

Office for Genetics and Children with Special Health Care Needs

Microcephaly Fact Sheet

What is Microcephaly?

- Microcephaly refers to a smaller than normal head size.

What is the cause of Microcephaly?

- A small head size in proportion to the rest of the body usually indicates a small brain size.
- This may be caused by infection (such as cytomegalovirus or CMV; toxoplasmosis; rubella or German Measles), bleeding, toxins (such as alcohol) or a genetic disorder

Signs and Symptoms

- Developmental delay is common in children with Microcephaly. This may affect their learning abilities, motor abilities, behavior or any combination of these.
- Hearing or vision problems may occur depending on the cause of the Microcephaly.
- Seizures may also occur depending on the cause of the Microcephaly.
- Some children have extra fluid on the brain because of its small size. When there is extra fluid because of a small brain size, no treatment for the fluid is needed.

Is there any treatment for Microcephaly?

- There is no treatment for the small head size.
- Treatment for developmental delays is needed and may include education, physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech.
- If children have hearing or vision problems or seizures, they will need to be seen by specialists for treatment.

Support Groups/Resources

- Foundation for Children with Microcephaly
<http://www.childrenwithmicro.org/>
1-877-476-5503
- Kennedy Krieger Institute
<http://www.kennedykrieger.org>
443-923-9200
- March of Dimes
www.marchofdimes.com
1-410-546-2241
- Office for Genetics and Children with Special Health Care Needs
<http://fha.maryland.gov/genetics/bdris.cfm>
1-800-638-8864
- The Parents' Place Of Maryland
www.ppmmd.org
410- 768-9100