

# Spina bifida

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# Who are SHINE?

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

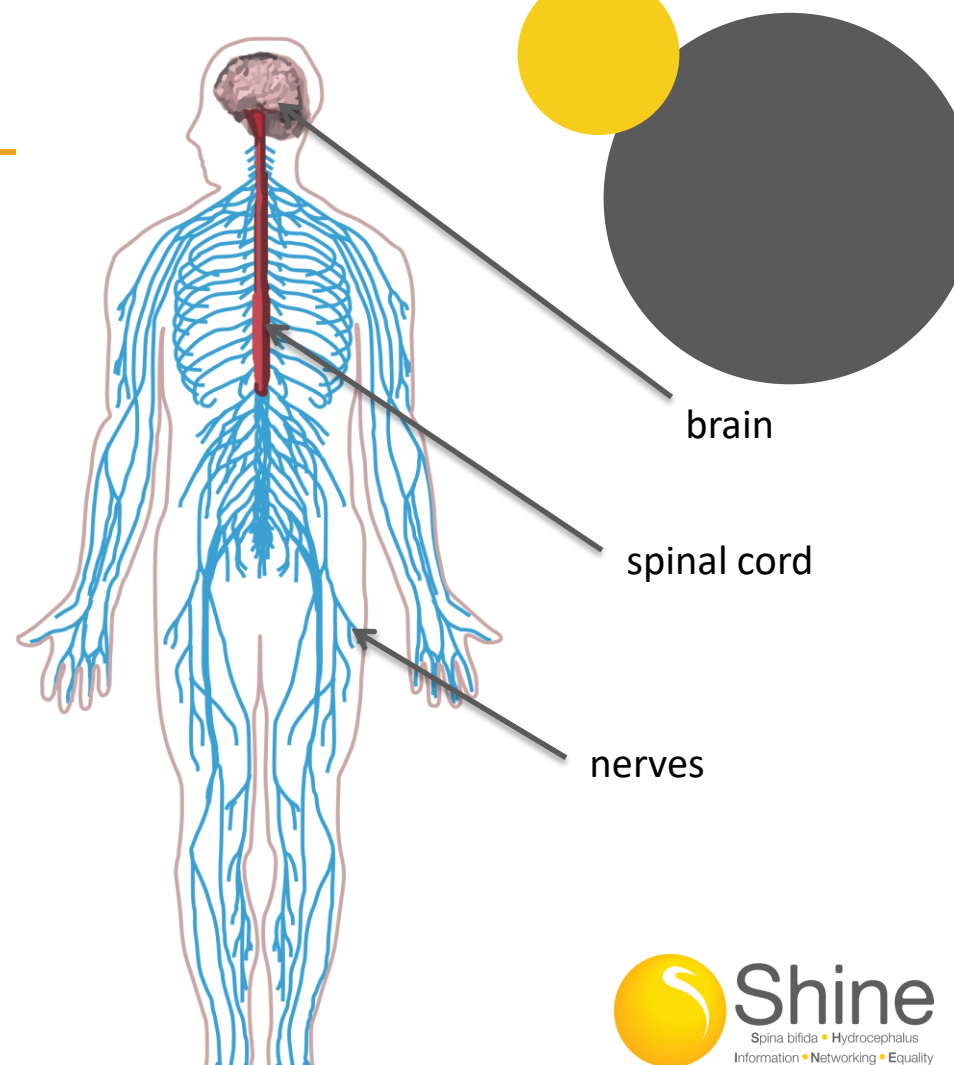


*Shine staff residential 2019*

# The nervous system

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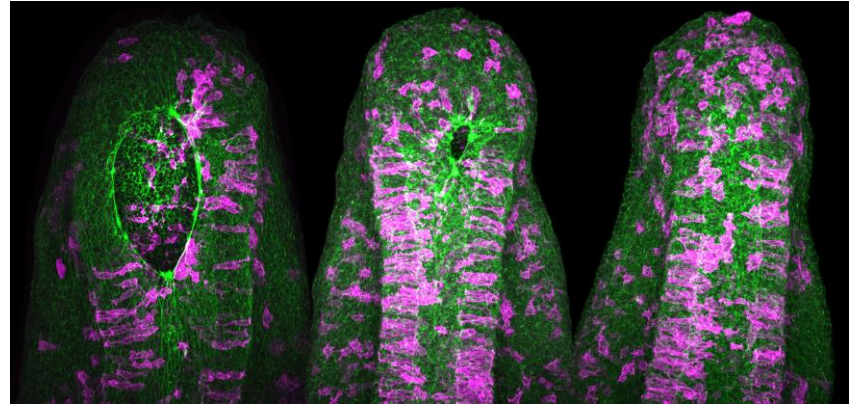
Spina bifida is a condition affecting the central nervous system (brain and spine)



# What is spina bifida?



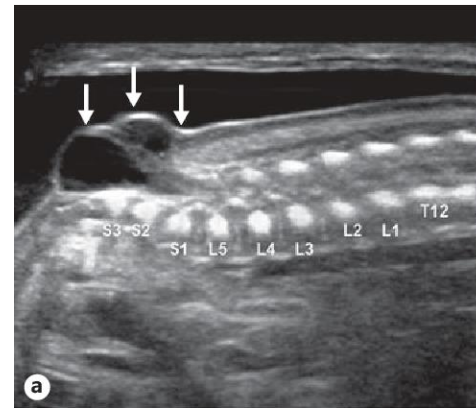
