



Cleft lip and

PALATE



A child with a cleft lip or palate can have feeding and speech problems. Speech-language pathologists, or SLPs, can help.

A "cleft" is a split. Cleft lips and palates happen before birth. A baby can have a cleft lip, cleft palate, or both. A cleft lip may be on one or both sides of the upper lip. The split may also be in the upper jaw and gum.

A cleft palate is an opening in the roof of the mouth. The front part is the bony hard palate. The back part is the soft palate, made of muscles. A cleft palate can be on one side or both sides of the mouth.

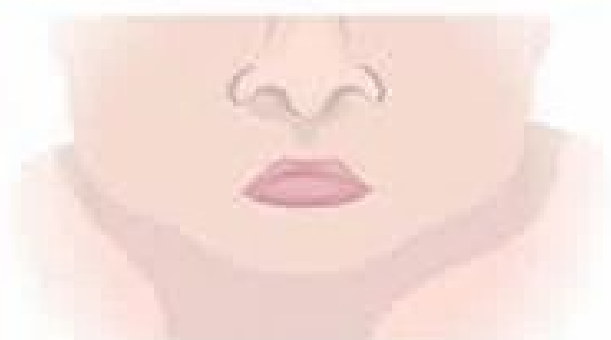
A child can have a submucous or hidden cleft palate. This happens when the tissue called "mucous membrane" covers the cleft. It is the pink tissue that you see in your mouth. The cleft may be hard to see and you may not know it is there.

CAUSES

OF

Cleft lip and

Palate



Normal lip



Unilateral cleft lip
and palate incomplete



Bilateral cleft lip and
palate incomplete



Unilateral incomplete



Normal palate



Cleft lip



Bilateral cleft lip



Cleft palate



Unilateral cleft
lip and palate



Bilateral cleft lip
with full palate

Cleft lip and / or palate is a common birth defect in certain countries.. Clefts happen very early in pregnancy and the cause is unknown. Some possible risk factors include:

- Genetics
- Smoking during pregnancy
- Diabetes during pregnancy
- Using drugs or alcohol during pregnancy
- Some medications during pregnancy
- Poor prenatal health care

**HOW TO KNOW
THAT YOUR
CHILD HAS A**

*Cleft lip and/ or
Palate?*

Most of the times a doctor will see a cleft lip or palate at birth. A cleft lip may show on an ultrasound before birth.

It is harder to see a cleft palate on an ultrasound. Your child may have a weak suck and take a long time to feed. Milk may come out of your child's nose. These are possible signs of a cleft.

In other cases, this type of cleft may not show up until your child starts talking. His speech may sound like it comes out of his nose. This may be a clue that there is a cleft palate.

You should have your child's hearing tested if she has a cleft. Your child may have trouble with fluid in her ears and may get ear infections. This is more common in children with a cleft palate than with a cleft lip.

A submucous cleft may cause feeding problems. Your child may have a bifid uvula, which is a sign of a cleft. The uvula is the piece of tissue that hangs in the back of your throat. You can see it when you look into the back of your mouth. A bifid uvula has a split in it. If you see this, you should talk to your doctor about a possible cleft palate.

**FROM WHOM YOU
HAVE TO SEEK
TREATMENT FOR**

*Cleft lip and/ or
Palate?*

- *Plastic surgeon*
- *Dentist*
- *Orthodontist*
- *ENT surgeon*
- *SLP*
- *Audiologist*
- *Dietitian*
- *Nurse*
- *Social worker*