

# **Motor neuron Lesions**



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### **Editing File**



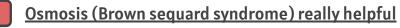
- **1** Describe the functional anatomy of upper and lower motor neurons.
- **2** Describe and differentiate the causes & features of upper and lower motor neuron lesions.
- **3** Explain features of Brown Sequard Syndrome.
- **4** Correlate the site of lesion with pattern of loss of sensations.
- **5** Describe facial, bulbar and pseudobulbar palsy.
- We advise you to revise the <u>anatomy lecture (sensory tract)</u> to make this lecture much easier.







<u>Upper & Lower Motor neuron lesions (Ghada Alsadhan)</u>



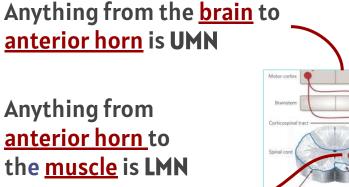


- Spinal cord injury <u>above</u> the cervical region would result in quadriplegia (paralysis of all 4 limbs).
- 2. Spinal cord injury <u>below</u> the cervical region (Thoracic and lumbar) would result in paraplegia,
  - a. (paralysis of lower limb).

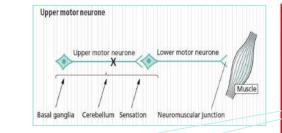
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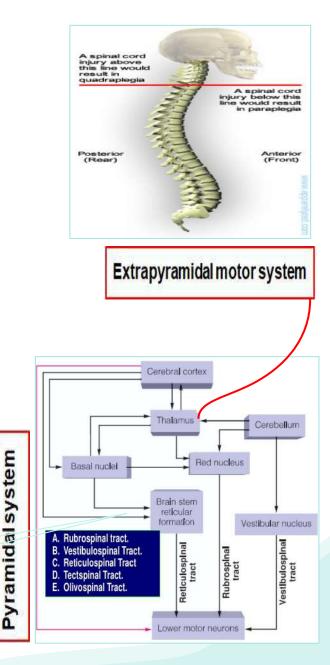
- b. (Thoracic and lumbar) would result in paraplegia, (paralysis of lower limb)
- 3. There are two cases of quadriplegia, either in:
  - a. High cervical cord lesion  $\rightarrow$  Diaphragm will be affected.
  - b. Low cervical cord lesion **and (C3-5) is not involved**  $\rightarrow$  Diaphragm will be intact.
- 4. Diaphragm is supplied by C3,4, 5, so if the lesion is below that level  $\rightarrow$  diaphragm will be intact.
- Upper motor neuron lesions prevent signals from traveling from your brain and spinal cord to your muscles.
   Your muscles can't move without these signals, therefore become stiff and weak.



Motor cortex Breinstern Corticoppinal tract Spinal cord



The term extrapyramidal motor system is widely used in clinical circles to donate all those portions of the brain and brain stem that contribute to motor control but are not part of the direct corticospinal-pyramidal system

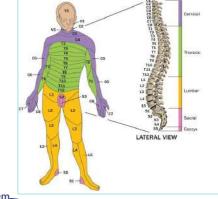




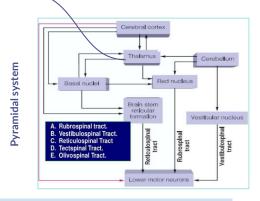
### Introduction

### Spinal cord:

**3I segments** (3I spinal nerve pairs), embryological development growth of cord lags behind -> mature spinal cord ends at LI (lower part of LI or upper part of L2)



Extrapyramidal motor system-



### **Upper & Lower motor neurons**

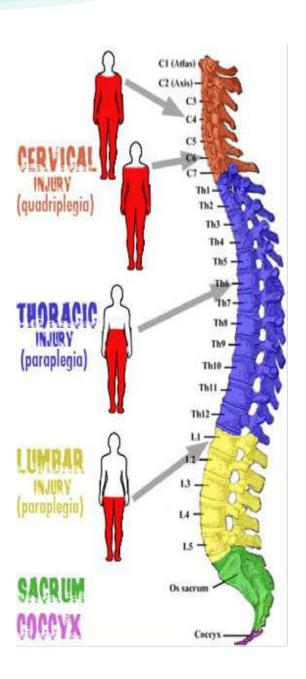
UMNs control LMNs through two different pathways:

