

**Office for Genetics
and
People with Special Health Care Needs**

Microcephaly Fact Sheet

What is Microcephaly?

- Microcephaly refers to a smaller than normal head size.

What is the cause of Microcephaly?

- A small head size in proportion to the rest of the body usually indicates a small brain size.
- This may be caused by infection (such as cytomegalovirus or CMV; toxoplasmosis; rubella or German Measles), bleeding, exposure to substances (such as alcohol) or a genetic disorder

Signs and Symptoms

- Developmental delay is common in children with Microcephaly. This may affect their learning abilities, motor abilities, behavior or any combination of these.
- Hearing or vision problems may occur depending on the cause of the Microcephaly.
- Seizures may also occur depending on the cause of the Microcephaly.
- Some children have extra fluid on the brain because of its small size. When there is extra fluid because of a small brain size, no treatment for the fluid is needed.

Is there any treatment for Microcephaly?

- There is no treatment for the small head size.
- Treatment for developmental delays is needed and may include education, physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech. You can contact the Maryland Infants and Toddlers program listed on the next page
- If children have hearing or vision problems or seizures, they will need to be seen by specialists for treatment.

Support Groups/Resources

- Foundation for Children with Microcephaly
<http://www.childrenwithmicro.org/>
1-877-476-5503
- Kennedy Krieger Institute
<http://www.kennedykrieger.org>
443-923-9200
- March of Dimes
www.marchofdimes.com
1-410-546-2241
- Office for Genetics and Children with Special Health Care Needs
<http://fha.maryland.gov/genetics/bdris.cfm>
1-800-638-8864
- The Parents' Place Of Maryland
www.ppmmd.org
410- 768-9100
- Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program
http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/earlyinterv/infant_to_ddlers/
410-767-0261 or 1-800-535-0182
- NIH Health information:
<http://health.nih.gov/topic/BirthDefects>
- CDC National Center for Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/birthdefects/index.html>
- National Organization of Rare Disorders (NORD)
<http://www.rarediseases.org/>
- Birth Defects Research for Children, Inc
<http://www.birthdefects.org/>