

About Sunny Hill

Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children is a provincial facility offering specialized services to children with disabilities, their families and communities throughout British Columbia. Using a family-centred approach, Sunny Hill helps promote the healthy development of children and youth by supporting families and community service providers in their efforts. It is also a resource for educational services and information about disabilities. Services are delivered close to home in a child's community, or on site at Sunny Hill, located in Vancouver.

How To Contact Us

**Sunny Hill Health Centre For Children
Tone Management Team**

3644 Slocan Street, Vancouver, BC V5M 3E8

Tone Management Team Leader

Phone: (604) 453-8300

Fax: (604) 453-8309

www.bcchildrens.ca

*Promoting Better Health for Children with Disabilities
through Clinical Services, Education and Research*



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What Is Tone?

Muscle Tone is the tension in our muscles that is always present even when we are relaxed. It is what helps us to move our bodies and keep our bodies in certain positions.

What Causes Tone Problems?

Our brain acts like a central computer telling our muscles what to do. After an injury to the brain or spinal cord the messages do not get through properly. This makes the muscle tension, what we call 'tone' in our muscles high and they appear tight and unable to relax. This can cause pain and stiffness.

Severe muscle tone problems may occur in children with brain injury, cerebral palsy or spinal injuries.

Different Kinds Of 'Tone'

Some of the most common types of muscle tone include:

Spasticity This is often called 'high tone'. This is a kind of muscle tightness that is always present when your child is awake. Sometimes the muscles become so stiff that children may have problems with moving their arms or legs.

Dystonia is abnormal muscle contractions that look like twisting, jerking or stiffening of the arms, legs or whole body that is followed by relaxation.

Hypotonia also called 'low tone' makes your child floppy and weak.



If your child has abnormal muscle tone, some of the problems can be damage to bones and joints, problems with walking, sitting and sleeping problems that can lead to pain and long-term health problems. It can also make participating in school and other daily activities, such as eating and dressing, difficult.

What Does The Tone Management Team Do?

Sunny Hill's Tone Management Team works with children, their families and community caregivers to find solutions for the problems created by tone. The team:

- Assesses your child's tone management needs
- Talks with community teams (OT, PT, doctor) about services and care options
- Recommends therapy for tone management, and is available for questions
- Supports families and community teams with education and information

What Treatment Options Are Available To Manage Tone?

The Tone Management Team helps parents and caregivers sort through the wide range of treatment options available for children experiencing difficulty with managing tone. Among the treatments typically recommended are:

- Physiotherapy
- Oral or injectable medications
- Surgical options
 - Orthopedics
 - Neurosurgery



The Tone Management Team works closely with families and healthcare professionals to ensure a safe selection and dosage of medication for each child, and to explain possible side effects of any medication.

About The Tone Management Team

The Tone Management Team offers services to children from birth to 19 years of age, and their families. Our interdisciplinary team makes assessments and recommendations concerning muscle tone, including spasticity, dystonia, hypotonia and other movement problems.

Families can access this specialized service by a referral from their community pediatrician or other physicians involved in their child's care.

Who Is On The Team?

The Tone Management Team includes:

- Developmental Pediatricians and Psychiatrists
- Nurse Clinician
- Physiotherapists

The team may also collaborate with other Sunny Hill professionals, including:

- Orthopedic Surgeon
- Dieticians
- Occupational Therapists

Other children's health specialists:

- Pediatric Neurosurgeon

