

Glossary of Terms

Abduction

Movement of a limb outwards away from the body (opposite to adduction)

Active Movements

Movements a child does without help

Active Response

Something the child does for themselves and is not done to them (opposite to passive)

Adduction

Movement of a limb inwards, towards body opposite limb (opposite to abduction)

Alternative Augmentive Communication (ACC)

A means of communication designed to supplement speech, where speech is not clear enough to be understood. Includes signing and pictures or symbols, and can be 'low tech' (eg. a communication board or book) or 'high tech' (eg. an electronic speech aid or computer)

Anterior

Front, or towards front (opposite to posterior)

Associated Reactions

Increase of stiffness in spastic arms and legs resulting from effort and overuse of the less involved parts of the body

Asymmetrical

One side of the body is different to the other - unequal

Ataxic

Children with this sort of tone have jerky movements and poor balance

Athetoid

Continuous movements beyond the child's control

Automatic Movements

Necessary movements done without thought or effort eg. walking, breathing

Bilateral

Both sides of the body

Central Nervous Systems

The brain and spinal cord, the sensory and control apparatus of the body

Cerebral Palsy

Disorder of posture and movement resulting from brain damage occurring in the baby or young child

Clonus

The shaky movements of spastic muscles

Cognition

Comprehension, understanding, awareness, the act of fully knowing

Co-ordination

Muscles working together in combination for control of movement

Communication

Interaction, the act of giving information

Contracture

Permanently tight muscles and joints

Deformities

Body or limbs fixed in abnormal positions

Depression

Downwards (opposite to elevation)

Diplegia

Type of cerebral palsy where legs are more affected than arms

Dislocation

Loss of joint integrity, eg. the hip; if the ball shape head of the femur (thigh bone) is no longer held in the socket in the pelvis. Joints only partially dislocated can be referred to as subluxed

Distal

Part of body away from trunk eg. hands, feet

Dysphagia

Difficulty in swallowing

Elevation

Upwards (opposite of depression)

Equilibrium Reactions

These contribute to the balance reactions that help us to know when we are correctly aligned and orientated in space, and help us make automatic corrections

Eversion

Turning out (opposite to inversion)

Extension

Straightening of trunk and limbs (opposite to flexion)

External Rotation

Turning outwards of arm from shoulder, or leg from hip (opposite to internal rotation)

Facilitation

A handling technique used to give the child a more normal sensation of movement

Flexion

Bending of trunks and limbs (opposite to extension)

Floppy

Loose or weak posture and movements

Gastrostomy

An operation to provide nutrition directly to the stomach via a tube

Handling

A way of holding and moving a child

Head Control

Ability to control the position of the head

Hemiplegia

Type of cerebral palsy where one side of the body is affected

Hypertonus

Increased tone, higher than the normal range

Hypotonus

Low tone, lower than the normal range

Inhibition

A handling technique which reduces muscle stiffness/spasticity

Internal Rotation

Inward turning of arm from shoulder or of leg from hip (opposite to external rotation)

Inversion

Turned in (opposite to eversion)

Involuntary Movements

Unintended movements eg. as seen in athetosis

Involvement

The extent of the disability

lateral

Side(s)

Medial

Middle

Mobile Weight Bearing

Moving over an arm or leg which is taking weight eg. walking

Motor Patterns

The ways in which the trunk and limbs work together to make movement possible

Occupational Therapy

Aims to maximise the potential for independence in activities of daily living (including play, school and social skills)

Opposition

The ability to touch the pads of your fingers with the thumb of the same hand. This ability is one of human's great advantage over other animals (except the other primates who also have opposite big toes) and which allow us to develop highly selective hand skills

Paraplegia

Legs only affected. Not often seen in children with cerebral palsy

Passive

That which is done to the child without their help or active participation

Pathological

Abnormal

Perception

To make sense of, organise and respond to information received through the senses: ears, eyes, touch, taste and smell, and the ability to make sense of the information received

Perseveration

Unnecessary repetition of movement, and/or speech

Physiotherapy

Using specific handling techniques and activities aimed to maximise potential of posture and movement for function

Posterior

Back, or towards back (opposite to anterior)

Posture

Position of the body in space etc

Postural Tones

See 'Tone'

Primitive Pattern

A pattern of movement which occurs at a very young age during normal development. Some children with cerebral palsy retain these primitive patterns and present with immature patterns as they get older

Primitive Reflexes

Reflexes that occur during normal development but are retained, inappropriately, as the child matures

Pronation

Turning of the hand with the palm down (opposite to supination)

Prone

Lying on tummy (opposite to supine)

Protraction

Pulled forwards eg. shoulder pointing forwards of trunk

Proximal

Part of the limb near the centre of the body, including the trunk (opposite to distal)

Quadraplegia

Type of cerebral palsy where the whole body is affected

Reflex

Consistent involuntary response to nerve stimulation eg. a baby will turn its head to suckle if stroked on the side of its face

Reflux

When food comes back past the oesophageal sphincter (the opening at the top of the stomach) due to the sphincter's failing, and produces a sensation like heartburn

Retraction

Pulled backwards eg. shoulder blade pulled back and winging, or one side of the pelvis pulled back when compared to the other side

Righting Reactions

Ability to put head and body right when positions are abnormal or uncomfortable

Rigidity

Very stiff movements and posture

Rotation

Turning one part of the body against the other

Sensation

Feeling, perception by the senses eg. touch, taste, smell, hearing, vision, proprioception (messages from the joints) and vestibular (messages from the inner ear)

Sensory Motor Experience

The sensation of one's own movement

Skill

Ability

Spasm

Sudden uncontrolled tightening of muscles

Spasticity

Stiffness/tightness of muscles

Speech and Language Therapy

Aims to maximise a child's potential to communicate (including, eating and drinking skills which require the same postural background needed for speech; and non verbal methods of communication)

Stimulation

Input which encourages movement or a response from the child

Strabismus

Squint, eye that is turned inwards (towards nose) or outwards (away from nose)

Supination

Turning of hand with palm up (opposite to pronation)

Supine

Lying on back with face upwards (opposite to prone)

Symmetry/Symmetrical

Both sides equal

Tone

Firmness of muscles eg. floppy or tight

Trunk

The body, excluding the head and limbs

Unilateral

One side of the body

Valgus

Weight on inner border of foot

Varus

Weight on outer border of foot

Voluntary Movements

Movements done with intent and concentration and under volition