

Cerebral Palsy (CP) Topography

How CP Affects Parts of the Body

There are 3 main ways to classify cerebral palsy (CP): by area of the body affected (topography), by atypical body movements and postures (movement disorder) and how they use their body to get around (gross motor function or functional mobility). This handout covers the different body parts that can be involved in a child with CP.

What do the colors mean in the drawings?

Depending on the area of the brain affected, different parts of the body may be impacted by CP. In the images below, the dark green areas refer to the parts of the body that are always involved, while the light green areas refer to the parts of the body that may be affected or are always affected but to a lesser degree than the dark green areas.

What is the difference between -plegia and -paresis?

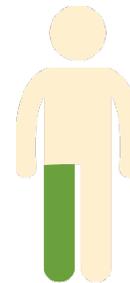
You may also hear all of these terms but with the end of the word (suffix) "-paresis". For example, you may hear "hemiplegia" and "hemiparesis." It is important to know the difference between the two.

- "-plegia" means complete lack of muscle activity (paralysis)
- "-paresis" refers to a slight weakness

Unilateral: When CP affects one side of the body

Monoplegia

One limb is involved. This is usually a leg, but could also be an arm.



Monoplegia

Hemiplegia

Half of the body is involved including the arm and the leg on the same side. The trunk or torso may be involved as well.



Hemiplegia

To Learn More

- Cerebral Palsy Program
206-987-0199
- 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.

Bilateral: When CP affects both sides of the body

Diplegia

Both legs are involved. Usually children with diplegia have some difficulties with coordination in their hands and arms. The trunk may be involved too.



Diplegia

Triplegia

Both legs and one arm are involved. Usually the leg on the same side as the affected arm is more affected than the other leg. The trunk may be affected on that side too.



Triplegia

Quadriplegia

Both arms and both legs are involved. The trunk is also affected.



Quadriplegia

Summary

- It is important to know what parts of your child's body are affected by CP (topography).
- If you have any questions or are hearing different things from different providers, bring this up with your providers at Seattle Children's.

Images adapted from: Graham H, Rosenbaum P, Paneth N, et al. Cerebral palsy. *Nat Rev Dis Primers*. 2016 Jan;2:15082.