

# Natural Help 4...

## Bell's Palsy



### What is Bell's Palsy?

**Bell's Palsy** is a neurological disorder that causes the **facial muscles on one side of the face to suddenly weaken or become paralyzed**. The muscles that close the eye control the tear glands, as well as control one of the salivary glands and the taste buds in front of the tongue are all controlled by the [facial nerve](#). When damage or trauma is caused to the [facial nerve](#), it usually only affects one side of the face.

The electrochemical signals sent from the brain to these muscles travel along the [facial nerve](#). If the [facial nerve](#) is disrupted, no signals can get through to these muscles and, depending on how many of the nerve fibers within the [facial nerve](#) are involved, the affected half of the face experiences muscle weakness or paralysis and this is what is known as [Bell's Palsy](#).

People with [Bell's Palsy](#) experience an interference with normal facial actions and functions such as closing the eye, eating, smiling and their speech may also be slurred. Other symptoms which are present include tearing of the eye, loss of taste, slurred speech, sensitivity to sound, facial paralysis and drooling. This condition occurs suddenly, and usually peaks within 48 hours.

**People often think that they are experiencing a stroke, and are not familiar with the milder symptoms of [Bell's Palsy](#) that often precede the involvement of the facial muscles.**

[Bell's Palsy](#) affects about 40,000 people in the United States every year. [Bell's Palsy](#) is more **common in young adults, the elderly, diabetics and pregnant women**. Children are not immune to it but they do tend to recover extremely well. Generally there are no other medical risks associated with this condition but developing [Bell's Palsy](#) during pregnancy may be associated with the development of pre-eclampsia.

### Symptoms of Bell's Palsy

The symptoms of [Bell's Palsy](#) tend to progress very quickly. The symptoms are often not recognizable at first but will develop over a period of a few days. The warning signs are usually neck pain, pain behind the ear or pain in the back of the head.

The common symptoms of [Bell's palsy](#) include:

- Paralysis of the facial muscles
- Facial weakness

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Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read in this ebook or on ANY website.

- Drooping or sagging mouth
- Drooling
- Facial pain or twitching
- Loss of taste
- Inability to close the eye, tearing or dry eyes
- Dizziness
- Dry mouth
- Hypersensitivity to sound
- Impaired speaking
- The affected half of the face is usually flat and expressionless but it is not uncommon for patients to complain about the unaffected side of the face, saying that it feels twisted or uncomfortable.

## Diagnosing Bell's Palsy

The diagnosis of [Bell's Palsy](#) is determined by the patient's medical history, a thorough physical examination and laboratory tests. Tests for diabetes, Lyme disease, myasthenia gravis, sarcoidosis, cancer, facial tumors, AIDS and Guillain Barre might also be performed to rule out other conditions that may cause facial paralysis.

## Common Tests Used in Diagnosis

- **MRI Scan** (magnetic resonance imaging) and **CT Scan** (computerized tomography)  
These imaging tests are used to determine tumors, bone fractures, infections or abnormalities around the [facial nerve](#).
- **Hearing and Balance Tests**  
The tests are able to assess if there is any injury to the inner ear and if the nerve responsible for hearing is damaged. It is also able to determine the eye's ability to produce tears and whether the sense of taste functions.
- **EMG (Electromyography)**  
The injury is assessed by stimulating the [facial nerve](#) electrically, and can also determine the progression and extent of the injury.

## What Causes Bell's Palsy?

Though the exact [causes of Bell's Palsy](#) are **not known**, the condition is thought to be brought upon due to inflammation and swelling of the [facial nerve](#). This in turn could be due to:

- Viral infections such as herpes, mumps, influenza, a cold, infectious mononucleosis or HIV
- Bacterial infections such as Lyme disease or Tuberculosis
- Multiple sclerosis
- Myasthenia gravis or tuberculosis
- Guillain-Barre Syndrome
- Chronic disease such as diabetes
- Traumatic injury to the face or head (such as a skull fracture)
- Tumor causing nerve compression
- Stress
- Pregnancy

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## Michele Carelse, Clinical Psychologist



All of our natural remedies are formulated by our expert team of herbalists, naturopaths and homeopaths, and headed by Michele Carelse.

Michele has had years of experience in the manufacturing and use of natural remedies. In addition, she is a trained Clinical Psychologist and has been incorporating natural remedies into her treatment of patients with depression, anxiety, ADD, ADHD and stress for many years with spectacular results.

# Help for Bell's Palsy

In mild cases of [Bell's Palsy](#), treatment is not actually required, and the nerve will heal by itself in due course. However, **more severe cases of this condition require treatment**. Various types of treatments such as conventional medicine, complementary and natural therapy may be effective if integrated into a broader treatment plan.