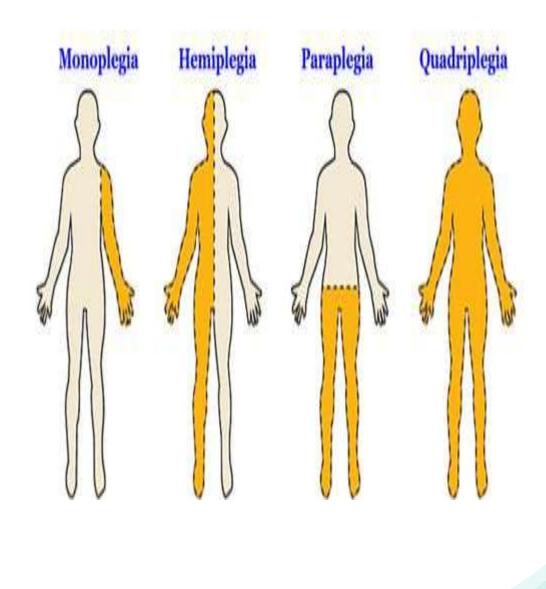
- a. **Pyramidal system** "They **travel** from the <u>cerebral cortex</u> through the pyramidal system, and **terminate directly** in LMN of the <u>spinal cord</u>"
- b. Extrapyramidal system "They do not go directly to LMN, rather they make a synapse either in the brainstem, basal nuclei, or cerebellum"

### **Males Slides**

Pure corticospinal tract lesion cause hypotonia(flaccidity) instead of spasticity. The reason is that pure pyramidal tract lesion is very very rare(clinically isn't seen), and spasticity is due to loss of inhibitory control of extrapyramidal tract.

		UMN		LMN
*	Causes of UMN and LMN lesions:	Cerebral stroke by hemorrhage, thrombosis or embolism (the most common)		Anterior horn cell lesions e.g: poliomyelitis, motor neuron disease
		Spinal cord transection or hemisection (brown séquard syndrome)	<b>Result from</b>	Spinal root lesions or peripheral nerve lesion e.g: nerve injury by trauma or compressive lesion.

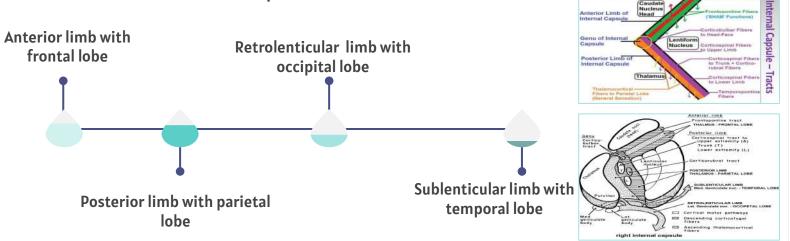






### **Right-Side Internal Capsule :**

★ Reciprocal (reverse) connections between **thalamus** and **cortex** are found in **four limbs** of the internal capsule:



### Genu contains the corticobulbar axons.

- **Posterior limb** contains corticospinal axons and corticopontine axons
- Anterior limbs contains corticopontine axons

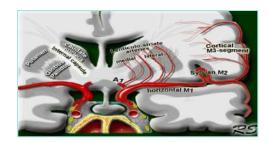
Note that corticopontine fibers are present in both Anterior and posterior limbs.

- ★ If the lesion is in the **corona radiata** due to artery blockage for example, the affected area will be depended on the fibers located in that area (partial paralysis)
- ★ If the lesion is in the internal capsule there will be contralateral total paralysis because all tracts are passing through the internal capsule

#### **Females Slides**

#### **Lenticulostriate Arteries:**

The superior parts of both the **anterior** and **posterior** and the **genu of the internal capsule** are supplied by the **lenticulostriate arteries**, which are branches of the **MI segment** of middle cerebral artery.





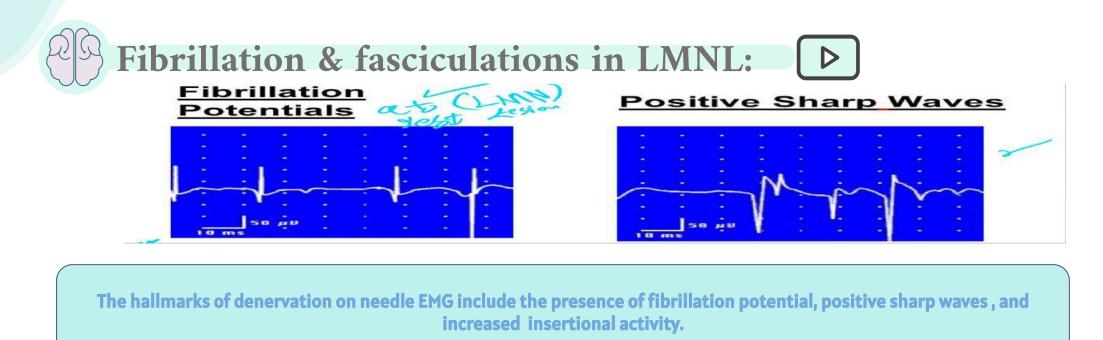
## Comparison between UMN and LMN lesions

