



Spinal Muscular Atrophy

Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) Types I, II, and III belong to a group of hereditary diseases that cause weakness and wasting of the voluntary muscles in the arms and legs of infants and children. The disorders are caused by an abnormal or missing gene known as the survival motor neuron gene (SMN1), which is responsible for the production of a protein essential to motor neurons. Without this protein, lower motor neurons in the spinal cord degenerate and die. The type of SMA (I, II, or III) is determined by the age of onset and the severity of symptoms. Type I (also known as Werdnig-Hoffman disease, or infantile-onset SMA) is evident at birth or within the first few months. Symptoms include floppy limbs and trunk, feeble movements of the arms and legs, swallowing difficulties, a weak sucking reflex, and impaired breathing. Type II (also known as juvenile SMA, intermediate SMA, or chronic SMA, has an onset between 6 and 18 months. Legs tend to be more impaired than arms. Children with Type II are usually able to sit without support if placed in position. Some may be able to stand or walk with help. Type III (also called Wohlfart-Kugelberg-Welander disease, or mild SMA) can begin as early as the toddler years or as late as adolescence. Children can stand alone and walk, but may have difficulty getting up from a sitting position.

Source: NINDS Spinal Muscular Atrophy Information Page

http://www.ninds.nih.gov/health_and_medical/disorders/sma.htm

Websites

Cure SMA (formerly Families of SMA)

<http://www.curesma.org/>

925 Busse Road

Elk Grove Village, IL 60007

Toll-free: 800-886-1762

E-mail: info@curesma.org

Cure SMA is dedicated to promoting and supporting research, helping families cope through informational programs and support, and educating the public and the medical community about SMA. The organization has 29 chapters serving all but 3 states. Offers publications such as Understanding Spinal Muscular Atrophy, Breathing Basics, and Caring Choices.

Never Give Up/Gwendolyn Strong Foundation

<https://nevergiveup.org/>

27 W. Anapamu St., Suite 177

Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Phone: 805-203-0334

Email: info@nevergiveup.org

Gwendolyn Strong Foundation offers advocacy and assistance to families of SMA children and also continues to offer practical family support for the overwhelming expenses of life with a disability, helping give families greater independence. The Foundation is building an inclusive playground in Santa Barbara, CA.

NINDS: Spinal Muscular Atrophy booklet

<https://catalog.ninds.nih.gov/publications/spinal-muscular-atrophy>

SMA Foundation

<https://smafoundation.org/>

970 W. Broadway, Suite E

PMB 140

Jackson, WY 83001

Phone: 646-253-7100, 877-FUND-SMA (Toll-free)

E-mail: info@smafoundation.org

The SMA Foundation promotes the development of a treatment for SMA. The Foundation funds research and fosters information exchanges and alliances among pharmaceutical companies, biotech, academia, non-profits, clinicians, patients, government/regulators, and the media.

Treat NMD Neuromuscular Network: Spinal Muscular Atrophy

<http://www.treat-nmd.eu/sma/overview/>

4th Floor

The Catalyst

Newcastle upon Tyne

NE4 5TG

United Kingdom

Phone: +44 (0)191-241-8617

This site provides information on SMA to patients and families, as well as doctors and researchers. Topics covered include research, standards of care, patient registries, patient organizations, and other resources.

Consensus Statement for Standard of Care in Spinal Muscular Atrophy

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0883073807305788>

This page presents the abstract for an article appeared in the August 2007 issue of *Journal of Child Neurology*. A PDF of the full article can be accessed for free from the site or by going directly to <http://jcn.sagepub.com/content/22/8/1027.full.pdf+html>. The page also lists other articles that cited the consensus statement article.

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This publication is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$10,000,000 with 100 percent funding by ACL/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.