

Intellectual Disability in Cri du Chat Syndrome

It is important to remember that everyone with Cri du Chat syndrome is an individual

It is important to remember that while individuals with Cri du Chat syndrome may have particular difficulties each individual will be unique and will have things that they find easier and things they find more difficult. Sometimes an individual will have difficulties with things you expect them to be able to do, and sometimes they will surprise you with things they do that you were not expecting. How a child develops is difficult to predict.

Research studies have looked at intellectual disability in Cri du Chat syndrome; however, these studies are only a snapshot of a certain group of individuals at a particular time. The results of these studies can guide our understanding of Cri du Chat syndrome but it is important to remember that they may not represent what a single individual can do.

What is intellectual disability?

The majority of children and adults with Cri du Chat syndrome have an intellectual disability. This is also referred to as: developmental disability or learning disability, and in some cultures, mental retardation.

The term 'intellectual disability' means that a person has global developmental delay in both intellectual functioning and [adaptive behaviour](#) (everyday practical skills) in comparison to other individuals of the same age.

For difficulties to be understood as an intellectual disability they have to have been present before adulthood.

Intellectual disability is sometimes described as mild, moderate, severe or profound. This indicates degree of disability and is based on someone's [adaptive \(everyday living\) skills](#).

Intellectual disability in people with Cri du Chat syndrome

The first research studies with people with Cri du Chat syndrome suggested that almost all individuals had a profound degree of intellectual disability. A profound degree of disability means a person may need significant support with day to day living tasks such feeding, washing and dressing.

These early studies may have been misleading. Although research is limited, recent studies have shown that not all individuals with Cri du Chat syndrome have a profound disability. There is a range of ability levels in Cri du Chat syndrome and some individuals are more able.

Associations between genetics and intellectual disability

Individuals with Cri du Chat syndrome that have an [unbalanced chromosomal rearrangement](#) (such as an unbalanced chromosomal translocation resulting in 5p deletion and another chromosomal change, usually excess material from another chromosome) have been found to have more severe developmental delay, a greater degree of [social withdrawal](#) and more features of [Autism Spectrum Disorder](#).