Cerebral Palsy
AUSTRALIA

the national voice



What is cerebral palsy?

It is the most common lifelong physical disability in the world that begins in childhood.

Globally, an estimated 50 million people live with cerebral palsy, with around 350 million family members and carers directly affected.

- **Lifelong**
  a physical disability caused by damage to the developing brain.
- **Permanent**
  Cerebral palsy is permanent and non-reversible.
- **Different for everyone**
  It primarily affects movement, posture and coordination.
- **Different support needs**
  Some people may have mobility or communication differences, fatigue or pain.
- **Other health conditions**
  These can add to the complexity of their support needs.

3 in 4 Live with chronic pain

1 in 3 cannot use their hands to manipulate objects

1 in 3 cannot walk

1 in 4 do not use speech to communicate

> **“If you have met one person with cerebral palsy, you have met one person with cerebral palsy.”**

With the right opportunities, health care, therapies, technology and supports, people with cerebral palsy can thrive and live fulfilling lives.

Sources: Australian Cerebral Palsy Register (2023); Dan et al., Developmental Medicine & Child Neuroscience (2025); Cieza et al., The Lancet (2020).

Living with cerebral palsy



75% higher risk of developing a non-communicable disease for adults with cerbral palsy compared with adults without cerebral palsy.

5.5 x more likely to have a stroke

2.6 x more likely to develop heart failure

2.2 x more likely to develop asthma

1.6 x more likely to develop hypertension

Commonly co-occurring conditions

50% intellectual impairment

25% epilepsy

25% behaviour disorder

20% sleep disorder

10% vision impairment

Sources: Australian Cerebral Palsy Register (2023); Ryan et al., Neurology (2019); Novak et al., Pediatrics (2012)

Cerebral palsy in Australia

37,000

Australians live with cerebral palsy (2025)

75%

of people with cerebral palsy are adults - 28,000 people

47,000+

projected to be living with cerebral palsy by 2060

$5.4 billion

estimated annual cost of cerebral palsy (2019)

1 every 20 hours

an Australian baby is born with cerebral palsy

6.8%

of children with cerebral palsy are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.



Sources: Deloitte Access Economics, The Cost of Cerebral Palsy in Australia (2018); Australian Cerebral Palsy Register (2023 & 2025)

Cerebral palsy and the NDIS

23,621

people with cerebral palsy are NDIS participants (63% of people with CP)

19,041

have cerebral palsy as their primary condition

62%

are adults

$208,000

average annual package

$3.9 billion

annual NDIS funding

Source: NDIA, NDIS participant data (June 2026)

Cerebral palsy is lifelong and every person is different. **Individualised supports can help people maintain their health, build independence and participate in the lives and communities they choose.**

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