## Using Conventional Medicines for Treatment

- Anti-viral drugs (such as acyclovir) may treat the herpes viruses if this is one of the suspected [causes of Bell's Palsy](#) and [facial nerve damage](#) or inflammation.
- Corticosteroids, such as prednisone, are used to reduce swelling and inflammation of the [facial nerve](#) and prevent any possible or further [facial nerve damage](#).
- A Vitamin B12 injection can protect the nerves and reduce nerve inflammation ensuring better [nerve health](#).
- Botulinum toxin (Botox) can be injected into the upper eyelid to protect the eye and also to reduce facial spasm.
- If [facial nerve damage](#) occurs, surgical treatments such as [facial nerve](#) repair, nerve substitution and muscle transposition may be needed if the condition does not improve or remit, in order to reduce distortion of the facial features and restore [nerve health](#).
- A surgical procedure called tarsorrhaphy may improve eyelid closure.
- Plastic surgery may be performed to improve permanent facial drooping.

## Other Therapies for Bell's Palsy

- Physiotherapy
- Acupuncture
- Massage
- Facial exercises

## Natural Remedies Used for Bell's Palsy

**A natural approach to [Bell's Palsy](#) often works best in combination with other therapies.**

Natural remedies like herbs can promote effective functioning of the nervous system and offer a therapeutic effect therefore possibly preventing some [causes of Bell's Palsy](#). Herbal ingredients such as St. John's Wort, Valerian, and Avena sativa, as well as homeopathically prepared Aconite, Causticum, Dulcamara and Gelsemium can be used to treat symptoms related to the nervous system and aid faster recovery.

Under the guidance of an herbalist or homeopath, herbal and homeopathic remedies may be successfully incorporated into your treatment plan.

## Caring for the Affected Eye

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**Bell's Palsy recovery** often includes special care for the eye on the affected side of the face. **Bell's Palsy** makes it hard to close or blink the eye, and without these actions it is difficult to maintain moisture in the eye.

If the eye becomes dry, and is exposed to foreign bodies because it cannot close, it will become damaged. Consultation with an ophthalmologist is recommended. Use the following safety measures to keep the eye moist:

- Administer artificial tears every 2 hours
- Wear sunglasses or an eye patch to protect the eye and reduce dryness
- Apply a lubricant and tape the eye shut before you sleep to keep the cornea from drying
- A weight may also be placed in the eyelid to keep it shut

**About 50% of **Bell's Palsy** patients will experience a complete recovery in two to three weeks.**

**Bell's Palsy recovery** depends on the severity of the nerve damage. If nerve damage is mild, recovery can be expected to be quick – and the patient should be healed within weeks. However, if the damage is more severe, recovery can take longer. Approximately 7% of patients experience a recurrence of **Bell's palsy**, with an average time span of ten years. **Bell's Palsy** has an increased tendency to recur in diabetics.

It is not uncommon for people suffering from **Bell's Palsy** to become self conscious because of their facial disfigurement, and they tend to shy away from others and isolate themselves. There are various treatment options and coping mechanisms to manage this condition and to ensure a good quality of life.

## Tips for Managing Bell's Palsy

There are basic wellness methods and lifestyle considerations that can aid in **Bell's Palsy recovery** patients to deal with their condition more effectively. These helpful tips include:

- Eating a healthy and balanced diet rich in leafy, green vegetables
- Exercising regularly
- Practice facial massage and facial exercises several times a day
- Increase intake of Vitamin B12, B6 and zinc supplements to promote nerve growth
- Manage stress levels by practicing relaxation exercises
- Investigate acupuncture, electrical stimulation and biofeedback training
- Apply moist heat to the paralyzed areas to help reduce pain
- Massage affected area
- Keep the face warm – wear a scarf or a jacket with a hood, because exposure to cold brings on paralysis
- Try drinking juice, water or cold drinks with a straw
- Cut food into small pieces and eat on the side of your mouth that feels most comfortable
- Wear a piece of cotton wool under your eye patch as it prevents dust from settling in
- Wear a pair of goggles when you shower to prevent soap and shampoo from affecting your weak eye



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## **The Natural Approach**

While Western medicine has become the norm in many cultures, it is not the only treatment option. Conventional western medicine, often called allopathic medicine, is the system of medicine taught at most medical schools and most pharmaceutical and synthetic medicines are manufactured and marketed according to the principles of allopathic medicine. Allopathic medicine is also sometimes called orthodox medicine.

