



Q: What is spasticity and is there any treatment?

A: Spasticity refers to stiffness or tightness of the muscles which are continuously contracted. This may vary in severity from mild stiffness to painful, incapacitating muscle spasms, often interfering with activities of daily living.

Spasticity usually results from injury to sites in the brain or spinal cord that control voluntary movement. Many patients with multiple sclerosis develop varying degrees of spasticity of the extremities. Other conditions that may result in spasticity include stroke, cerebral palsy, metabolic diseases and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease).

Treatment for the generalized type involves a combination of oral medications and physical therapy.

In those with limited areas of involvement, Botulinum injections(eg. Botox) into carefully selected sites are effective in relaxing the spastic muscles.

Some with severe spasticity may respond to delivery of medication into the fluid around the spinal cord by means of a programmable pump.

For more information, visit the website of the Kalamazoo Nerve Center.

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