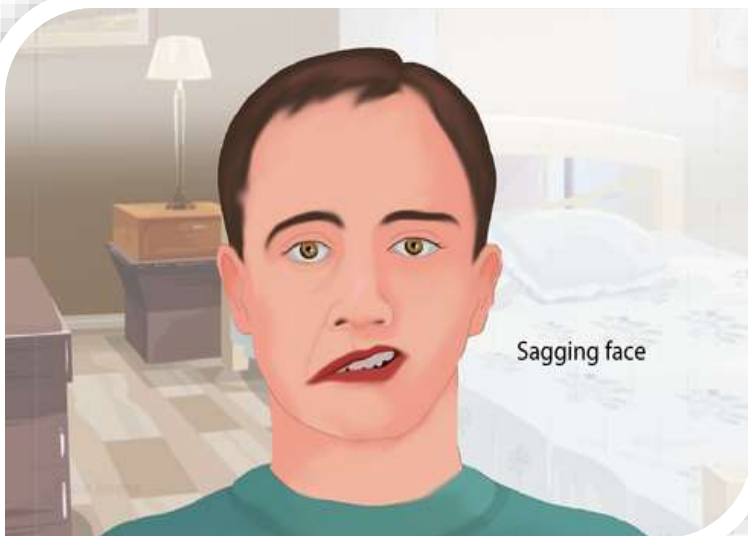


BELL'S PALSY



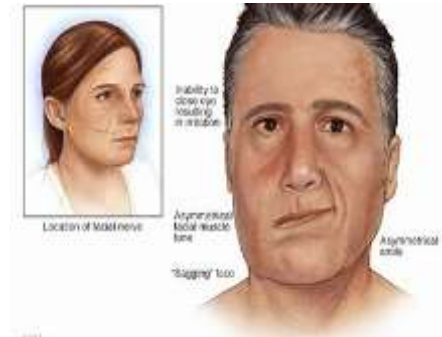
Physiotherapy Department

What is Bell's Palsy

Bell's palsy is a paralysis or weakness of the muscles on one side of your face. Damage to the facial nerve that controls muscles on one side of the face causes that side of your face to droop.

Who gets Bell's palsy?

Anyone can get Bell's palsy and it affects both men and woman equally. It most commonly occurs between the ages of 10 and 40. This condition comes on suddenly, often overnight, and usually gets better on its own within a few weeks. There is a slightly higher incidence in the winter.



What is Facial Nerve?

The facial nerve is a nerve which controls the muscles on the side of the face. It allows us to show expression, smile, cry and wink.

What causes Bell's palsy?

Though the exact causes of Bell's palsy are not known, the condition is thought to be because of inflammation, compression or swelling of the facial nerve. This in turn could be due to:

- Traumatic injury to the face or head.
- Diabetes and Blood Pressure.
- Stress and Pregnancy.
- Viral infections such as herpes, influenza, a cold or chronic middle ear infection.

What are the symptoms of Bell's palsy?

Rapid onset of mild weakness to total paralysis on one side of your face that causes it to droop. Difficulty in making facial expressions. Numbness of the affected side of your face & inability to wrinkle your forehead, whistle or blow your cheek. Headache Inability to close one eye which leads to excessive tearing or a dry eye. Eyebrow sagging. Loss of ability to taste & drooling of saliva. Difficulty in

chewing on affected side. Pain in or behind your ear & increased sensitivity to sound on the affected side.

What is the Treatment for Bell's palsy?

In Bell's palsy the function of the nerve gradually returns to normal within two months with proper treatment. Physiotherapy treatment helps to progress the recovery.

It includes:

1. Electrical Stimulation
2. Manual Massage
3. Bell's palsy facial exercises.

Lifestyle and Home activities:

- Apply moist heat to the paralyzed area to help reduce pain.
- Keep the face warm
- Wear a scarf or jacket with a hood.
- Try drinking with straw.
- Eat on the side of your mouth that feels most comfortable.
- Use protective eye wear.

Exercises:

Exercises will help to strengthen the specific muscles of the face and should be done 4-5 times a day in front of a mirror or as per the advice of your Physiotherapist.



Suck in cheeks & lips forward.



Turn the corners of your mouth up.



Wrinkle your nose.



Raise your eyebrows.



Bring your eyebrows together in a frown.



Close your eyes tightly.

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