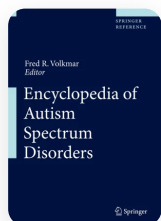


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Primitive Reflexes

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[Annelies de Bildt](#) , [George M. Anderson](#) & [Ruud Minderaa](#)

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Synonyms

[Innate reflexes](#)

Definition

Primitive reflexes are patterns of movement that are evoked by specific sensory

input. They are complex, automatic movements controlled by the brainstem that can be seen as early as the 25th week of gestation. The primitive reflexes are considered a normal part of infant movement (Zafeiriou, [2004](#)). The primitive reflexes include the Moro (a distinctive startle response), the walking/stepping, the rooting, the sucking, the tonic neck (arm straightening in response to turning of the head), the palmar grasp, the plantar or Babinski (toe curling when the sole of the foot is stimulated), the Galant (sideward flexing of the back toward stimulation), the swimming, and the Babkin (head and facial responses to pressure to both palms) reflexes. During the first year of life, the reflexes typically disappear or are more difficult to elicit and their persistence or appearance after infancy is thought to be due to reduced inhibition of brainstem reflexes by the...

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Author information

Authors and Affiliations

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, University Medical Center Groningen, PO Box 660, 9700, AR Accare, Groningen, The Netherlands

Dr. Annelies de Bildt

Laboratory of Developmental Neurochemistry, Yale Child Study Center, Yale University, 230 South Frontage Road, New Haven, CT, 06520, USA

Dr. George M. Anderson (Director Research Neurochemistry laboratory)

Department of Psychiatry, University of Groningen, University Medical Center Groningen, Accare, Groningen, The Netherlands

Dr. Ruud Minderaa

Corresponding author

Correspondence to [Annelies de Bildt](#).

Editor information

Editors and Affiliations

Irving B. Harris Professor of Child Psychiatry, Pediatrics and Psychology Yale University School of Medicine, Chief, Child Psychiatry Children's Hospital at

Yale–New Haven Child Study Center, New Haven, CT, USA

Fred R. Volkmar (Director, Child Study Center) (Director, Child Study Center)

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