



Information Sheet: ERBS Palsy

Sometimes, when your baby is born, the shoulders can get stuck in the birth canal leading to a condition known as Erbs Palsy. This is also known as a Brachial Plexus injury. When the shoulders get stuck, known as shoulder dystocia, as the clinicians try to deliver the baby the neck can be stretched causing the group of nerves that run from the spinal column in the neck down to the finger tips and which supply the arms and hands to be injured.

The nerves in the neck can be damaged mildly or severely. The extent of your child's disability can vary depending on how badly the nerve has been damaged.

Children with brachial plexus injuries can be affected in the following ways:

- Inability to control muscles with no feeling in the arm or hand
- Ability to move their arms, but little control over the wrist and hand
- Ability to use their hands well but inability to use the shoulder or elbow muscles

The extent of the injury depends on several factors such as how many of the nerves have been damaged and how badly they have been damaged.

Damage to the nerve can range from bruising to tearing which can result in a partial or complete injury. If the injury caused bruising and swelling around the nerves, the nerve can heal over time allowing movement to return within a few months. Tearing of the nerve may result in permanent nerve damage.

To assess whether your baby's injury has been caused by any negligence we will need to access your medical records and look at the care the clinicians provided during the delivery. There are standard ways to treat this problem and by assessing your medical records we can advise whether you have a potential claim.

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If you need any further information about matters in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to contact us.