant 1-on-1 support from an adult.
- Children need to be at least 4 years old.
- Camps take place each summer.
- We work in small groups of 2 to 4 children.
- CIT Camp is 5 days a week for 3 weeks, 2 hours per day.
- Children wear a cast for the entire 3 weeks.

1 of 3

To Learn More

- Constraint Induced Therapy Program
206-987-2113
Monday - Friday
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your 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.

Modified CIT

- There is no age requirement or limit.
- Modified programs run year-round and last for 3 weeks.
- We provide 1 hour of 1-on-1 therapy 2 to 4 times per week, depending upon your child's needs and if they are currently receiving community-based therapy.
- Children either wear a cast for 3 weeks or they may wear a mitt with elbow immobilizer during therapy and at home during supervised play.
- Families are expected to supervise structured playtime for 1-2 hours a day during the program and track the playtime using the mCIT calendar provided.

To progress and maintain the function your child gains during the program, we recommend you set up or continue community-based therapy following your child's CIT or mCIT program.

The CIT / mCIT Process – 4 Steps

Step 1 Set up a Meet and Greet Appointment

- This is your chance to ask questions about CIT or mCIT. Our therapists get to know you and your child, to determine if your child would be appropriate for CIT and, if so, which program will be best.
- Come with goals you have for your child. This could involve activities or tasks you see your child struggle with or things you would like your child to be able to do but they can't. Some example goals are:
I would like my child to be able to
 - Eat finger foods using their affected hand.
 - Hold a piece of paper still with their affected hand while coloring with their other hand.
 - Throw a ball with both hands.
- Please let us know if you plan to have your child in community-based therapy during the mCIT program. Due to the intensity of our CIT camp, children typically do not participate in community therapy during the 3 weeks they are with us in summer camps.
- If your child is currently receiving private therapy, please provide their current therapist's contact information during the evaluation.

Step 2 Evaluation

- A week before the program starts, you and your child will come in for a formal evaluation.
- If your child will be wearing a cast during the program, then it will be made during this appointment and your child will start wearing it on the first day of the program.
- Please review our demonstration video on how we make the cast with your child before your appointment: Constraint-Induced Therapy at Seattle Children's youtu.be/2ueJEV185tIh (3:03).

Constraint Induced Therapy Program

Step 3 Participate in a mCIT or CIT Program

- For CIT, your child will work in a group setting, and for mCIT your child will engage in 1-on-1 therapy sessions. We will work on awareness, strength and function of their affected arm while wearing a constraint on their strong arm.

Step 4 Follow-up / post-CIT Program Appointment

- Our office will set a follow-up appointment 4 to 6 weeks after your child's CIT or mCIT program to check their progress.
- If your child is right for the program, they may be able to participate in either CIT or mCIT program once a year, depending upon the waitlist for each program.
- Please let us know at this time if you are interested in having your child engage in a constraint program again through Seattle Children's. If yes, your next appointment will be set up about 6 months after your follow-up.
- If your child completed a CIT summer camp, your next Meet and Greet session should be no later than January to determine if they are appropriate for next year's summer camp.
- At the next Meet and Greet, the therapist will assess your child again to determine if they are right for another constraint program, community-based therapy or if your child requires follow-up appointments where the therapist will develop a home exercise program for your child's specific needs.

Who can I contact for more information?

- To make an appointment for your child with the Constraint Induced Therapy Program:
- Contact your child's doctor for a referral.
 - Call our scheduling team at 206-987-2113 Monday - Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.