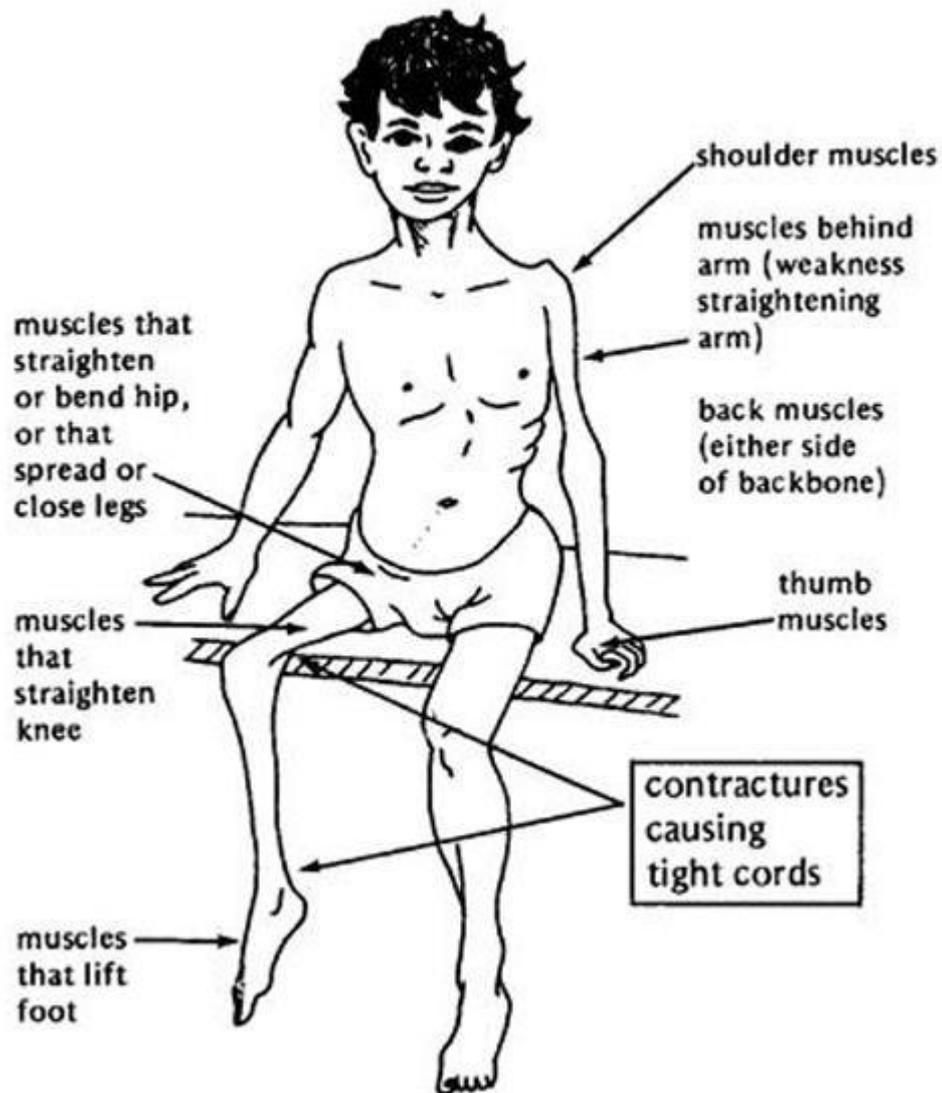


Post-Polio Syndrome (PPS)

MUSCLES COMMONLY WEAKENED BY POLIO



What is Post-Polio Syndrome?

Post-Polio Syndrome (PPS) is a condition that can affect people who have had **polio** in the past. It usually appears **many years after recovery** from the initial infection. PPS is **not contagious** and is related to the weakening of muscles that were previously affected by polio.

Who Can Be Affected?

- Adults who had polio in childhood or adulthood.
-
- Symptoms typically appear **15–40 years** after the original polio infection.
 - The severity can vary; some people experience mild symptoms, while others have more significant difficulties.

Symptoms

The main features of PPS include:

-
- **New muscle weakness** in muscles previously affected by polio or in muscles that seemed unaffected.
 - **Muscle fatigue**: Muscles tire more quickly than before.
 - **Joint and muscle pain**: Often in the shoulders, hips, or knees.
 - **Reduced endurance**: Difficulty performing daily activities or exercise.
 - **Breathing or swallowing problems**: In some cases.
 - **Cold intolerance**: Feeling unusually sensitive to cold.

Causes

- PPS is caused by **gradual degeneration of nerve cells** (motor neurons) that survived the initial polio infection.
-
- Over time, these neurons can no longer support muscles as effectively, leading to weakness and fatigue.
 - Exact mechanisms are still **not fully understood**, but PPS is a recognized longterm effect of polio.

Diagnosis

- Based on medical history, previous polio infection, and new symptoms.
- Doctors may use:

-
- **Physical examination** to assess muscle strength. ○
Electromyography (EMG) to check nerve function.
 - **Blood tests or imaging** to rule out other conditions.

Management

There is **no cure**, but symptoms can be managed:

- **Physiotherapy:** Tailored exercises to maintain strength without overfatiguing muscles.
-
- **Occupational therapy:** Advice on energy conservation and adapting daily activities.
 - **Pain management:** Medication, heat therapy, or gentle stretching.
 - **Assistive devices:** Braces, walking aids, or mobility aids if needed.
 - **Lifestyle changes:** Avoid overexertion, pace yourself, and rest when necessary.
 - **Respiratory support:** For those with breathing difficulties, specialist assessment may be required.

Living with PPS

- PPS can affect **quality of life**, but with appropriate support, most people remain **independent**.
 - Maintaining a **balanced lifestyle**, including gentle exercise, rest, and good nutrition, is important.
 - Emotional support may help, as PPS can be **frustrating or tiring**. Consider **support groups** for advice and encouragement.
-

When to Seek Medical Help

Contact your doctor if you experience:

- Rapidly worsening weakness.
 - Severe pain or joint problems.
 - Breathing difficulties or swallowing problems.
 - New symptoms that interfere with daily life.
-

Key Points to Remember

- PPS occurs **years after polio** and is **progressive** but usually slow.
 - Symptoms can **fluctuate**, with periods of increased fatigue or weakness.
 - Management focuses on **energy conservation, strengthening, and preventing complications.**
-
- Regular follow-up with your doctor or physiotherapist is recommended.