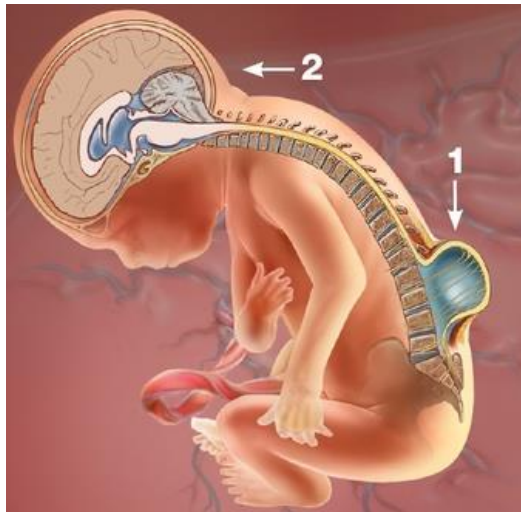
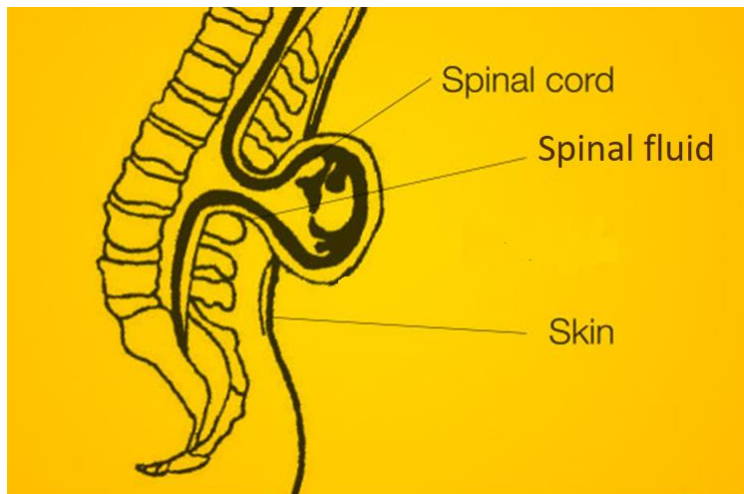
4 weeks after conception  
– the neural tube  
forms. This will eventually  
develop into the brain and spine



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?

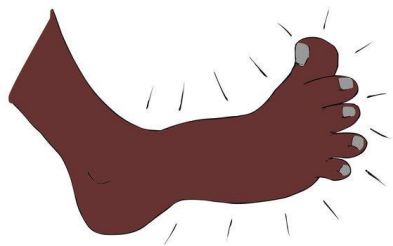
A sac or cyst forms on the spine – this can contain the spinal cord, fluid, and nerves



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?

