

Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy



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Spinal Muscular Atrophy

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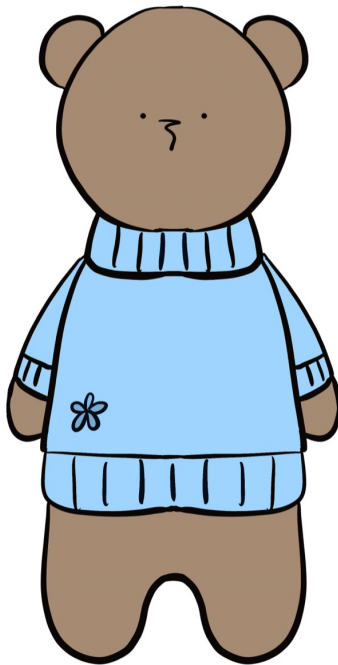
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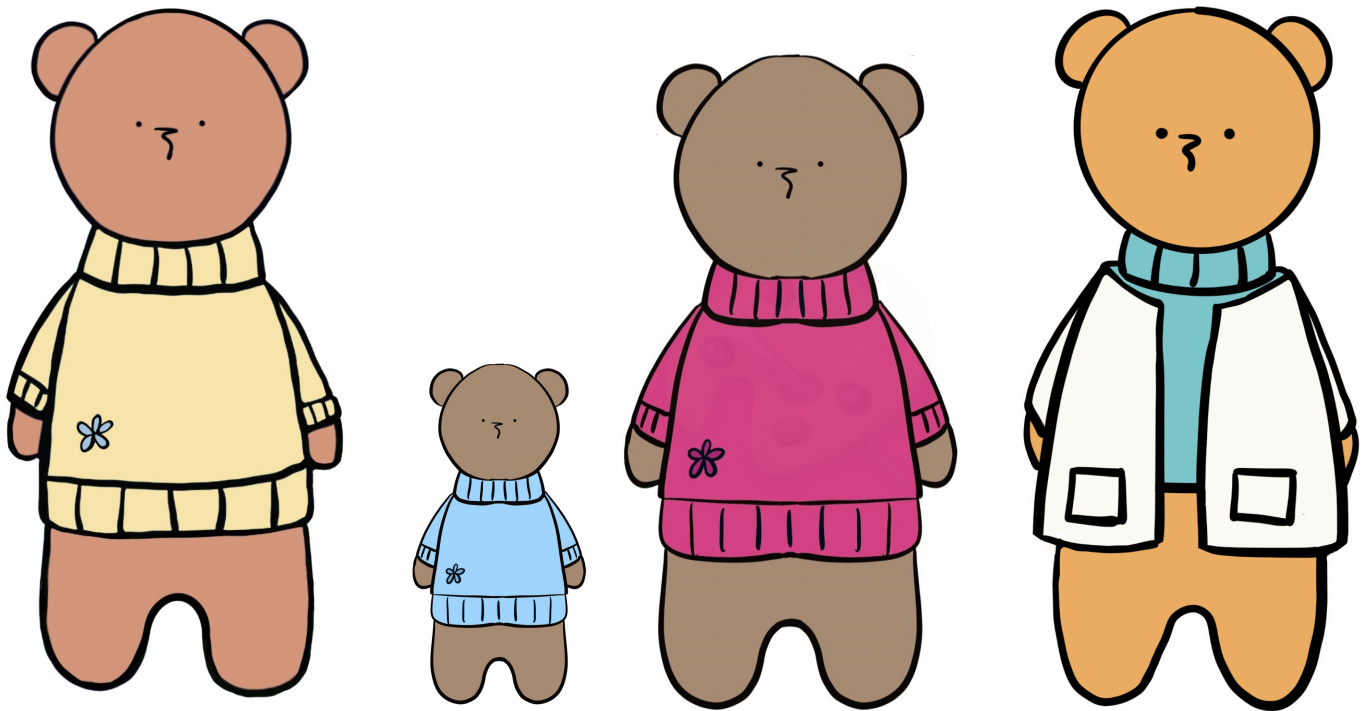
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Hello, how are you? Did you notice something different? Not really right? But I want to tell my story.

