

Spasticity

PREPARING FOR YOUR PHYSICIAN VISIT

Spasticity is tight, stiff muscles that can make movement, especially of the arms and legs, difficult. It can be due to multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, brain injury, spinal cord injury, or stroke.

There are several treatment options your physician may consider to treat spasticity. Understanding the risks and benefits associated with each treatment can help you and your physician decide what will work best for you. Using tools like the Spasticity Journal found at www.exploringspasticity.com may also assist your physician in their decision.

Here are a few questions and topics you may wish to discuss with your physician:

© **What has/hasn't worked for you in the past?**

Make sure your physician is familiar with your history. Have you been sensitive to oral medications? Does physical therapy or range of motion reduce your symptoms? Answering these types of questions may help your physician prescribe the optimal treatment.

© **Has your spasticity recently worsened or improved?**

Be certain that your physician knows of any changes in your spasticity. They may be able to better treat you by finding the underlying cause of your increased symptoms.

© **What are the available treatments?**

If your current spasticity treatment is not giving you the results you hoped for, asking your physician what options are available may give you ideas of what might be a next step. You also may find it beneficial to ask what the treatment continuum is for your spasticity.

© **How much does the recommended treatment cost?**

Knowing whether your insurance will pay for a certain therapy is important. Not all treatments are covered by Medicare, Medicaid, or private insurers.

© **What type of follow up is required after receiving the recommended therapy?**

Some spasticity treatments require regular follow up appointments with a physician. Other times, a physician may recommend a physical therapy regimen to help you get the most out of a treatment.

© **What are the potential risks and side-effects of the recommended treatment?**

Different treatments carry different long term and short term risks and side-effects. Understanding these before beginning a therapy can help you make an informed treatment decision.