

BELL - Bell's Palsy

BELL-AP ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand anatomy and physiology as it relates to Bell's palsy.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that Bell's palsy is a form of facial paralysis resulting from damage or disease of the 7th (facial) cranial nerve.
2. Explain that the mechanism of Bell's palsy involves swelling of the nerve due to immune or viral disease, with ischemia and compression of the nerve in the confines of the temporal bone.

BELL-C COMPLICATIONS

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the complications of Bell's Palsy.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that damage to the cornea can occur if the eyelid does not close, blinking is impaired, or lacrimation does not occur.
2. Discuss that the frequent use of artificial tears or saline drops in the eyes may be helpful.
3. Explain that a lubricant eye ointment is most effective.
4. Explain that the healthcare provider may recommend the use of tape or an eye patch to help close the eye.

BELL-DP DISEASE PROCESS

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the possible causes and disease process of Bell's Palsy.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that Bell's palsy can strike almost anyone at any age, but it is less common before age 15 and after age 60. Explain that it is more common in persons with diabetes, influenza, a cold or upper respiratory ailment, and pregnancy.
2. Explain that the common cold sore virus, herpes simplex, and other herpes viruses cause many cases of Bell's palsy, but Bell's palsy can also be caused by other infections especially tick fevers.

3. Explain that pain behind the ear may precede facial weakness and that weakness may progress to complete unilateral facial paralysis within hours. This paralysis may cause a drooping eyelid, inability to blink, drooping mouth, drooling, dryness of the eye or mouth, impaired taste, and excessive tearing. Explain that in severe cases the eye may not close and that salivation, taste and lacrimation may be affected.
4. Discuss that the prognosis for Bell's palsy is generally very good. Explain that about 80% recover completely within 3 months, but that for some the symptoms may last longer and may never completely disappear. Explain that the recovery for complete paralysis takes longer and that there is an increased incidence of residual symptoms.
5. Discuss that during the recovery period regrowth of nerve fibers may result in tearing while eating and unexpected muscle contractions during voluntary facial movements.

BELL-FU FOLLOW-UP

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the importance of regular follow-up and will develop a plan to manage the Bell's palsy and keep follow-up appointments.

STANDARDS:

1. Emphasize that full participation in the treatment plan is the responsibility of the patient.
2. Review the treatment plan with the patient/family, emphasizing the need for keeping appointments, taking medications as prescribed, and fully participating with the physical therapy plan.
3. Review the symptoms that should be reported and measures to take if they occur.
4. Stress the importance of keeping follow-up appointments and continuing the prescribed therapy as long as recommended by the healthcare provider.

BELL-L LITERATURE

OUTCOME: The patient/family will receive literature regarding Bell's palsy and its treatment.

STANDARDS:

1. Provide the patient/family with literature on Bell's palsy and its treatment.
2. Discuss the content of the literature.

BELL-M MEDICATIONS

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the purpose, proper use, and expected outcomes of prescribed drug therapy.

STANDARDS:

1. Describe the name, strength, purpose, dosing directions, and storage of the medication.
2. Discuss the risks, benefits and common or important side effects of the medication and follow up as appropriate.
3. Discuss any significant drug/drug, drug/food, and alcohol interactions, as appropriate.
4. Discuss the importance of keeping a list of all current prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbs, traditional remedies, and supplements. Encourage the patient to bring this list and pill bottles to appointments for medication reconciliation.

BELL-PM PAIN MANAGEMENT

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the plan for pain management.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that usually pain from Bell's palsy is transient and controllable with mild analgesics.
2. Explain that short term use of narcotics may be helpful in pain management as appropriate.
3. Explain the use of heat and cold in the relief of pain as appropriate.
4. Explain that the use of non-pharmacologic measures, such as imagery may be helpful with pain control.

BELL-TE TESTS

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the test(s) to be performed, the potential risks, the expected benefits, and the risks of non-testing.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain test(s) that have been ordered (explain as appropriate):
 - a. method of testing
 - b. necessity, benefits, and risks of test(s) to be performed
 - c. any potential risk of refusal of recommended test(s)
 - d. any advance preparation and instructions required for the test(s)
 - e. how the results will be used for future medical decision-making
 - f. how to obtain the results of the test
2. Explain test results:

- a. meaning of the test results
- b. follow-up tests may be ordered based on the results
- c. how results will impact or effect the treatment plan
- d. recommendations based on the test results

BELL-TX TREATMENT

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the possible treatments that may be performed.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that the patient and medical team will make the treatment plan after reviewing available options.
2. Discuss the treatment plan, including lifestyle adaptations, pharmacologic, and psychosocial aspects.
3. Discuss the importance of fully participating with the treatment plan, including scheduled follow-up.