



جامعة الإمام عبد الرحمن بن فيصل  
IMAM ABDULRAHMAN BIN FAISAL UNIVERSITY

مستشفى الملك فهد الجامعي  
King Fahad Hospital The University

# Rehabilitation in Spinal Bifida



## What is Pediatric Neurosurgery Role?

Developmental Milestones: Understanding your child's developmental milestones is crucial for their overall well-being. Despite the challenges posed by Spina Bifida, many children can achieve significant milestones with proper care and support.



### ❖ Physical Development:

- Encourage regular physical activity to promote strength and mobility.
- Work with physical therapists to develop a tailored exercise regimen.
- Monitor orthopedic needs such as braces or mobility aids.
- ❖ Track the achievement of gross and fine motor milestones.
- ❖ Be aware that milestones may be delayed or require adaptive techniques or assistive devices.
- ❖ Utilize physical therapy to promote motor development and provide support.
- ❖ Monitor physical development closely and engage in appropriate interventions.



## ❖ Cognitive and Speech Development:

- Observe cognitive development, including attention, problem-solving, and language skills.
- Look for age-appropriate engagement with toys, responsiveness to stimuli, and progress in language acquisition.
- If delays are noticed, seek early intervention services, including speech and language therapy.
- Stimulate cognitive growth through engaging activities and games.
- Support learning opportunities both at home and in school.
- Advocate for any necessary accommodations to facilitate learning.



## ❖ Social and Emotional Development:

- Foster social interactions with peers to encourage friendships and a sense of belonging.
- Provide emotional support and guidance to help your child navigate challenges.
- Seek counseling or support groups to address any emotional needs.
- Monitor social interactions, emotional responses, and attachment to caregivers.
- Look for appropriate eye contact, social smiling, and engagement with others.
- If there are concerns about social or emotional development, seek early intervention services and support from psychologists or therapists.

## ❖ School Support

- Most children with spina bifida have normal intelligence and can attend regular schools. However, they may require additional support to address any disabilities or physical challenges, such as incontinence.
- **Regular developmental assessments:** Schedule regular developmental assessments with a pediatrician or a developmental specialist experienced in spina bifida. These assessments involve observing the baby's physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development. They can help identify any delays or concerns.



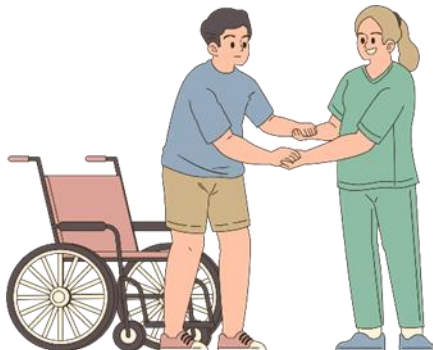
## ❖ Handling long term effects:

### Long-Term Goals of Managing Spina Bifida

- Prevent Infections: Protect the exposed spinal cord and nerves.
- Severity Assessment: The severity of spina bifida may not be immediately apparent and can become clearer over time.

## Surgical Interventions

- Closing the Defect: Surgery can address problems associated with the spinal defect.
- Hydrocephalus: Surgery may be necessary to treat hydrocephalus.
- Bone Problems: Surgery can address bone issues like curvature, hip dislocation, and foot deformities.
- Bowel and Bladder Problems: Surgery can aid with bathroom functions, incontinence, and constipation.





## Post-Surgery Care

- Skin Care: Monitor for pressure sores, especially in bony areas.
- Bowel and Bladder Function: Assist with bowel and bladder management.
- Nutrition: Ensure proper nutrition and feeding.
- Movement and Activity: Encourage movement and activity to support growth and development.
- **Non-Surgical Interventions**
- For some babies, rehabilitation, positioning aids, braces, splints, and medications may be sufficient without surgery.





## Sources and References

All illustrative images from [www.canva.com](http://www.canva.com)

<https://www.novita.org.au/helpful-information/does-your-baby-have-developmental-delay/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/spina-bifida/treatment/>

<https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/childrens-hospital/developmental-disabilities/conditions/spina-bifida.aspx>

## Review and Editing:

The content of this booklet has been reviewed by consultants  
Neurosurgery department at King Fahd University Hospital.

**Neurosurgery Department**

---

**Health Awareness Unit**

**IAU-24-603**



**جامعة الإمام عبد الرحمن بن فيصل**  
IMAM ABDULRAHMAN BIN FAISAL UNIVERSITY

**مستشفى الملك فهد الجامعي**  
King Fahad Hospital The University