Birth Defects

Congenital = condition that is present at birth; usually develops during the 1st month of life.
Cleft Lip/Cleft Palate

- Can affect anyone
- Appears at birth
- Congenital
- Two sides of lip and/or pallet not joined
- Treatment - surgery
Clubfoot

- Affects anyone
- Appears at birth
- Foot and ankle twisted, making it impossible to walk normally
- Treatment - surgery
Down’s Syndrome
Down’s Syndrome

- Common if baby has young or old parents
- Appears at birth
- Chromosomal error
- Effects – Some form of mental retardation, oval shaped eyes, thick big tongue, short neck, back of head is flat, small ears, common heart problems
- Surgery, special assistance
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

- Affected if mom drank alcohol while pregnant
- Appears at birth
- Prenatal
- Some form of mental retardation, facial abnormalities, deformed limbs
- Special assistance
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

Baby with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

FAS Facial Characteristics:
- small eye openings
- smooth philtrum
- thin upper lip
Muscular Dystrophy

- Affects anyone
- Appears in childhood and adulthood
- Weakening of muscles. Inability to walk, move, wasting away and sometimes death
- No treatment
PKU

- Affects anyone
- Appears at birth
- Abnormal digestion of protein, mental retardation, hyperactivity
- Preventable diet
Spina Bifida

- Affects anyone
- Appears at birth
- Prenatal damage (folic acid deficiency)
- Varying degrees from slight cyst to open spine (sores, infertile, legs paralyzed, poor bladder and bowel control, death)
- Surgery and physical therapy
Spina Bifida
Cerebral Palsy

- Affects anyone
- Appears at birth
- Prenatal damage
- Damage of one or more parts of the brain that control movement. Lack of control of movement and posture.
- Special medication, physical therapy
Sickle Cell Anemia

- Affects primarily blacks
- Appears at birth
- Blood disorder
- Abnormal blood cells, bout of pain, heart and kidney failure, less oxygen to all parts of the body. Death in childhood. Damage to adult vital organs.
- Blood transfusions
Preventing Birth Defects

- Eat well during pregnancy
- Avoid marrying close relatives
- Consider not having children after age 35 or 40
- Avoid all medicines during pregnancy
- Avoid contact with pesticides and other poisons
- Avoid tobacco and alcohol
- While pregnant, stay away from children with German measles
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