Spina bifida

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Who are SHINE?

Charity dedicated to providing specialist information, advice and support for spina bifida and hydrocephalus across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Shine staff residential 2019
Spina bifida is a condition affecting the central nervous system (brain and spine)
What is spina bifida?

4 weeks after conception – the neural tube forms. This will eventually develop into the brain and spine.

Spina bifida: a neural tube defect where the tube doesn’t fully close and leaves a gap which becomes a split in the spine later.
What is spina bifida?

A sac or cyst forms on the spine – this can contain the spinal cord, fluid, and nerves.

We estimate that there are between 11 and 14.5 thousand people living with spina bifida in England and Wales.
What might spina bifida affect?

Everyone is unique but these are some of the things that are often different in people with spina bifida...

- Sensation
- Mobility
- Thinking & learning
- Balance
- Bladder & bowel function
What does spina bifida affect?

Depending where the gap in the spine is and how big it is, different parts of the body might not work quite the same or as well – everyone is different!

All these people have spina bifida!
How is spina bifida treated?

- Surgical repair usually performed within the first 48 hours after delivery to preserve neural tissue and to prevent infection.
- Repair can also be performed prenatally (in the womb before birth)
- Shunt can also be placed if hydrocephalus is present

https://www.lovewhatmatters.com
https://musculoskeletalkey.com/congenital-anomalies-of-the-spinal-cord/
https://www.childrensmn.org/educationmaterials/parents/article/18525/vp-shunts/
Folic for Life

• ~1:750 UK pregnancies are affected by an NTD

• ~70% of NTDs like spina bifida are preventable through taking folic acid in the 8 weeks before pregnancy until the 12th week of pregnancy

• 90% of UK women do not have high enough levels of folate to protect against NTDs and ~45% of pregnancies are not planned.
Thank you for listening
Any Questions?