



# CEREBRAL PALSY

Cerebral palsy is a term that refers to a group of disorders affecting a person's ability to move. It is due to damage to the developing brain either during pregnancy or shortly after birth.

Cerebral palsy affects people in different ways and can affect body movement, muscle control, muscle coordination, muscle tone, reflex, posture and balance. Although cerebral palsy is a permanent life-long condition, some of these signs of cerebral palsy can improve or worsen over time.

People who have cerebral palsy may also have visual, learning, hearing, speech, epilepsy and intellectual impairments.  
For full information on Cerebral Palsy please contact Cerebral Palsy Alliance.

**Before exercising always check with an accredited exercise physiologist.**

## Why it's important to exercise

Exercise is very important to improve general physical and mental health for any children with Cerebral Palsy. It's also important to note that a lack of physical activity can lead to further deconditioning and make general moving even more difficult.

Children with Cerebral Palsy can face a number of limitations on an individual level so it's vital that you consult an Accredited Exercise Physiologist for expert guidance.

## Things to remember:

- Before increasing or introducing any specific physical activity consult an Accredited Exercise Physiologist for expert guidance.
- It's important to make sure your child is as active as they are physically able to be.
- Motivation and encouragement are essential for your child due to the difficulties they have with movement.
- Activities should focus on increasing their general fitness, improving their strength and improving their range of movement.

## Types of exercise recommended:

- When you work with an Accredited Exercise Physiologist they will use a variety of different techniques including challenges and games, wheelchair and cycling games, swimming and other water based activities through to mat work and resistance exercises.

## References:

1. Physical activity and exercise in children with chronic conditions (Riner and Sellhorst 2012)