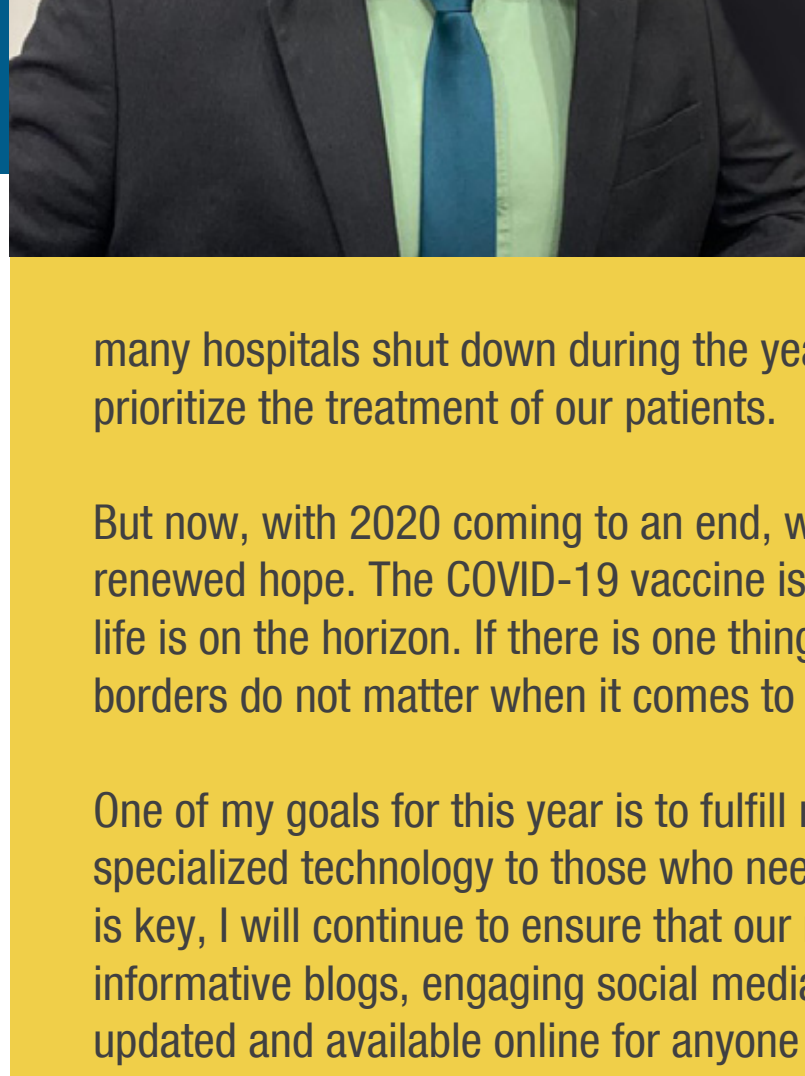




# The Synapse

Monthly updates from Plexus

January 2021



## From the Director's desk

First and foremost, I would like to wish our patients, readers, and supporters a very happy and prosperous New Year.

2020 has been one of the most difficult years the Plexus family has faced, from the rapid spread of a global pandemic, to the subsequent lengthy lockdown. Although

I was determined to keep our doors open and prioritize the treatment of our patients.

But now, with 2020 coming to an end, we are delighted to bring in the new year with renewed hope. The COVID-19 vaccine is on the way, and the promise of a return to normal life is on the horizon. If there is one thing I have learned from the pandemic, it is that borders do not matter when it comes to health and mental wellbeing.

One of my goals for this year is to fulfill my mission of bringing unique expertise and specialized technology to those who need it, wherever they may be. Since communication is key, I will continue to ensure that our rich repository of knowledge, in the form of our informative blogs, engaging social media posts, and other articles are consistently updated and available online for anyone to view. I want to continue to inspire, include, and help everyone suffering from debilitating illnesses to take back control of their lives. Therefore, along with my team, I am determined to reach for the sky and cement our positioning as THE destination for acute and chronic neurological disorders.

My fantastic team, who are committed to helping our patients overcome their illnesses in the shortest possible time, is my biggest asset. I could not have asked for a better team to be by my side through this pandemic, and one of my major goals for 2021 is to continue to ensure they constantly upskill in the form of world-class training in preparation for a changing world.