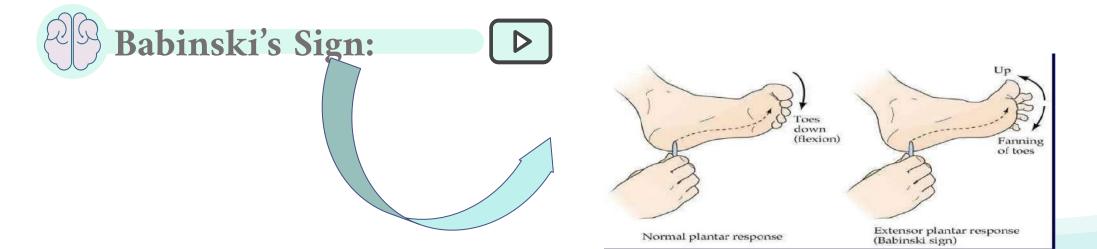
	Upper Motor Neuron Lesion	Lower Motor Neuron Lesion	
Pattern	Paralysis affect movements rather than muscles (Whole lower limb, or both so it affects movement)	Individual muscle or group of muscles are affected (Doesn't involve the whole limb, so limited effect on the movement)	
<b>Wasting</b> " if you don't use it, you lose it" (438: muscle waste due to disuse but less than LMN)	Not pronounced (About 20-30% wasting)(20-30%) Muscle is intact and respond to reflexes because reflexes are mediated by SC (LMN), but cannot be controlled that's why wasting is less.	Pronounced (About 70-80% wasting) More wasted than UMN because the muscle supply is damaged.	
Tone	Spasticity muscles hypertonic <u>(clasp knife)</u> (spastic muscle)	(Hypotonic muscle) Tendon reflexes diminished or absent, Hypotonic paralysis(flaccidity muscle)	
Tendon reflexes (Deep)	brisk/increased (due to loss of inhibition signals coming from UMN, the reflex is exaggerated)	Diminished or absent (due to damaged fibers that initiates reflexes, e.g. gamma motor neurons)	
Superficial reflexes "Polysynaptic"	Absent/ Decreased/ Changed (UMNs have a main role in polysynaptic reflexes, so if it gets damaged, this reflex will be inhibited)	Absent(Notice that all reflexes will be absent in case of LMN lesion)	
NCV "Nerve conduction velocity"	Normal (Nerves roots are not involved)	Decreased (Nerves roots are affected)	
Denervation potentials (Fibrillations) on EMG only, can't be seen with eyes and Fasciculations (Visible) can be seen with eyes	<b>Absent</b> Group of muscle fibrils make one muscle fasciculus	Present	
Trophic changes	Less (Because nerves supply are not involved)	Pronounced in skin & Nails Trophic changes are simply changes in soft tissue (skin, fascia, muscle), resulting from <u>interruption of</u> <u>nerve supply.</u>	
Clonus (involuntary movements alternate between contraction and relaxation)	<b>Present</b> (Clonus is involuntary and rhythmic muscle contractions caused by a permanent lesion in upper motor neurons.)	Absent	
Babinski's sign A normal response is flexion of the large toe and adduction of the other toes – this a negative Babinski sign. However, in patients who have an UMN syndrome an abnormal plantar reflex is elicited whereby the large toe extends and there is abduction of the other toes	Extensor plantar response (positive)	Flexor or absent plantar responses	

Important



### **Comparison between UMN and LMN lesions**







## **BROWN-SÉQUARD SYNDROME**

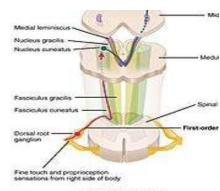
### What is BROWN-SÉQUARD SYNDROME ?

It is is a condition that results from damage to one half of the spinal cord, either right or left side.

