

## **Mobius Syndrome**

Mobius is an extremely rare condition in which the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> cranial nerves are not fully developed resulting in eye muscle and facial paralysis. The ensuing lack of facial expression and inability to smile are the most graphic symptoms.

Blinking, lateral eye movements and facial expressions are either non-functioning or severely limited.

When a newborn exhibits impaired ability to suck there is a possibility that Mobius may be responsible. Combined with excessive drooling and crossed eyes, deformities of tongue and jaw, club foot or missing or webbed fingers, a Mobius diagnosis is likely. The mouth and eyes may remain open during sleep with eyes becoming ulcerated due to lack of tears in the absence of blinking.

Acquiring gross motor skills is often delayed with the child catching up to peers after a while. Speech therapy is required to maximize communication given the impaired mobility of the tongue and lips as well as to gain better control of eating. Surgery may be needed to correct crossed eyes; nerve and muscles may be transferred to provide ability to smile; physical therapy helps improve gross motor skills and coordination.

The exact cause of Mobius syndrome is unknown though there are numerous possible causes. One is that a complete exchange of fragments occurs between two broken chromosomes. It may occur due to a history of maternal illness during the first trimester; drug intake or trauma during pregnancy.