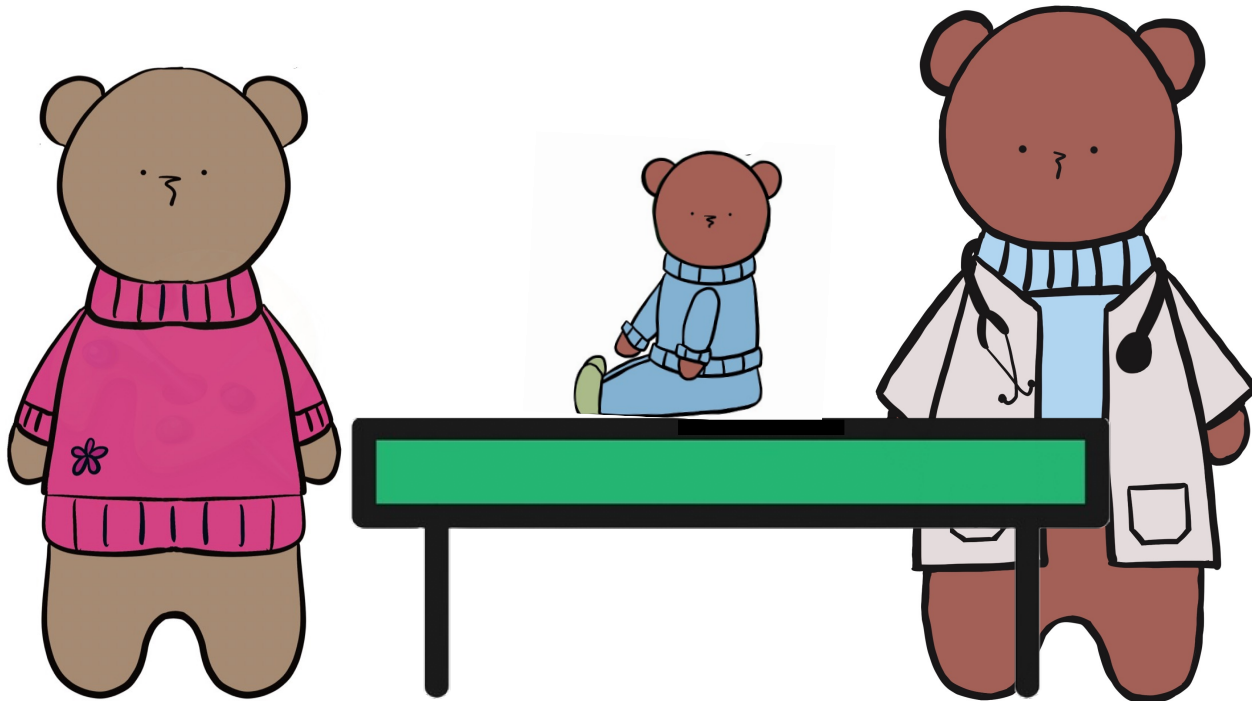
"Hello"



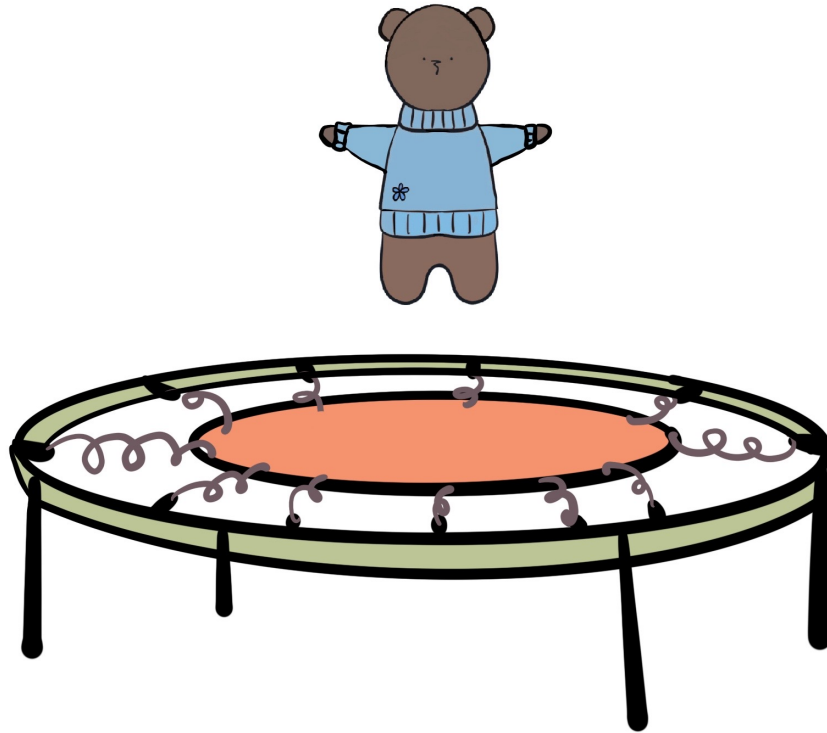
When I was little my parents noticed that I had a hard time climbing stairs. At the beginning they thought it wasn't anything serious, but my pediatrician told them that I needed to see a neurologist.