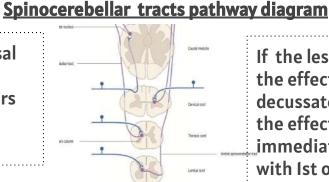
### ★ What can BROWN-SÉQUARD SYNDROME cause?

- I. The hemisection causes damage of the spinal cord tracts which are pathways for transfer of information to and from the brain.
- 2. Results in weakness or paralysis (hemiparaplegia) on one side of the body.
- 3. Results in loss of thermal and pain sensation (hemianesthesia) on the opposite side of the body. (because the lateral spinothalamic tract is damaged).
- 4. Results in loss of vibration and proprioception on the same side (because the dorsal column tracts are damaged).

### Dorsal column pathway diagram

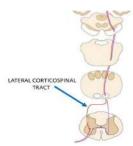


If the lesion occurs in dorsal column, the effect will be ipsilateral because it occurs **at the level below the decussation** 



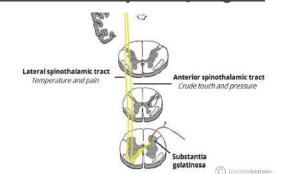
If the lesion occurs in the **dorsal spinocerebellar tract**, the effect will be ipsilateral because this tract doesn't decussate. Whereas in the **ventral spinocerebellar tract**, the effect will be contralateral because it decussate immediately at the level of spinal cord where it synapse with 1st order neuron

### Lateral corticospinal tract pathway diagram



If the lesion occurs in LCST, the effect will be ipsilateral because it initially goes ipsilateral, and the decussation occurs at the level above the spinal cord (MO).

### Spinothalamic tracts pathway diagram



If the lesion occurs in spinothalamic, the effect will be contralateral because decussate immediately at the level of spinal cord where it synapse with 1st order neuron.



## **BROWN-SÉQUARD SYNDROME**

### **HEMISECTION OF SPINAL CORD**

### **Ipsilateral loss**

Fine touch, vibration, proprioception (dorsal column).

Leg ataxia (dorsal spinocerebellar)

Spastic paresis below lesion (lateral corticospinal) UMN

Flaccid paralysis (ventral horn destruction)

Dermatomal anesthesia (dorsal horn destruction)

### **Contralateral loss**

Loss of pain and temperature (lateral spinothalamic)

Loss of crude touch and pressure (ventral spinothalamic)

Minor contralateral muscle weakness (ventral corticospinal)

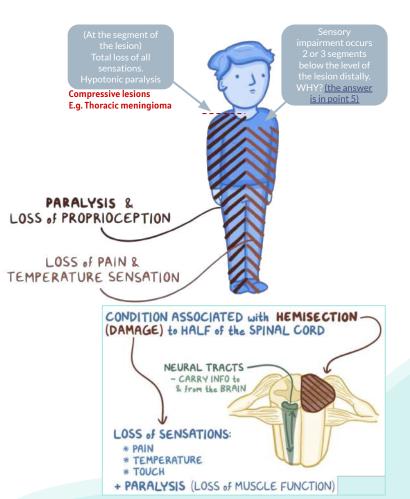
Leg ataxia (ventral spinocerebellar)

Make sure to read the previous slide

Upper cervical cord lesions produce quadriplegia and weakness of the diaphragm and lower lesions spare diaphragm with good prognosis (if C3,4,and 5 not involved)

### Lesions at C4-C5 produce quadriplegia

Hemiparesis means weakness Hemiplegia means total paralysis limerick C3,C4,and C5 keep the diaphragm alive.



 $\triangleright$ 



## **BROWN-SÉQUARD SYNDROME** (1)

Damage to the neurons on the anterior gray column and possibly by damage to the nerve roots of the same segment cause <u>Ipsilateral</u> lower motor neuron paralysis in the segment of the lesion and muscular atrophy.

Anterior grey column damage (motor)  $\rightarrow$  ipsilateral LMN paralysis  $\rightarrow$  if you don't use it, you loss it (muscular atrophy)

2

Loss of the corticospinal tracts on the side of the lesion causes <u>Ipsilateral</u> spastic paralysis below the level of the lesion. An ipsilateral Babinski sign is present, and depending on the segment of the cord damaged, an <u>ipsilateral</u> loss of the superficial abdominal reflexes and cremasteric reflex occurs.

**Ipsilateral band of cutaneous anesthesia** in the segment of the lesion. This results from the destruction of the **posterior root** and its entrance into the spinal cord at the level of the lesion.

