

Contracture deformity

Definition

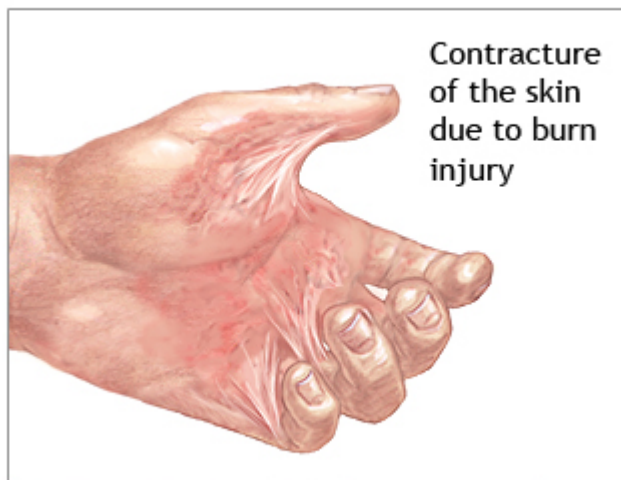
A contracture develops when the normally stretchy (elastic) tissues are replaced by nonstretchy (inelastic) fiber-like tissue. This makes it hard to stretch the area and prevents normal movement.

Contractures mostly occur in the skin, the tissues underneath, and the muscles, tendons, ligaments, and joint areas.

They affect range of motion and function in a certain body part. There is usually also pain.

See also:

- Becker's muscular dystrophy
- Duchenne muscular dystrophy
- Dupuytren's contracture
- Volkmann's contracture



Alternative Names

Deformity - contracture

Causes

- Brain and nervous system disorders, such as cerebral palsy or stroke
- Inherited disorders (such as muscular dystrophy)
- Nerve damage
- Reduced use (for example, from lack of mobility)
- Scarring after traumatic injury or burns

Home Care

Home care involves the care your health care provider prescribes, such as:

- Performing exercises and stretches
- Using braces

When to Contact a Medical Professional

Call your health care provider if:

- A contracture seems to be developing.
- You notice a decreased ability to move a joint.

What to Expect at Your Office Visit

Depending on the cause and type of contracture, you may need diagnostic testing (such as an x-ray).

Physical therapy, medicines, orthopedic braces, or surgery may be helpful for some types of contractures.

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Notes:

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