

The long-term outcomes of babies born with [hypoxic-ischemic encephalopathy \(HIE\)](#) can vary widely, from no lasting effects to extensive physical and intellectual impairment requiring 24/hour care.

How is the severity of HIE determined?

How severely HIE affects an individual depends on a variety of factors, including:

1. Severity of oxygen deprivation



If a baby's oxygen supply is dramatically or entirely cut off, their lasting brain damage may be greater.

2. Duration of oxygen deprivation

Babies deprived of oxygen for longer are more likely to have permanent health complications.



3. The baby's condition prior to the oxygen-depriving incident

For example, [premature babies](#) have more fragile brains and are more vulnerable to damage resulting from oxygen deprivation.

4. Treatment immediately after the oxygen-depriving incident

A cutting-edge treatment called [therapeutic hypothermia](#) can minimize or prevent lasting brain damage if administered very shortly after the baby is deprived of oxygen (this treatment is so important that failure to provide it in a timely manner is a form of [medical malpractice](#)).

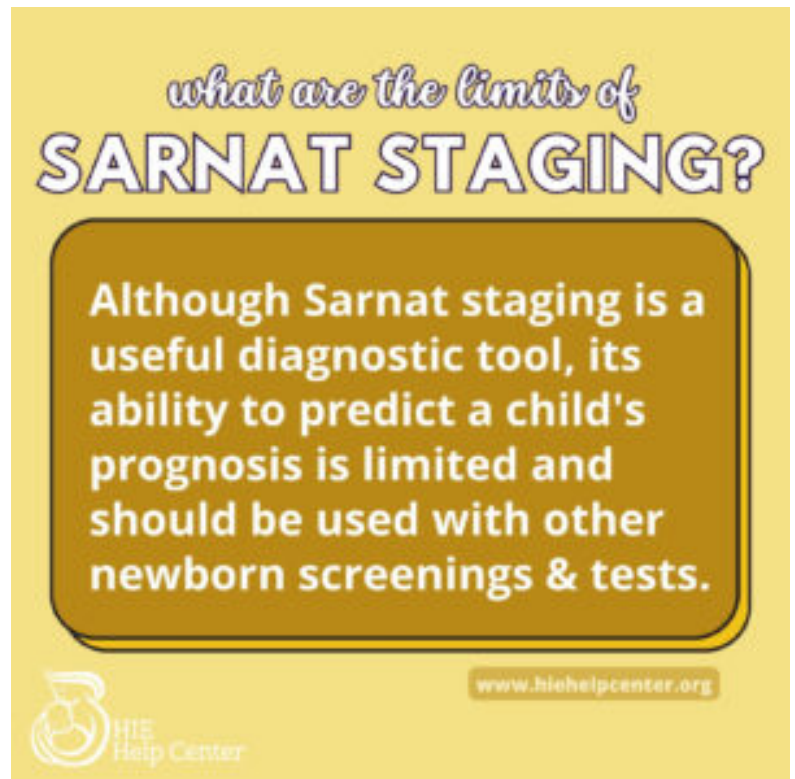
Medical negligence can cause HIE. Do you have a case?

Call us today for a free legal consultation.

5. Care throughout the child's development

There are a variety of [treatments and therapies](#) that can benefit children with HIE and associated conditions.

What is Sarnat staging?



To determine the prognosis of an infant with HIE after birth, doctors may use Sarnat staging. Sarnat staging considers clinical presentation, exam results, illness duration, and whether the baby has [seizures](#). There are three levels of Sarnat staging (1):

Stage I = "Mild" HIE

Stage II = "Moderate"

Stage III = "Severe"

Although Sarnat staging is a useful diagnostic tool, its predictive value is somewhat limited. It should be used in conjunction with other neonatal assessments (2, 3).



Long Term Outcomes & Related Conditions

The ways in which HIE affects an individual baby may not be completely clear until they grow older and begin to miss [developmental milestones](#). Kids with HIE may be diagnosed with related conditions, such as:

- [Cerebral palsy](#)
- [I/DD \(Intellectual/developmental disabilities\)](#)
- [Learning disabilities](#)
- [Epilepsy/seizure disorders](#)
- [Speech delays and language disorders](#)
- [Behavioral and emotional disorders](#)
- [Hearing and vision limitations](#)
- [Nutritional concerns](#)
- [Oral health issues](#)
- [Neurologic and mental health concerns](#)
- [Skin health concerns](#)
- [Orthopedic conditions](#)
- [Pain](#)
- [Respiratory conditions](#)
- [Sensory processing issues](#)

An HIE diagnosis can be difficult,
but our team is here to help.
Call us when you're ready.

Although many of these conditions are not curable, symptoms and quality of life may be improved with a variety of [treatments/therapies](#), [assistive and adaptive technologies](#), [service animals](#), and other supports.



About the HIE Help Center and ABC Law Centers

The HIE Help Center is run by [ABC Law Centers](#), a medical malpractice firm exclusively handling cases involving HIE and other [birth injuries](#) since the firm's inception in 1997.

If you suspect your child's HIE may have been caused by medical negligence, [contact us](#) to learn more about pursuing a case. We provide free legal consultations, during which we will inform you of your [legal options](#) and answer any questions you may have. Moreover, you would pay nothing throughout the entire legal process unless we obtain a favorable settlement (no fee unless we win!)

Sources

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Related resources

- [Disability Cost Guide](#)