Destruction of the ascending tracts in the posterior white column on the same side of the lesion cause <u>Ipsilateral</u> loss of tactile discrimination and of vibratory and proprioceptive sensations below the level of the lesion.



## BROWN-SÉQUARD SYNDROME (2)

Contralateral loss of pain and temperature sensations below the level of the lesion. This is due to destruction of the crossed lateral spinothalamic tracts on the same side of the lesion. Because the tracts cross obliquely, the sensory loss occurs two or three segments below the lesion distally.

6

Contralateral but not complete loss of tactile sensation below the level of the lesion. This condition is brought about by destruction of the crossed anterior spinothalamic tracts on the side of the lesion. Sensory impairment occurs two or three segments below the level of the lesion distally.



### Patterns of UMN disorders (1)

CONTRALATERAL MONOPARESIS Lesion situated peripherally in the cerebral hemisphere (Boys slides only)

**Involving part of the motor homunculus only**, produces **weakness of part of the contralateral side** of the body, e.g. the contralateral leg. If the lesion also involves the adjacent sensory homunculus in the postcentral gyrus, there may be some sensory loss in the same part of the body.

CONTRALATERAL HEMIPARESIS In the Internal Capsule Lesions situated deep are much more likely to produce weakness of the whole of the contralateral side of the body, face, arm and leg. Because of the funnelling of fibre pathways in the region of the internal capsule, such lesions commonly produce significant contralateral sensory loss (hemianesthesia) and visual loss (homonymous hemianopia), in addition to the hemiparesis.

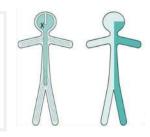
IPSILATERAL HEMIPARESIS

**TETRAPARESIS** 

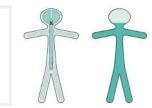
A unilateral high cervical cord lesion will produce a hemiparesis similar to that which is caused by a contralateral cerebral hemisphere lesion, except that the face cannot be involved in the hemiparesis, vision will be normal, and the same dissociation of sensory loss (referred to above) may be found below the level of the lesion. (The face is spared).

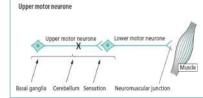
**Tetraparesis or quadriparesis, if the lesion is in the upper cervical cord or brainstem.** A spinal cord lesion more usually causes upper motor neuron signs in both legs, often asymmetrically since the pathology rarely affects both sides of the spinal cord equally.





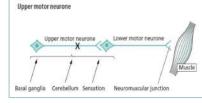








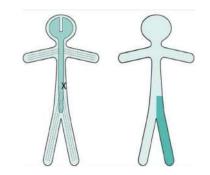
## Patterns of UMN disorders (2)



PARAPARESIS (Boys slides only) **Paraparesis, if the lesion is at or below the cervical portion of the spinal cord.** A spinal cord lesion more usually causes upper motor neuron signs in both legs, often asymmetrically since the pathology rarely affects both sides of the spinal cord equally.

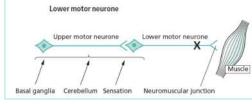
#### IPSILATERAL MONOPARESIS Brown-Séquard syndrome

A unilateral lesion in the spinal cord below the level of the neck produces upper motor neuron weakness in one leg. There may be posterior column (position sense) sensory loss in the same leg, and spinothalamic (pain and temperature) sensory loss in the contralateral leg. This is known as dissociated sensory loss, and the whole picture is sometimes referred to as the **Brown-Séquared syndrome**.





### Patterns of LMN lesions



GENERALIZED LMN WEAKNESS	May result from <b>widespread damage to the axons of LMNs</b> . This is the nature o <b>f peripheral neuropathy</b> ( <b>polyneuropathy</b> ) in DM. The axons of the dorsal root sensory neurons are usually simultaneously involved. The LMN weakness and sensory loss tend to be most marked distally in the limbs.
GENERALIZED LMN WEAKNESS	May result from pathology affecting the LMNs throughout the spinal cord and brainstem, as in motor neuron disease or poliomyelitis. Generalized limb weakness (proximal and distal), trunk and bulbar weakness characterize this sort of LMN disorder. (The body will be affected)
LMN WEAKNESS OF ONE SPINAL ROOT (Most common)	ONE SPINAL ROOT OR ONE PERIPHERAL NERVE. The LMN signs are found only in the muscles supplied by the particular nerve root or peripheral There is sensory impairment in the area supplied by the nerve or nerve root. Examples of such lesions are an SI nerve root syndrome caused by a prolapsed intervertebral disc, or a common peroneal nerve palsy (neck of the fibula), Median (CTS), Femoral (Lnguinal Ligament), Post tibial (Tarsal Tunnel S) and Ulnar (wrist;Guyon's canal). CTS = carpal tunnel syndrome.

