Is there a cure for SMA?

There is currently no cure for SMA but improved understanding of the condition has led to the development of potential treatments. Some of these are being tested in clinical trials and may potentially be licensed in the UK. Symptoms of SMA can also be managed and the highest standard of care given so that people with SMA can have the best possible quality of life.

Who are SMA Support UK?

We are an established charity that supports and empowers anyone affected by Spinal Muscular Atrophy. We are advocates for better services and access to new treatments, raise public awareness and fund research related initiatives.

How You Can Help Us

We do not receive government funding. Please help us keep busy working to support the research community in their efforts to address the causes, treatment and management of SMA.

www.smasupportuk.org.uk/donate

How to contact us

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- Mon – Thurs (9.00 am – 3.30 pm)
- Friday (9.00am –1.00pm)
- Closed on public holidays.

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What is Spinal Muscular Atrophy?

Key Facts

Spinal Muscular Atrophy Support UK
Help for today • Hope for tomorrow

What is Spinal Muscular Atrophy?

Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) is a rare, genetically inherited neuromuscular condition. SMA causes progressive loss of movement and muscle weakness as a result of muscle wasting (atrophy).

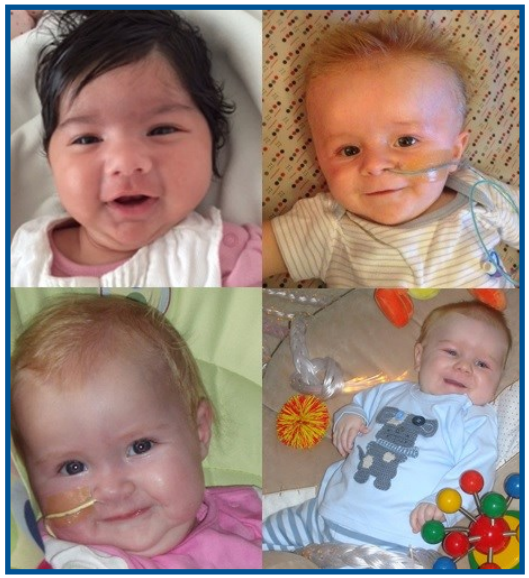
SMA is passed from parents to their children through the Survival Motor Neuron 1 or *SMN1* gene.

- One in 40—60 of us carry this gene which equates to between 1 million and 1.5 million people in the UK.
- If two carriers of the gene have a baby there is a one in four chance their baby will have SMA.

- Approximately 1 in every 6,000—10,000 babies are born worldwide with SMA.
- There are approximately 2,000—2,500 children and adults in the UK living with SMA.

Types of SMA

SMA is often grouped into 'Types' based on the age at which symptoms first appear and what physical 'milestones' a baby or child is likely to achieve. There is a wide spectrum of severity both between the different types of SMA and between children, young people and adults within each type. The main childhood onset forms are Types 1, 2 and 3.



Spinal Muscular Atrophy Type 1

SMA Type 1 is the most severe form of SMA, with symptoms usually appearing before a baby is six months old and sometimes before birth. Babies are unable to sit without support. Sadly usually due to breathing difficulties, most children with SMA Type 1 rarely survive beyond two years of age.

Spinal Muscular Atrophy Type 2

Children with SMA Type 2 are unable to stand or walk without support. Though this is a serious condition that may shorten life expectancy, improvements in care standards mean that the majority of people can live long, fulfilling lives.

Spinal Muscular Atrophy Type 3

Children with SMA Type 3 are able to stand and walk, although they may need more support with this over time. Some may need to use a wheelchair. Life expectancy is normal and most people can live long, fulfilling lives.

Rarer forms of SMA

There are other rarer forms of SMA. These often have different genetic causes. They include Adult Onset SMA, Distal SMA, Kennedy's and SMA with Respiratory Distress (SMARD) .