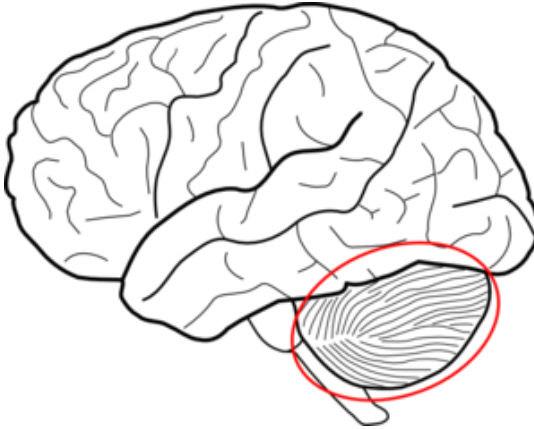




مدينة الملك فهد الطبية
King Fahad Medical City



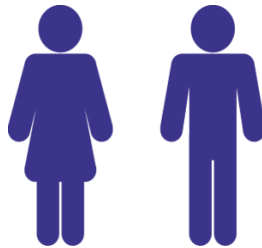
Ataxia

What is Ataxia?

Ataxia is a word for a group of disorders which affects movement, coordination and speech.

What are the facts involving ataxia?

- **Ataxia affects anyone regardless of age, gender or race.**



- **Symptoms may appear from childhood to late**



What are the symptoms of ataxia?

Weakening coordination.

Difficulty walking.



Lack of balance with frequent falls.

**Difficulty with high control tasks
such as eating, writing or
buttoning a shirt.**



Difficulty speaking.

Vision problems.



Swallowing difficulties.

What are the causes of ataxia?

- A damage in the part of the brain that controls coordination (cerebellum) causes ataxia.
- Some diseases which damages the spinal cord and nerves that connects the cerebellum to the muscles can cause ataxia.



These conditions include:



Head trauma



Stroke



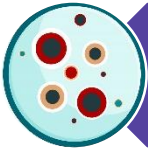
Cerebral palsy



Infections



Autoimmune disease



Paraneoplastic syndromes



Tumor



Side effects of certain medications



Exposure to toxic substances



Vitamin E, vitamin B-12 or thiamine deficiency

Some types of ataxia are also hereditary which are passed on by family members with faulty genes.

How is ataxia diagnosed?

1. Medical history.



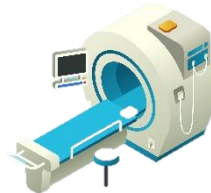
2. Complete neurological evaluation



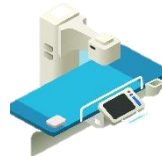
3. Family history



4. Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)



5. Computerized Tomography (CT)



6. Laboratory testing



What is the treatment?

Treatment depends on the cause; options may include:

- **Speech and language therapy.**
- **Occupational therapy.**
- **Physical therapy.**
- **Medication therapy.**



Adaptive devices include:

- **Canes or walking frames**
- **Specialized utensils for eating**
- **Communications tools for speaking**

What will you prepare before seeing your doctor?

- **Know your symptoms: make a list of your symptoms.**
- **Know your personal information: provide information regarding your past and present health condition including your family medical history.**
- **Know all your medications: make a list of all the medications you are taking.**
- **Make a list of the questions you want to ask your doctor.**

What should you ask your doctor if you have an appointment?

- **What is probably causing my symptoms?**
- **What are other possible causes other than the main causes?**
- **What tests do I need to do?**
- **Is my condition temporary or chronic?**
- **What devices can help me with coordination?**
- **How can I manage both my ataxia and other health conditions?**
- **Do I need to follow any restrictions?**
- **Do I need to see a specialist?**
- **Where can I find additional information about my condition?**



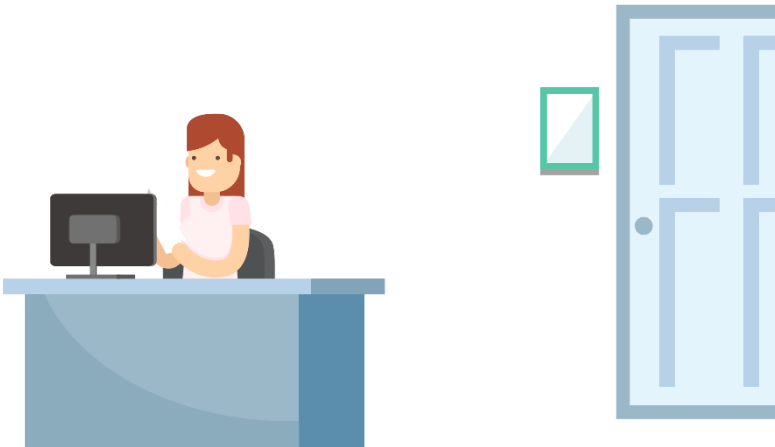
What are the possible questions will your doctor ask you?

- **When did your symptoms start to occur?**
- **Are your symptoms constant or not continuous?**
- **How serious are your symptoms?**
- **What most likely relieves your symptoms?**
- **What most likely makes your symptoms worst?**
- **Do you have any family members who have the same symptoms you have?**
- **Have you had any exposure to alcohol, drugs or toxins?**
- **Have you been sick with virus lately?**



How do I cope or where do I find support?

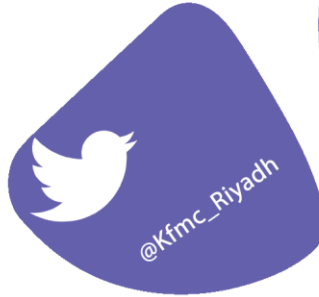
There are many challenges when living with ataxia. It is better to talk to a counselor or therapist when you are anxious or depressed. Encouragement and understanding is also found in support groups, support groups is a good source of information regarding latest treatments and experiences.



لأن الوعي وقاية ..

إدارة التثقيف الصحي

Outpatient Nursing Department 1



HEM2.19.000669

