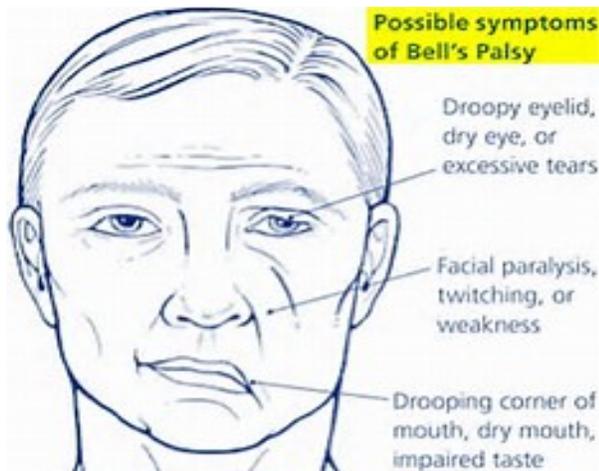
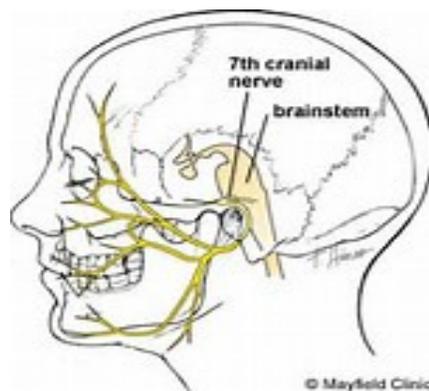


Facial Palsy (Bell's Palsy)



What is Bells palsy?

Bell's palsy also known as facial palsy is a paralysis or severe weakness of facial muscles on one side of the face, mainly resulting from temporary or permanent damage to the facial nerve (seventh cranial nerve).



Causes:

Although the exact reason Bell's palsy occurs isn't clear, it's often linked to exposure to a viral infection. Viruses that have been linked to Bell's palsy include the virus that causes:

- Cold sores
- Genital herpes (herpes simplex).
- Chickenpox and shingles (herpes zoster).
- Mononucleosis.
- Respiratory illness.
- German measles (rubella).
- Mumps.
- Flu.
- Hand foot and mouth disease.

With Bell's palsy the nerve that controls the facial muscles which passes through a narrow corridor of bone on its way to your face becomes inflamed and swollen, usually related to a viral infection.

Besides facial muscles the nerve affects ears, saliva, taste and a small bone in the middle of your ear.

Symptoms:

- Drooling
- Difficulty eating and Drinking
- Inability to make a facial expression, such as smiling or frowning.
- Facial weakness.
- Muscle twitches in the face
- Dry eye and mouth
- A headache
- Sensitivity to sound
- Inability to open or close your eye.

Recovery Period :

The recovery time varies between individuals and will depend on the amount of nerve damage. Most people notice an improvement in their symptoms after about two to three weeks, but a complete recovery can take between three to six months. Some patients are left with some degree of permanent facial weakness.

Physiotherapy Treatment:

Initially intermittent galvanic current is given to stimulate and activate the muscles and nerve respectively, which is further progressed to surge Faradic current in later stages.

When the facial nerve is damaged, the nerve no longer receives these messages as a result the muscles become weak and floppy. External electrical stimulation can try and mimic these electrical impulses and can help restore muscle tone

Hot fomentation.

Facial exercises (facial expressions) – As in Mirror Biofeedback exercises.

PNF exercises.

Precautions :

The patient suffering with Facial Palsy is generally advised by a Physiotherapist to protect specifically their eyes and ears from secondary infection.

Eyes can be protected by wearing goggles while travelling on a bike or walking by roadside.

Ears should be covered with cotton buds.