

Risk Factors

A number of surveys of new health problems in late polio have included an analysis of potential risk factors, but no firm conclusions were drawn. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, there have only been a small number of studies examining this area and their results have been conflicting. Secondly, due to methodological differences, e.g. the definition of PPS used to identify subjects, it is difficult to compare the findings of these studies. The risk factors that have been considered in surveys of polio survivors include:

Risk factors related to the acute polio episode: Risk factors related to the post-polio period:

- Age at onset^{43,48-50}
- Severity of paralysis^{43,44,48-52}
- Use of ventilator^{49,52}
- Hospitalisation^{49,52}
- Year of acute polio infection⁴⁹
- Gender^{44,48-50,52}
- Polio to post-polio interval^{43,44,48}
- Current age^{43,48,49}
- Functional recovery and residual impairment^{45,48}
- Weight gain⁴⁸
- Presence of muscle pain associated with exercise⁴⁸

On the basis of these studies the most important risk factor appears to be severity of the acute polio illness.