

BELL'S PALSY

Please read this information sheet. If you have any questions, particularly about the treatment or potential side-effects, please ask Professor.

- This is fairly common
- It affects only the facial nerve; there are no brain or other neurological problems
- It may be caused by herpes simplex virus, or other infections
- It is not contagious
- It disproportionately attacks pregnant women and people who have diabetes, influenza, a cold, or immune problems
- There are usually no serious long-term consequences
- X-rays and blood tests *may* be required
- Treatment takes time and patience; corticosteroids and antivirals can help
- Most patients begin to get significantly better within 2 weeks, and about 80 percent recover completely within 3 months
- It rarely recurs, but can in 5-10%
- Useful websites

http://www.ninds.nih.gov/health_and_medical/disorders/bells_doc.htm

<http://www.bellspalsy.ws/>

A patient has the right under common law to give or withhold consent to medical examination of treatment. This is one of the basic principles of health care. Patients are entitled to receive sufficient information in a way they can understand about the proposed treatments, the possible alternatives and any substantial risk or risks which may be special in kind or magnitude or special to the patient, so that they can make a balanced judgement. (UK Health Dept. 19.2.99. HSC 1999/031)

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February 2005