



# Brachial Plexus

A brachial plexus injury occurs when nerves that control motion and sensation in the wrists, hands and arms are damaged.

## Q: What is a brachial plexus injury?

The brachial plexus is a network of nerves that extends from the shoulder down through the arm. These nerves can be damaged by excessive stretching, tearing or compression caused by trauma, tumors, inflammation, and sports injuries. Babies can sustain a brachial plexus injury during birth.

## Q: What are symptoms of a brachial plexus injury?

Symptoms may include a limp or paralyzed arm; lack of muscle control in the arm, hand, or wrist; lack of sensation in the arm or hand; and a sudden burning or stinging pain in the shoulder or arm.

## Q: Will I recover from a brachial plexus injury?

The severity of the injury depends on the extent and location of nerve damage. Some injuries fully heal, while others result in a permanent loss of function.

## Q: How is a brachial plexus injury treated?

Some injuries may heal without treatment, while others will require physical and occupational therapy. Surgery may be needed for ruptures that partially or completely tear the nerve, or when the nerve root is severed from the spinal cord.

## Q: Are there clinical trials for brachial plexus injuries?

Yes. To find current trials for brachial plexus injuries, visit [ClinicalTrials.gov](https://www.clinicaltrials.gov) (<https://www.clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/home>), a searchable website for publicly and privately supported clinical studies maintained by the National Library of Medicine at the National Institutes of Health (<https://www.nih.gov>).

Sources: Merck Manual, Johns Hopkins Medicine, Mayo Clinic.

### **Need to talk to someone?**

Our Information Specialists are available to answer your questions.

Call toll-free 1-800-539-7309 Mon-Fri, 7 am-8 pm EST.

Or schedule a call or ask a question online at

<https://www.ChristopherReeve.org/Ask>.

## **Resources for Brachial Plexus Injury**

### **United Brachial Plexus Network**

[www.ubpn.org](http://www.ubpn.org)

32 William Road

Reading, MA 01867

Phone: 781-315-6161

Email: [info@ubpn.org](mailto:info@ubpn.org)

UBPN provides information and support for individuals and families affected by brachial plexus injuries. Features an online registry, publications, and informational materials to increase awareness of the disorder and educate medical and legal professionals.

### **HealthyChildren.org: Brachial Plexus Injuries in Children**

<https://www.healthychildren.org/english/health-issues/injuries-emergencies/pages/brachial-plexus-injuries-in-children.aspx>

Email: [Info@healthychildren.org](mailto:Info@healthychildren.org)

HealthyChildren.org, an online resource from the American Academy of Pediatrics, provides general information related to children's health including brachial plexus injury.

### **Mayo Clinic: Brachial Plexus Injury Overview**

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/brachial-plexus-injury/home/ovc-20127336>

200 1st St SW

Rochester, MN 55905

Phone: (507) 284-2511

The Mayo Clinic's Health Library provides information about many diseases and conditions, including brachial plexus injuries.

### **MedlinePlus: Brachial Plexus Injuries**

<https://medlineplus.gov/brachialplexusinjuries.html>

MedlinePlus is the National Library of Medicine's online resource for patients and families.

### **Merck Manual Home edition: Plexus Disorders**

<https://www.merckmanuals.com/home/brain-spinal-cord-and-nerve-disorders/peripheral-nerve-and-related-disorders/plexus-disorders?query=brachial%20plexus>

Merck Manuals provide comprehensive medical information and resources for healthcare providers and consumers.

**NINDS: Brachial Plexus Information Pages**

<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/Disorders/All-Disorders/Brachial-Plexus-Injuries-Information-Page>

NIH Neurological Institute

P.O. Box 5801

Bethesda, MD 20824

Phone: 781-315-6161

Toll-free: 800-352-9424

Email: [InformationOffice4@mail.nih.gov](mailto:InformationOffice4@mail.nih.gov)

The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke is part of the National Institute of Health. Its research and educational outreach efforts are focused on preventing and treating neurological disorders and stroke.

**WebMD: What is Brachial Plexus Palsy?**

<https://www.webmd.com/pain-management/what-is-brachial-plexus-palsy>

The information contained in this message is presented for the purpose of educating and informing you about paralysis and its effects. Nothing contained in this message should be construed nor is intended to be used for medical diagnosis or treatment. It should not be used in place of the advice of your physician or other qualified health care provider. Should you have any health care related questions, please call or see your physician or other qualified health care provider promptly. Always consult with your physician or other qualified health care provider before embarking on a new treatment, diet or fitness program. You should never disregard medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read in this message.

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.