

# Do You Think Your Child Has Rett Syndrome?

What is Rett syndrome?

- Did your child have an apparently normal prenatal and perinatal history?
- Was her motor development normal?
- Was her head circumference at birth normal?
- Did she lose purposeful hand skills between 18 months and 30 months?
- Does she have hand movements like wringing, clapping, mouthing or rubbing?
- Has she withdrawn socially?
- Has she forgotten skills?
- Can a boy have Rett?

The diagnostic criteria for Rett syndrome include:

- apparently normal prenatal and perinatal history
- psychomotor development largely normal through the first six months or may be delayed from birth
- normal head circumference at birth
- postnatal deceleration of head growth in the majority
- loss of achieved purposeful hand skill between ages 1/2-21/2 years
- stereotypic hand movements such as hand wringing/squeezing, clapping/tapping, mouthing and washing/rubbing automatisms

And also possibly:

- awake disturbances of breathing (hyperventilation, breath-holding, forced expulsion of air or saliva, air swallowing)
- teeth grinding (bruxism)
- impaired sleep pattern from early infancy
- abnormal muscle tone successively associated with muscle wasting and dystonia
- peripheral vasomotor disturbances (cold, blue hands and feet)
- scoliosis/kyphosis progressing through childhood
- growth retardation
- hypotrophic (small) feet; small, thin hands

But not:

- enlarged organs or other signs of storage disease
- retinopathy, optic atrophy, or cataract
- evidence of brain damage before or after birth
- existence of identifiable metabolic or other progressive neurological disorder
- acquired neurological disorder resulting from severe infections or head trauma