

DISEASE:
Spinocerebellar Ataxias

NAME:	Spinocerebellar Ataxias
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<p>DESCRIPTION:</p>	<p>Ataxia often occurs when parts of the nervous system that control movement are damaged. People with ataxia experience a failure of muscle control in their arms and legs, resulting in a lack of balance and coordination or a disturbance of gait. While the term ataxia is primarily used to describe this set of symptoms, it is sometimes also used to refer to a family of disorders. It is not, however, a specific diagnosis.</p> <p>Most disorders that result in ataxia cause cells in the part of the brain called the cerebellum to degenerate, or atrophy. Sometimes the spine is also affected. The phrases <i>cerebellar degeneration</i> and <i>spinocerebellar degeneration</i> are used to describe changes that have taken place in a person's nervous system; neither term constitutes a specific diagnosis. Cerebellar and spinocerebellar degeneration have many different causes. The age of onset of the resulting ataxia varies depending on the underlying cause of the degeneration.</p> <p>Many ataxias are hereditary and are classified by chromosomal location and pattern of inheritance: <i>autosomal dominant</i>, in which the affected person inherits a normal gene from one parent and a faulty gene from the other parent; and <i>autosomal recessive</i>, in which both parents pass on a copy of the faulty gene. Among the more common inherited ataxias are <i>Friedreich's ataxia</i> and <i>Machado-Joseph disease</i>. Sporadic ataxias can also occur in families with no prior history.</p> <p>Ataxia can also be acquired. Conditions that can cause acquired ataxia include stroke, multiple sclerosis, tumors, alcoholism, peripheral neuropathy, metabolic disorders, and vitamin deficiencies. (Source: https://www.ninds.nih.gov/Disorders/All-Disorders/Ataxias-and-Cerebellar-or-Spinocerebellar-Degeneration-Information-Page)</p>
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