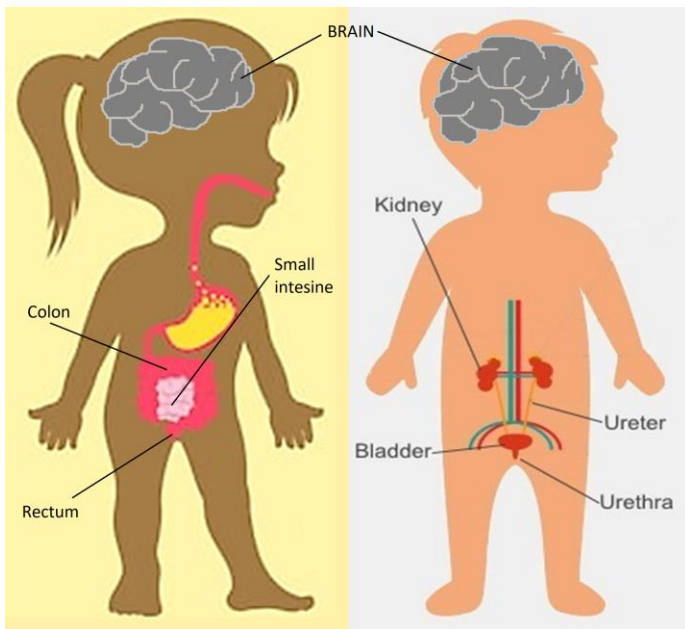
Everyone is unique but these are some of the things that are often different in people with spina bifida...



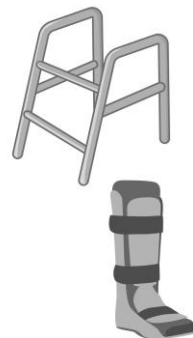
Sensation



Balance



Bladder & bowel function



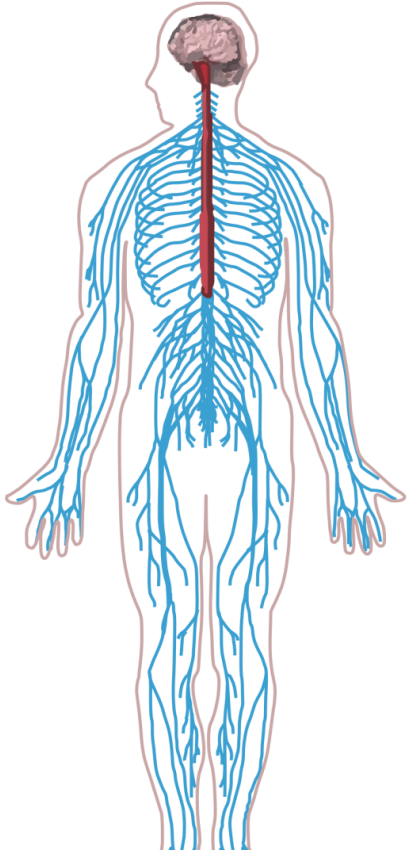
Mobility



Thinking & learning

# What does spina bifida affect?

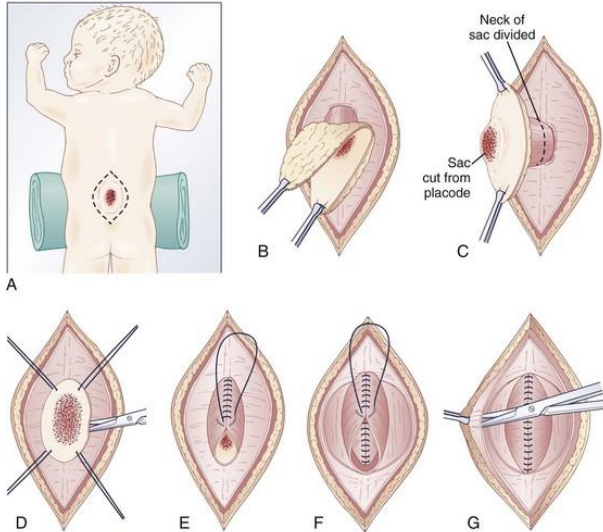
Depending where the gap in the spine is and how big it is, different parts of the body might not work quite the same or as well – everyone is different!



