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Diseases and Conditions

Ataxia

SECTIONS



Definition

By Mayo Clinic Staff

Ataxia describes a lack of muscle control during voluntary movements, such as walking or picking up objects. A sign of an underlying condition, ataxia can affect movement, speech, eye movement and swallowing.

Persistent ataxia usually results from damage to your cerebellum — the part of your brain that controls muscle coordination. Many conditions can cause ataxia, including alcohol abuse, stroke, tumor, cerebral palsy and multiple sclerosis. An inherited defective gene also can cause ataxia.

Treatment for ataxia depends on the cause. Adaptive devices, such as walkers or canes, might help you maintain your independence. Physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy also might help.



Cerebellum and brainstem

Symptoms

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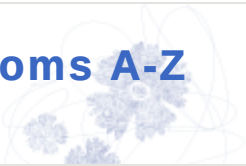
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