

Health Difficulties in Fragile X Syndrome

There are some health problems associated with fragile X syndrome.

Health Difficulties

Otitis media (middle ear infection) is a common, recurrent problem in children with fragile X syndrome, more so than in typically developing children. This can subsequently affect language development and lead to hearing loss. Otitis media can be treated by grommets which are tiny tubes that are inserted into the eardrum to drain fluid. More information on grommets can be found [here](#).

Sinusitis (inflammation of the lining of the sinuses) is also commonly found in fragile X syndrome. Although it is less common than otitis media, it too can be a recurring problem.

Digestive disorders such as gastroesophageal reflux are common in many children with fragile X syndrome. Reflux can be painful for individuals and may be hard to detect when language is delayed and children do not have a way to communicate their discomfort.

[Download: Guide to assessing pain in children with intellectual disability.](#)

Flat feet is prevalent in around 50% of individuals with fragile X syndrome and is not usually associated with pain or disability. However, orthopaedic shoes or foot orthoses may be used to improve gait pattern or shoe wear.

Excessive joint laxity, where joints are loose or unstable due to the ligaments holding them in place, is commonly found in fragile X syndrome, including hyperextensive finger joints and thumbs. However, it does not tend to cause many problems and generally improves with age.

Other health difficulties commonly found in fragile X syndrome include scoliosis (curvature of the spine) and hypertension (high blood pressure), which is usually seen in males with fragile X syndrome. Seizures are also common during childhood, although these are infrequent and are often outgrown before adulthood.

Sleep difficulties can also occur. To read more, please click [here](#).

Further information:

The Fragile X Society provides more information on the behavioural and health features of Fragile X Syndrome:

<http://www.fragilex.org.uk/syndrome>