

Self-Injurious Behaviour in Cri du Chat Syndrome

Self-injurious behaviour is common in individuals with Cri du Chat syndrome

The term self-injurious behaviour refers to any non-accidental behaviour (i.e., accidentally bumping your head on the wall would not be classed as self-injury whereas intentionally hitting your head on the wall would) that has the potential to cause some kind of damage such as reddening, bruising, bleeding or hair loss.

Research by Dr Kate Arron and her team showed that individuals with Cri du Chat syndrome are around nine times more likely to show self-injurious behaviour than individuals with an intellectual disability without Cri du Chat syndrome.

It has been identified that the most common form of self-injurious behaviour in Cri du Chat syndrome is pulling hair or skin (around 10% of individuals show this behaviour). 'Hits self with object' is the next most common form of self-injury (around 5% of individuals show this behaviour).

Other reported forms of self-injurious behaviour include:

- 'rubs/scratches self' (occurs in 4%),
- 'hits self with body' (occurs in 3%),
- 'hits self against object' (occurs in 2%),
- 'bites self' (occurs in 2%),
- 'inserts' (occurs in 2%)

Self-injurious behaviours are reported to reach a plateau in late childhood and stay the same during early adulthood.

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