

Ventral Dorsal Rhizotomy

What is ventral/dorsal rhizotomy surgery?

Ventral/dorsal rhizotomy surgery is a procedure that treats muscle spasticity and dystonia caused by abnormal communication among the brain, spinal cord, nerves and muscles. It decreases or eliminates muscle spasticity and dystonia by cutting the sensory/motor nerves.

Ventral/dorsal rhizotomy surgery is a treatment for cerebral palsy and is typically performed on people who have mixed tone. Both spasticity and dystonia—a movement disorder in which a person's muscles contract uncontrollably and cause repetitive or twisting movements. Dystonia can cause pain. In addition, ventral/dorsal rhizotomy surgery is recommended for people who are not able to walk, stand or pivot and have mixed muscle tone. This surgery might help to:

- Reduce spasticity/dystonia
- Reduce pain
- Improve care, comfort and positioning
- Help maintain proper nutrition and caloric intake
- Improve overall relaxation and sleep quality

Who benefits from ventral dorsal rhizotomy surgery?

Ventral/dorsal rhizotomy surgery is irreversible, so it's critical to carefully select patients who will benefit most from surgery.

When evaluating candidates for ventral/dorsal rhizotomy surgery, a team of experts at Gillette will assess if a person will benefit from this surgery. The team includes; an orthopedic surgeon, a neurosurgeon, a pediatric rehabilitation medicine physician, and physical and occupational therapists.

The Gillette team has performed this surgery on patients who range in age from 5 to 50-years-old. Gillette patients and families report they are pleased this surgery has increased their enjoyment and quality of life.

Pioneers in Ventral/Dorsal Rhizotomy and Compassionate Care

Gillette has been performing ventral/dorsal rhizotomy surgery for more than a decade and is considered to be a pioneer in the procedure.

At Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare our experts work with your family to discuss ventral/dorsal rhizotomy and to make sure it's the best option for your family member. Gillette is a regional leader in pediatric neurosurgery and is one of the top providers of pediatric neurosurgery in the U.S.

What is surgery and recovery like for a ventral/dorsal rhizotomy?

The patient will be in surgery for about two or three hours. After the surgery, patients are typically in the hospital for about 5 days of recovery. During this hospitalization, a team of Gillette experts will evaluate the patient to create a customized plan of care. This team includes; physical and occupational therapists, seating experts, pediatric rehabilitation medicine physicians and members of the neurology team.

Going Home after Ventral/Dorsal Rhizotomy Surgery

At Gillette, we begin planning for a successful return home as soon as your family arrives at the hospital.

You'll have a family conference shortly before leaving the hospital. We'll provide recommendations for supporting recovery at home and scheduling follow-up appointments.

Follow-up Care

The team at Gillette will help you schedule follow-up care after a ventral/dorsal rhizotomy. The care plan includes follow-up medical appointments with the Gillette team and working with physical and occupational therapists.

Make An Appointment

[651-290-8707](tel:651-290-8707)

Refer a Patient

[651-325-2200](tel:651-325-2200)

This information is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care providers. If you have any questions, talk with your doctor or others on your health care team.

If you are a Gillette patient with urgent questions or concerns, please contact Telehealth Nursing at [651-229-3890](tel:651-229-3890).