Because most of us in the Western world have grown up in a society in which allopathic medicine is the prevailing norm, we forget that, only a few decades ago, homeopathic, herbal and other natural medicines were commonly available – and freely used even by conventional doctors. While there are often heated debates about which system of medicine is ‘better’ than the other, many responsible doctors (whether they are allopathic or not) recognize that both have a role to play in the treatment program.

Natural medicine has often been frowned on by conventional doctors, especially by those who did not have sufficient knowledge of these medicines. However, it is encouraging to note that some medical schools are now beginning to re-introduce it into their course work, thereby providing doctors with a wider range of treatment options from which to choose. In many countries, especially in Europe, India and China, natural and homeopathic medicines are commonly prescribed by conventional doctors and represent a significant part of the total annual drug sales.

Naturopathy is a branch of medicine (just as allopathy is a branch of medicine) which operates according to the underlying philosophy that the body has an innate capacity to heal itself. While natural medicines are often called ‘alternative’ or ‘complimentary’ medicines, they are, in fact, a unique and independent form of medicine in their own right, well able to treat a variety of conditions. Perhaps the term ‘holistic’ medicine is more apt, given the broad range of treatment options and approaches which are to be found within the practice of natural medicine, which encompasses many different disciplines, including herbalism, homeopathy, iridology, osteopathy, chiropractic, therapeutic massage techniques, aromatherapy, acupuncture and many, many more.

Most naturopaths will use a variety of treatment modalities in order to treat their patients in a holistic way to support health, relieve symptoms and prevent future disease. In fact, even the World Health Organization defines health as being "... more than simply the absence of illness. It is the active state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being." This is a wonderfully clear description of holistic or natural medicine, which strives to support health (thereby relieving or preventing symptoms), rather than simply eliminating disease.

Although allopathic medicine certainly has a role to play and has made a tremendous contribution to medical science during the past century, there is a growing perception that it is not the only answer and that, in many cases, holistic medicine can accomplish just as much, if not more – without the risk of side effects, addiction and sacrifice to health so commonly associated with pharmaceutical drugs. Contrary to common perception, and provided that they are manufactured in the correct way, natural medicines can work quickly and safely to promote healing.

1) All Native Remedies products are manufactured according to the highest pharmaceutical standards - using only the best quality raw ingredients from nature's medicine chest.

2) Native Remedies and our suppliers are registered with the FDA as accredited suppliers and manufacturers of health supplements. Our products are sold all over the world and are manufactured to strict international standards in a GMP accredited manufacturing plant.

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4) Manufacturing is done strictly according to the principles of GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) and all raw ingredients undergo stringent testing before being approved by our registered manufacturing pharmacists.

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In many cases, they can succeed where pharmaceutical drugs have failed. Despite frequent reports that they are ‘unproven’ and ‘untested’, the opposite is true. Natural medicines have a long history of usage and there is a wealth of empirical evidence to support their effectiveness and safety. In addition, active clinical research is carried out by many academic hospitals and universities to support the extensive traditional and empirical evidence behind natural medicines.

It is also important to know that, like any medicine, herbal and homeopathic medicines must be manufactured in the correct way, following acceptable procedures and manufacturing methods to ensure maximum effectiveness and safety. Due to the recent rise in popularity of natural remedies, many companies have sprung up to take advantage of the market. Unfortunately not all of them are equipped to manufacture to the correct standards, often resulting in a flood of inferior (and sometimes even unsafe) remedies onto the market – and giving natural remedies a bad name.

Even some pharmaceutical companies have rushed to claim their market share by producing so-called ‘standardized’ extracts of herbs and offering these as superior to the tried and tested methods of naturopathic manufacturing. Nothing could be further from the truth. While ‘standardized’ extracts may offer benefit of easy consistency of dosage (and cheaper more efficient production lines), they have grave disadvantages. These include an increase in side effects as the medicines produced in this manner lose the natural protective properties of the herbs. In some cases, these side effects have proved fatal – as was seen in the liver toxicity associated with standardized extracts of kava kava, a herb previously safely used for generations without any known side effects.

Most naturopaths recommend what is called the Full Spectrum Method of extraction – which retains the benefits of ALL the active ingredients within the herb as opposed to isolating only one – thereby providing a more complete treatment as well as superior protection against side effects.

Whatever your choice, always choose wisely. Research what is best for you. If you have a chronic or life threatening condition, don’t make changes without first discussing them with your doctor in order that your condition may be monitored. Well informed and supportive practitioners will support patients who want to take responsibility for their own health.

In the treatment of depression, the following herbal and homeopathic remedies are often used as part of the treatment plan.

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