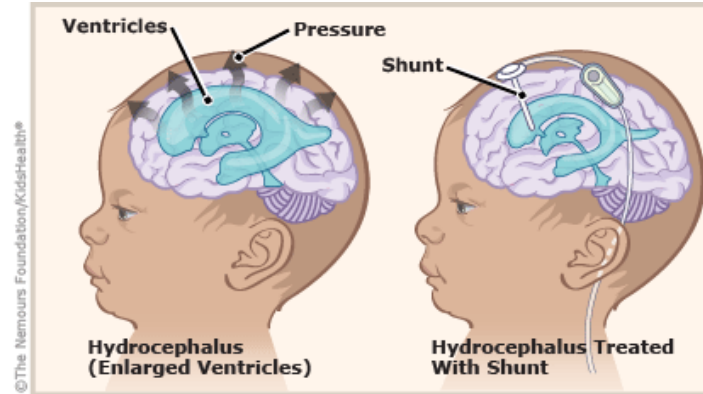
All these people have spina bifida!

# 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>

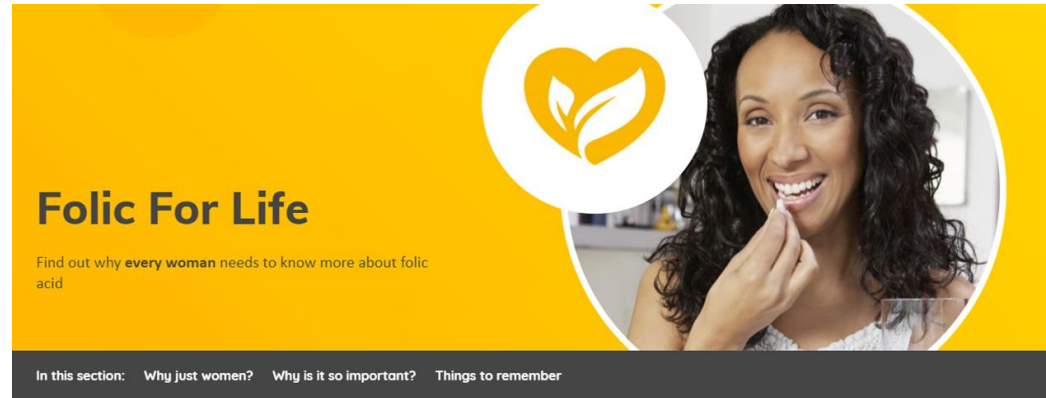


<https://www.childrensmn.org/educationmaterials/parents/article/18525/vp-shunts/>

# Folic for Life

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- ~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 12<sup>th</sup> 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.


A promotional graphic for the 'Folic For Life' campaign. It features a bright yellow background. On the left, there is a white circular icon containing a stylized orange heart with a green leaf inside. Below this icon, the text 'Folic For Life' is written in bold black font. Underneath that, in a smaller font, it says 'Find out why every woman needs to know more about folic acid'. On the right side of the graphic is a circular inset photograph of a smiling woman with dark, curly hair, who is holding a small white pill to her lips. At the bottom of the graphic, a dark grey horizontal bar contains the text 'In this section: Why just women? Why is it so important? Things to remember' in a small white font.

**Folic For Life**

Find out why **every woman** needs to know more about folic acid

In this section: Why just women? Why is it so important? Things to remember

**If you're sexually active, you need to take a folic acid supplement every day**

The background is a vibrant yellow, filled with a pattern of overlapping circles and swirls in various shades of yellow and white, creating a dynamic and textured effect.

**Thank you for listening  
Any Questions?**