#### Female slides

**MOTOR NEURON DISEASE**: Selectively affect motor neurons, that control voluntary muscle activity. Types:

- Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis -> UMN+LMN.
- Primary lateral sclerosis -> UMN.
- Progressive muscular atrophy -> LMN.
- Bulbar palsy-bulbar -> LMN.
- Pseudobulbar palsy-bulbar -> UMN.

It was mentioned in Dr.Shahid's older slides, but he removed it because it's not that important and they don't ask about it.



## Bulbar vs Pseudobulbar palsy

Bulbar = Medulla Medulla houses 9 - 12 CNs. Dysfunction of lower CNs

### Bulbar Palsy (Nuclear)

- Means: Defect of IX, X, XI, and XII cranial nerves or their nuclei in Medulla Oblongata, Bilateral affection of LMN
- LIMN lesion Peripheral palsy.

#### Result in:

- I. Dysphagia (liquid>solid)
- 2. Nasal regurgitation
- 3. Slurred speech.
- 4. Nasal speech
- 5. Wasted tongue (atrophied) with fasciculation (visible unwanted muscle twitches)
- 6. Absent gag reflex
- 7. Atrophy to all bulbar muscles
- 8. No emotional effect
- Caused by: polyradiculoneuritis (GBS): brainstem lesions, tumors, meningoencephalitis, MND

### BACKGROUND

- \* BULBAR PALSY SYMPTOMS LINKED & IMPAIRED FUNCTION of LOWER CRANNAL NERVES ~ CN IX - GLOSSOPHARYINGEAL
- C N X VAGUS
   CN X VAGUS
   CN XI ACCESSONY
   CN XII HYPOGLOSSAL
   CN XII HYPOGLOSSAL
   CN XII HYPOGLOSSAL
   NON-PROGRESSIVE or
   NON-PROGRESSIVE or

### Pseudobulbar Palsy (supranuclear)

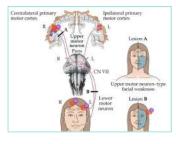
- ✤ Bilateral lesion of corticobulbar tract
- Means: UMN defect of central palsy IX, X, XI, and XII cranial nerves.
- Result in:
- I. Dysphagia (especially in liquid)
- 2. No Nasal regurgitation
- 3. Spastic Dysarthria (due to cortical region involvement)
- 4. Emotional lability (unprovoked uncontrollable crying or laughing)
- 5. spastic tongue (UMN)
- 6. Hyperreflexive gag (UMN)
- 7. Slow indistinct speech
- 8. Exaggerated Brisk jaw jerk (masseter reflex).
- 9. Frontal release signs.

Anything spastic, we have to think of hyperreflexia

**Caused by:** CVA, arteriosclerosis



#### Bell's palsy vs UMNL



It was mentioned in Dr.Shahid's older slides, but he removed it because it's not that important and they don' ask about it.



**UMN VII** 

**Cranial Nerve** 

Lesion

**LMN VII** 

**Cranial Nerve** 

Lesion

## Intramedullary & extramedullary lesions:

Cause weakness of the lower part of the face on the opposite side.

Causes weakness (ipsilateral) of all facial expression muscles.

I. The angle of the mouth falls; unilateral dribbling develops.

2. Frowning (frontalis) and eye closure are weak.

**Females Slides** 

### **Extramedullary lesion**

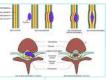
**II Cranial Nerve lesion.** 

Lower motor neuron (LMN) lesions.

LMN VIIth Cranial Nerve lesion.

unaffected.

**Results:** 



Frontalis & orbicularis is spared: normal furrowing of the brow is preserved; eye closure and blinking are largely

(because the upper nuclei are innervated by two fibers, so the lower part of the face will be spared)

3. Corneal exposure and ulceration occur if the eye does not close during sleep, called Bell's palsy.

Extramedullary lesions, **radicular pain** is often prominent, and there is **early sacral sensory loss** (lateral spinothalamic tract) and **spastic weakness in the legs** (corticospinal tract) due to the superficial location of leg fibers in the corticospinal tract. **Early UMN signs** 

### Intramedullary lesion

Intramedullary lesions tend to produce **poorly localized burning pain** rather than radicular pain and **spare sensation in the perineal and sacral areas** ("sacral sparing"), reflecting the laminated configuration of the spinothalamic tract with sacral fibers outermost; **corticospinal tract signs appear later. Late UMN signs** 



## Spinal cord and bladder control

### Spinal cord

#### **Transverse Myelitis**

Upper sensory level for all sensations, LMN signs at the level of lesion, flaccid paralysis (spinal shock)→ UMN signs distally, Bladder/Bowel involved.

