

# DYSTONIA TALKING POINTS

Dystonia is a brain disorder. It causes uncontrollable body movements and postures. The brain sends chaotic signals to the muscles, telling the muscles to contract, even if the person does not want them to. There are many forms of dystonia.

## Common symptoms include:

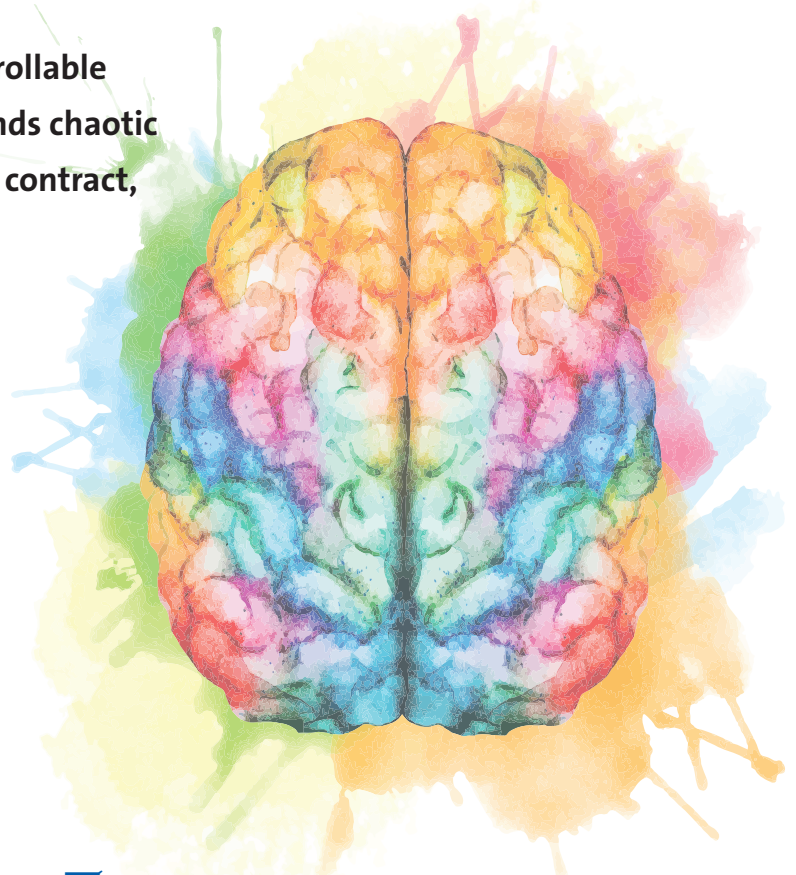
- Involuntary movements and pain in the neck
- Excessive blinking
- A breathy or strangled-sounding voice
- Slurred speech
- Hand cramps
- A twisted foot

✓ Estimates suggest at least 250,000 adults and children in the USA are affected.

✓ Dystonia can be caused by gene mutations, brain injury, stroke, certain drugs, and other insults to the nervous system.

✓ Most cases of dystonia occur out of the blue, without an obvious cause.

✓ Treatment is available. There is not yet a cure, but researchers around the world are working to better understand dystonia and develop new therapies.



✓ Dystonia is life-changing and can be disabling.

✓ Because dystonia is not better known, dystonia is frequently misdiagnosed. The symptoms are often mistaken for mental health issues, substance abuse, or poor social skills.

✓ The Dystonia Medical Research Foundation (DMRF) is a resource for patients, medical professionals, and researchers. Information is available at [www.dystonia-foundation.org](http://www.dystonia-foundation.org)