My parents took me to a very nice doctor. After a few tests, the doctor explained that I have **Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy**.

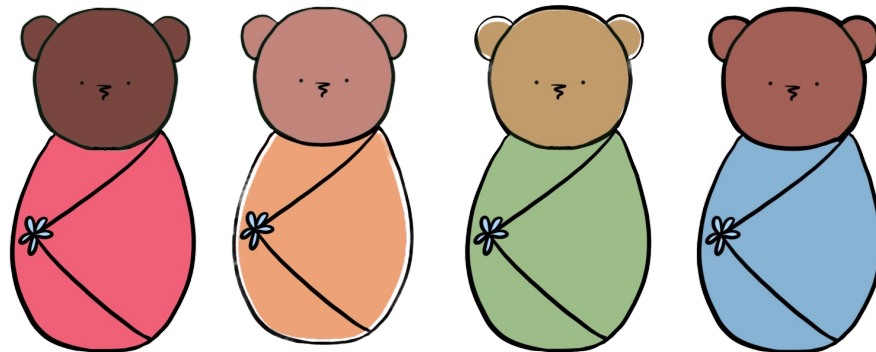


Duchenne muscular dystrophy is a genetic condition when a protein called dystrophin is missing. Dystrophin stabilizes the muscle cell membrane like a coil stabilizes a trampoline. If it doesn't work well, the muscle cell might break.

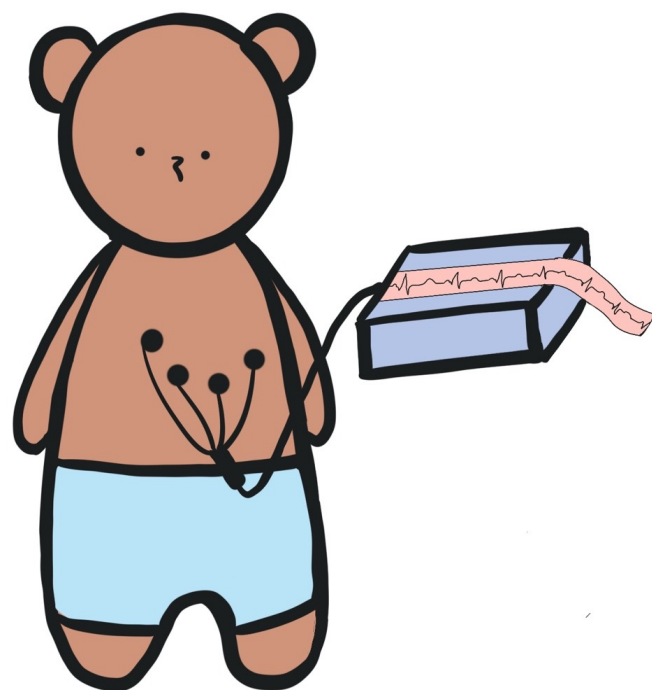


The doctor explained that:

- We are born with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, so you cannot “catch it”.
- It is caused by mutations in the **DMD** gene.
- Symptoms vary but it usually starts in the first years of life.