#### **Anterior Spinal Artery Syndrome**

Upper sensory level for pain/temperature, sparing of posterior columns, UMN signs distally.

#### **Brown-Sequard syndrome**

I/L spastic paralysis & loss of joint/position sense, C/L loss of pain/temperature sensation.

#### **Females Slides**

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#### **Bladder Control**

#### Cortical

- ★ Post-central lesions cause **loss of sense** of bladder fullness.
- ★ Pre-central lesions cause **difficulty initiating** micturition.
- ★ Frontal lesions cause **socially inappropriate** micturition

#### Spinal cord

- ★ Bilateral UMN lesions (pyramidal tracts) cause urinary frequency and incontinence. The bladder is small and hypertonic, I.e. sensitive to small changes in intravesical pressure.
- ★ Frontal lesions can also cause a **hypertonic bladder**.

#### LMN

Sacral lesions (conus medullaris, sacral root and pelvic nerve- bilateral) cause a **flaccid**, **atonic bladder** that overflows (cauda equina), often unexpectedly.



Pattern of UMN lesions					
Lesion name Part involved		Result in	Other		
Contralateral monoparesis	I. Motor homunculus 2. +/- Sensory homunculus (postcentral gyrus)	<ul> <li>★ Hemiparesis of a part of the contralateral body side.</li> <li>★ Sensory loss in the same part (that already affected, so contralaterally as well) if Sensory homunculus involved</li> </ul>	Lesion situated peripherally in the cerebral hemisphere		
Contralateral hemiparesis	<b>Internal capsule</b> It is funnelling of fibre pathways in the region of the internal capsule	<ul> <li>★ Hemiparesis of the whole of the contralateral body side, including face, arm, leg.</li> <li>★ Vision loss (homonymous hemianopia)</li> <li>★ Significant contralateral sensory loss (hemianesthesia)</li> </ul>	Lesion situated deep (IC), so more likely to produce weakness of the whole contralateral body side		
	Unilateral high cervical	<ul> <li>★ Hemiparesis of the whole ipsilateral side, FACE, is not involved.</li> <li>★ Normal vision</li> <li>★ Same dissociation of sensory loss, below the lesion level</li> </ul>	A hemiparesis similar to that caused by contralateral cerebral hemisphere lesion, but face is intact and vision is normal.		
Ipsilateral hemiparesis	Unilateral lesion in the spinal cord below the level of the neck	<ul> <li>★ UMN hemiparesis in one leg</li> <li>★ Dorsal column ipsilateral sensory loss (position sense) in the same leg.</li> <li>★ Spinothalamic contralateral sensory loss (pain &amp; temperature) in the opposite leg.</li> </ul> Dissociated sensory loss is a pattern of sensory loss with selective loss of touch sensation and proprioception without loss of pain and temperature, or vice-versa.	Brown-séquard syndrome. Sensory loss here is known as dissociated sensory loss.		
Tetraparesis (quadriparesis)	Upper cervical cord or brain stem		Pathology rarely affect both side of spinal		
Paraparesis	At or below the cervical portion of SC	★ UMN lesion signs, in both legs (bilaterally) asymmetrically	cord equally		



Patterns of LMN lesions				
Lesion name	Parts involved	Result in	Other	
	Wide spread axons of LMNs	<ul> <li>★ Hemiparesis in the distal limb</li> <li>★ sensory loss is the distal limb</li> </ul>	This is the nature of peripheral neuropathy (polyneuropathy	
Generalized LMN	LMNs throughout the SC and brainstem	<ul> <li>★ Generalized limb weakness (distal and proximal)</li> <li>★ Trunk weakness</li> <li>★ Bulbar weakness</li> </ul>	As in motor neuron disease or poliomyelitis	
LMN weakness one spinal root	One spinal root or one individual peripheral nerve.	<ul> <li>★ LMN signs are only found in the muscles supplied by the particular nerve root or peripheral.</li> <li>★ Sensory impairment in the area supplied by the nerve or nerve root.</li> </ul>	E.g. Lesions in SI nerve root syndrome caused by prolapsed intervertebral discs (other examples are mentioned in the previous slide)	



