

Dystonia

Dystonia is a neurological condition that affects the ability of people to control their muscles, giving rise to often repetitive involuntary abnormal postures, positions, spasms or tremors

- Dystonia can affect children and adults of any age and has many different causes
- Dystonia arises from an abnormality in the brain's control of movement, even though the problems appears as abnormal muscle contractions
- Dystonia can affect almost any part of the body, often but not always in isolation

Common forms of dystonia are:

Cervical dystonia — dystonia of the neck causing abnormal and often painful spasms or postures

Blepharospasm — dystonia of the eyelids causing the eyes to blink or close excessively

Spasmodic dysphonia — dystonia of the larynx or voice box leading to strangled, whispering or tremulous speech

Upper limb dystonia — often causing difficulty with a specific task such as writing or playing a musical instrument

Oromandibular dystonia — dystonia of the face, jaw, mouth and tongue causing involuntary movements

Generalised Dystonia — dystonia affecting multiple parts of the body. This is the most uncommon form and is seen more commonly in children than adults

Causes of dystonia — include but are not confined to genetic forms, brain injury or disease and certain medications. Often the cause of dystonia is not known (idiopathic).

Do you have dystonia or care for someone with dystonia?

The Dystonia Network of Australia Incorporated (DNA) is a registered charity for people living with dystonia, their family, carers and health professionals. See above contact details.