

Guidance provided for identifying, managing cerebral palsy in primary care

November 21 2022, by Elana Gotkine



In a clinical report issued by the American Academy of Pediatrics and

the American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine, published online Nov. 21 in *Pediatrics*, recommendations are presented for identifying and managing cerebral palsy (CP).

Garey Noritz, M.D., from the Nationwide Children's Hospital at The Ohio State University in Columbus, and colleagues provide guidance to [primary care physicians](#) for identifying children with CP; managing medical, developmental, and [behavioral problems](#); and providing general medical care.

The authors note that physicians who provide care for children should be familiar with definitions, manifestations, and management of CP. Care providers of hospitalized infants should recognize those with increased likelihood of CP, should use available tools for diagnosis as early as possible, and should refer for therapy promptly. Formal developmental surveillance and screening should be implemented for early identification of possible motor delays such as CP.

Primary care pediatricians should engage with the child's family and specialists to establish a patient- and family-centered care team. Families should be advised about available medical, social, and educational services. Pediatricians should be aware of disparities in CP, including increased prevalence in Black children and those from families with lower socioeconomic status. Pediatricians should monitor for problems that often co-occur with CP; when new symptoms or functional declines occur, these should be investigated without assuming relation to CP.

"As a primary care physician, a critical task is to integrate and orchestrate care across multiple [organ systems](#) and specialists, while providing families with resources and support to help the child or adolescent thrive," Noritz said in a statement.

More information:

- [Clinical Report](#)
- [Executive Summary](#)

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Citation: Guidance provided for identifying, managing cerebral palsy in primary care (2022, November 21) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-11-guidance-cerebral-palsy-primary.html>

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