

## Educational Links (English):

- ❖ [http://aaidd.org/intellectual-disability/definition#.V\\_vsseArKM8](http://aaidd.org/intellectual-disability/definition#.V_vsseArKM8)
- ❖ <http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/intellectual/>
- ❖ <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001523.htm>
- ❖ <http://www.thearc.org/learn-about/intellectual-disability>
- ❖ <http://www.webmd.com/parenting/baby/intellectual-disability-mental-retardation#1>

## Support Groups:

- ❖ American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities -- [www.aaidd.org](http://www.aaidd.org)
- ❖ The Arc -- [www.thearc.org](http://www.thearc.org)
- ❖ National Association for Down Syndrome -- [www.nads.org](http://www.nads.org)



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## Educational Booklet: Intellectual Disability

### What is Intellectual Disability?

Intellectual disability (ID), once called mental retardation, is a condition diagnosed before age 18 that includes below-average general intellectual functioning and a lack of life skills daily.

Intellectual disability is often suspected in the early years of life if children experience delayed social skills development, self-help, motor skills, and language development.

Intellectual disability is not a disease. You can't get it from other people. Intellectual disability is not a type of mental illness, such as depression.

### What Are the Causes of Disability?

**Genetic conditions:** Sometimes intellectual disability is caused by abnormal genes inherited from parents, errors when genes combine, or other reasons. Examples of genetic conditions include Down Syndrome, Fragile X Syndrome, and Phenylketonuria (PKU).

**Problems during pregnancy:** Intellectual disability can result when the baby does not develop properly within his or her mother. For example, there may be a problem with the way your cells divide during their growth. A woman who drinks alcohol or gets an infection such as rubella during her pregnancy, which can also lead to a baby with an intellectual disability.

**Problems at birth:** If the baby has problems during childbirth, such as if he or she is not getting enough oxygen, he or she may have an intellectual disability.

**Health problems:** Some diseases such as infections, chickenpox, or meningitis can cause an intellectual disability. Intellectual disability can also be caused by extreme malnutrition (not eating well), not getting enough medical care, or being exposed to poisons such as lead or mercury.

## ¿Cómo se caracteriza?

Intellectual Disability can be characterized by the following:

- ❖ **Significant limitations in intellectual functioning** (e.g. reasoning, learning and problem solving)
- ❖ **The significant limitations in adaptive behavior** (i.e. conceptual, social and practical skills in everyday life)
- ❖ **Onset in childhood** (before the age of 18)

## What are the signs?

As a family, you may suspect that your child has an intellectual disability when he or she has any of the following:

- ❖ Lack or delay in the development of motor skills, language skills and self-help skills, especially when compared to peers
- ❖ Insufficiency to grow intellectually or continued childhood behavior
- ❖ Lack of curiosity
- ❖ Problems keeping up with school
- ❖ Inability to adapt (adjust to new situations)
- ❖ Difficulty understanding and abide by social rules

Signs of intellectual disability can range from mild to severe.

## When to call a doctor?

Call your doctor if:

1. Have concerns about your child's development
2. Note that your child's motor and language skills are not developing normally
3. Your child has other disorders that need treatment

## How to diagnose?

There are three things that are factors in the diagnosis of intellectual disability: interviews with parents, observation of the child, and intelligence tests and adaptation behaviors. A child with intellectual disability is considered if he or she has a deficit in both IQ and adaptive behaviors.

Developmental tests are often used to evaluate the child:

- ❖ Abnormal Denver development test
- ❖ Score on below-average adaptive behavior
- ❖ Development much lower than that of peers of the same age
- ❖ IQ score below 70 on a standard IQ test

## What about treatment?

The goal of treatment is to maximize the person's potential. Training and special education can start from breastfeeding, including social skills to help the person perform as normally as possible.

**For questions or concerns, discuss it with your doctor.**