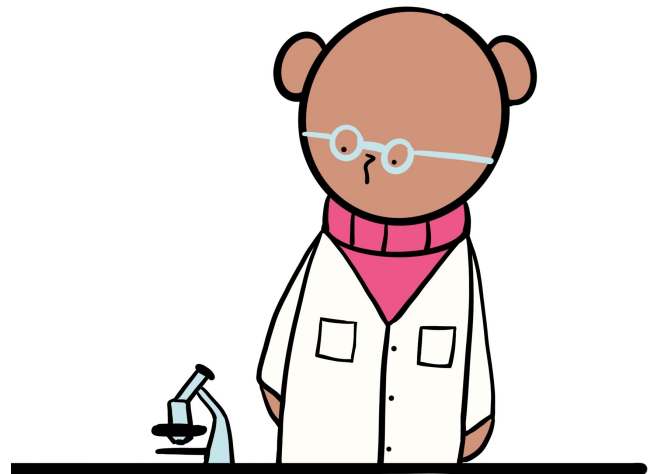
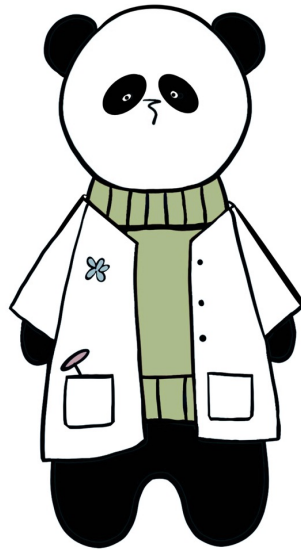
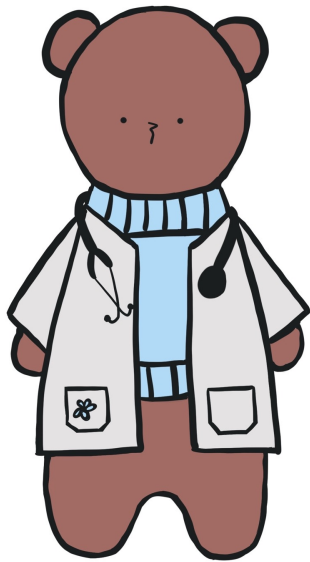
- The most common symptom is weakness causing it difficult to climbing stairs or standing up.
- Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy may also affect the heart, so we patient's need regular check ups.



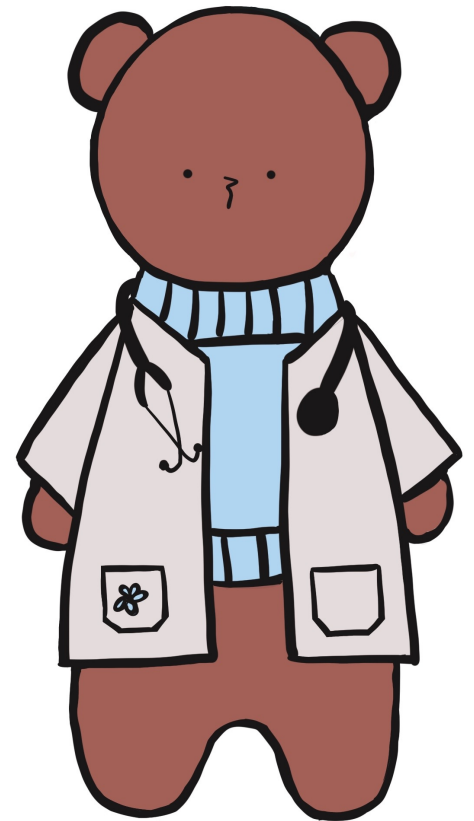
At first, my parents were scared, but the nice doctor explained that there is a lot they can do to help people with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.



There is still a lot to know about Duchenne's Muscular Dystrophy and scientists are working hard to find out how to treat it even better.



- Currently there are several treatment options.
- The most common is steroids, which keep the muscles healthy.
- Others are weekly infusions, which help the body make dystrophin.
- Physical therapy and exercise, like as biking and swimming, can also help.



There is also a gene therapy in which the doctor gives a small version of the DMD gene with help of a virus.



In the beginning, I thought I was the only person with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, but now I know that although rare, many people also have it.



Everyone is a little different and although many kids have a muscle disease we are a regular kid, just like you.



The End