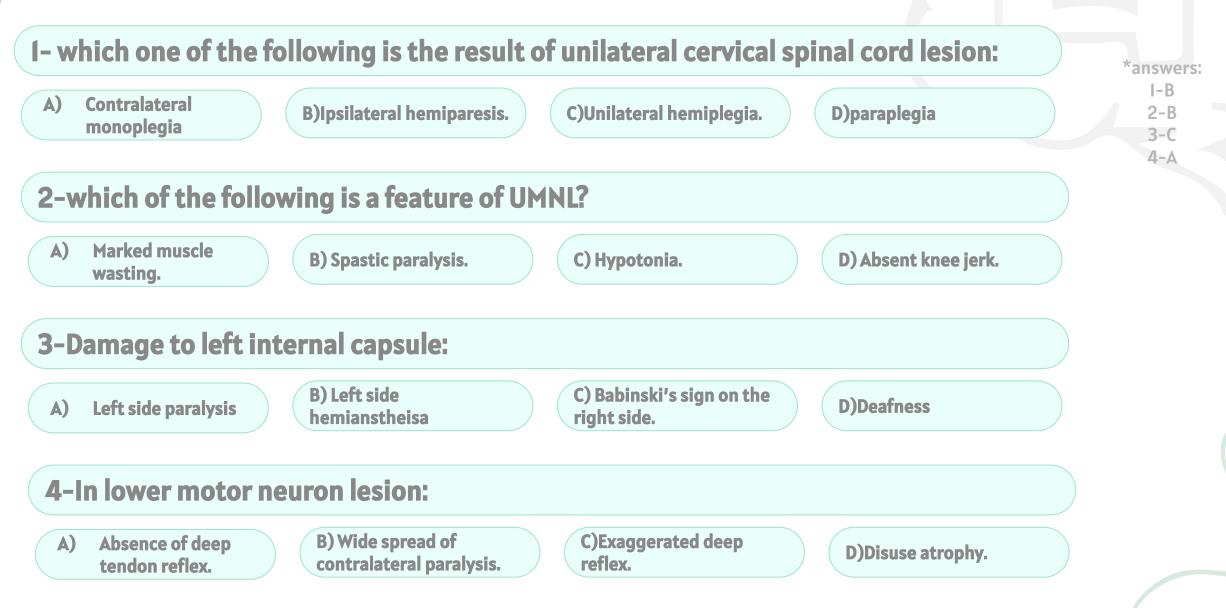
## Correlation between site of the lesion and clinical feature

Clinical Feature	Site of Lesion	
Ipsilateral LMN flaccid paralysis in the segment	Ant Horn cell	
Ipsilateral spastic paralysis below the level	UMN Lesion	
Ipsilateral band of cutaneous anesthesia (only one root)	Posterior root damage	
Ipsilateral loss of tactile vibratory and proprioceptive sensations below the level	Dorsal Column	
Contralateral loss of pain and temperature sensations below the level of the lesion.	Lat Spinothalamic	
Contralateral but not complete loss of tactile sensation	Ant Spinothalamic	
Ipsilateral Dystaxia	Dorsal Spinocerebellar	
Contralateral Dystaxia	Ventral Spinocerebellar	
Bilateral Pain & Temp Loss Upper limbs (Bilateral because all fibers are damaged)	Ant Commissure	
All sensory lost	Dorsal Horn	
All motor lost	Ant Horn	

## How to localize LMN lesion :

Presenting features	Anterior horn cell disease	Peripheral nerve	Neuromuscular junction disease	Muscle disease
Distribution	Asymmetric limb/bulbar	Symmetric & distal	Extra ocular, bulbar and proximal limb muscles	Symmetric proximal or distal limb muscles
Muscle atrophy	Marked and early	Moderate	None	-Early stage - slight -Late -marked
Sensory involvement	None	Parasthesia	None	None
Characteristics Features	Fasciculations and cramps	Combined sensory and motor	Diurnal fluctuation	Usually proximal involvement
Reflexes	Variable	Decreased	Normal	Decreased







### 1-compare between UMNL & LMNL:

Turn into slide number 7.

### 2-Explain briefly about Brown-sequard syndrome:

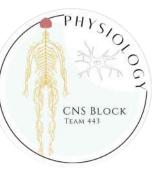
Turn into slide number 10.



**Team Members** 



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