

DYSPRAXIA

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WHAT IS DYSPRAXIA?

- Impaired ability to plan and carry out motor tasks
- Difficulty in muscle control → problems with movement, coordination, language, speech
- Can cause learning difficulties
- Difficulty in 4 areas:
 - Fine motor
 - Gross motor
 - Motor planning
 - Coordination

DYSPRAXIA VS. DCD

- Dyspraxia is not in the DSM 5
- Refers to motor difficulties PLUS issues with speech, organization, planning, sequencing, working memory, socialization
- Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD) is in the DSM-5
- Refers to difficulty in learning everyday motor skills which cannot be explained by physical, sensory, or intellectual impairment

HOW DOES IT PRESENT?

- Individuals appear out of sync with their environment
- Poor balance and coordination
- Clumsiness
- Eye movement problems
- Writing difficulty
- Speaking difficulty
- Poor social skills
- Poor posture
- Poor organizational skills

VERY EARLY CHILDHOOD

- Delays in sitting
- Delay or lack of crawling
- Speech delay – hard to make sounds, repeat sounds, sustain normal intonation pattern, speak slower
- Delay in standing
- Delay in potty training

EARLY CHILDHOOD

- Problems tying shoelaces, doing buttons, using cutlery, handwriting
- Difficulty getting dressed
- Problems jumping, catching/kicking a ball, skipping
- Problems using scissors, coloring, drawing
- Difficulties with concentration
- Difficulty learning new skills

LATER CHILDHOOD

- Avoid sports
- Learn well one-on-one but not in class
- Difficulty in math and writing
- Spends a long time for tasks
- Does not follow instructions (due to inability to process and plan the task)
- Poor organization

WHAT CAUSES DYSPRAXIA?

Faulty development
or immature
development of
motor neurons

Hereditary
component –
several genes
identified

HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED?

- No formal diagnostic criteria (not in DSM5)
- Diagnosis can be made by psychologist, pediatrician, developmental specialist, OT
- Collecting history from parents and teachers
- Assessment of gross motor skills and fine motor skills
 - Children will not be able to follow verbal directions but can copy the examiner for at least part of the task
 - Can be prompted by breaking down a word/phrase into syllables, but is unable to say the full word/phrase
 - Can be guided to complete a fine motor task but cannot complete it on their own

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT?

Speech therapy

- Prompting or cueing
- Developing oral motor skills

Occupational therapy

- Hand-on-hand method to teach tasks since children with dyspraxia cannot plan their motor movements

Intensive therapy (3-5 times per week)

WHAT IS THE PROGNOSIS?

- Lifelong disorder
- Many can compensate for disabilities through the appropriate therapies
- Possible to outgrow

REFERENCES

<https://ldaamerica.org/types-of-learning-disabilities/dyspraxia/>

<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/Disorders/All-Disorders/Developmental-Dyspraxia-Information-Page>

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/151951>

<https://www.dyspraxia.ie/What-is-Dyspraxia-DCD>