



# Bell's Palsy

## Natural Remedies for Facial Nerve Damage

Bell's palsy is a nerve weakness or paralysis of the muscles that control one side of the face. The disease gets its name from a Dr. Charles Bell, who first described the disorder in 1882. Bell's palsy is not usually a serious condition and typically clears up spontaneously within a few weeks or months. In fact, 50% of all cases resolve themselves in 30 days, and 80% of all cases resolve themselves within six months.

The disorder arises from damage to a facial nerve. These nerves run beneath each ear to the muscles on that side of the face. This causes the face to droop on one side, the most commonly recognized symptom of the disorder. Besides creating a facial droop or partial paralysis on the side of the face, the disorder may also cause pain behind or in front of the ear, headache, loss of taste in the front portion of the tongue, or a change in hearing on the affected side. The skin may tingle, while the face feels numb and heavy on the affected side. In some cases, spontaneous crying may occur with no emotional stimulus.

There are many possible causes of the disorder, so the exact therapy that will work is going to vary, depending on the cause. Infections are the most probable cause of the disorder, including viral infections, such as herpes or shingles, and bacterial infections such as Lyme's disease. Ear infections may also be a triggering factor. Another possible cause is autoimmune disorders such as Gullain-Barré syndrome and myasthenia gravis. In some cases, Bell's palsy may also be due to trauma caused by injuries or surgery. Birthing trauma, such as forceps delivery, may cause this condition in children. Other possible causes include a toxic reaction of some kind or a tumor.

Obviously, successful natural therapy is dependent on correctly identifying the cause of the problem. Seek appropriate medical assistance when dealing with this condition to help ascertain the cause before beginning any course of therapy. Once the cause is known, herbs and supplements can be selected as adjuncts to medical therapy.

Where infection is the cause of the problem, a variety of remedies can be used to help the body fight off the infection. Immune Stimulator is a formula that can boost the immune system to fight off infections of any kind.

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However, this formula would not be appropriate if there is an autoimmune condition of any kind.

For viral infections, VS-C and Olive Leaf Extract are excellent remedies. VS-C is very good for low grade viral disorders such as herpes, and is probably the best choice for Bell's palsy. VS-C reduces inflammation and clears toxins from the blood, so it can help promote more rapid healing of the nerves. Olive Leaf Extract can also be useful for bacterial infections causing Bell's palsy, but should be avoided if autoimmune conditions are involved. Astragalus is another antiviral remedy that may be helpful in Bell's palsy.

A common medical therapy for Bell's palsy is to prescribe steroidal drugs. These drugs mimic a hormone called cortisol, which is produced by the adrenal glands to reduce inflammation. Supplements that help support the adrenal glands can be used to naturally boost the body's ability to reduce inflammation. These include Adrenal Support and Nervous Fatigue Formula. Licorice root has cortisol-like action and has been used to slow the progression of the paralysis in Bell's palsy. Licorice can also stop spontaneous crying associated with the Bell's palsy.

Wood betony as a single herb is good for helping reduce nerve pain and inflammation, as well as promoting healing. It is very helpful for treating Bell's palsy. Nerve Eight is a nervine formula that has an anti-inflammatory effect, making it very good for any condition in which nerves are being irritated and inflamed. It is also helpful for Bell's palsy.

A final type of remedy that may be of help in Bell's palsy is something to stimulate nerve regeneration and repair. IGF-1 may be of help here. St. John's wort has also been known to help stimulate nerve regeneration, especially when taken as a homeopathic remedy. Kudzu relieves muscle tension in the neck and has been helpful in some cases, so the combination of kudzu and St. John's wort may also benefit Bell's palsy.

### Selected References

*Encyclopedia of Natural Healing* by Siegfried Gursche  
*Prescription for Nutritional Healing* by James F. Balch and Phyllis A. Balch

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