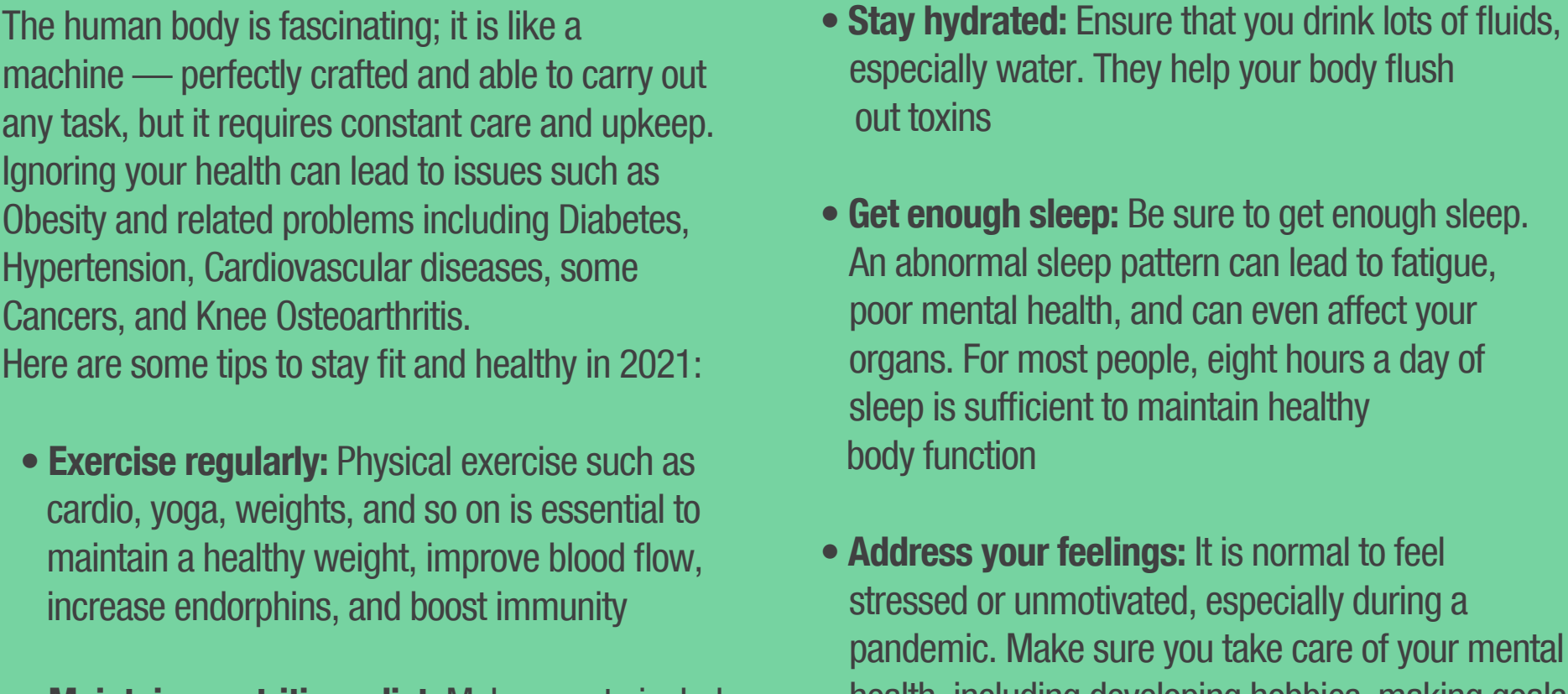
Last, but not least, I would like to thank all our patients, old and new, for putting their faith and welfare in our hands. You give us purpose. Always remember, whenever you are in need of healing, be it the mind, body, or soul, I will be here to reassure you and provide you with the best treatment possible.

It is said that change is the only constant. And so, along with the Plexus family, I invite you to join us as we step into this brave, new world.

Stay safe. Stay informed.

**Dr Na'eem Sadiq**  
Founder

# Plexus insider



The human body is fascinating; it is like a machine — perfectly crafted and able to carry out any task, but it requires constant care and upkeep. Ignoring your health can lead to issues such as Obesity and related problems including Diabetes, Hypertension, Cardiovascular diseases, some Cancers, and Knee Osteoarthritis.

Here are some tips to stay fit and healthy in 2021:

- **Exercise regularly:** Physical exercise such as cardio, yoga, weights, and so on is essential to maintain a healthy weight, improve blood flow, increase endorphins, and boost immunity
- **Maintain a nutritious diet:** Make sure to include all food groups in your meals especially fruits, vegetables, and items rich in protein to stay fit. Avoid junk food as it just packs on the calories without benefiting your body

- **Stay hydrated:** Ensure that you drink lots of fluids, especially water. They help your body flush out toxins
- **Get enough sleep:** Be sure to get enough sleep. An abnormal sleep pattern can lead to fatigue, poor mental health, and can even affect your organs. For most people, eight hours a day of sleep is sufficient to maintain healthy body function

- **Address your feelings:** It is normal to feel stressed or unmotivated, especially during a pandemic. Make sure you take care of your mental health, including developing hobbies, making goals for yourself, keeping in touch with friends and family, and meditating.

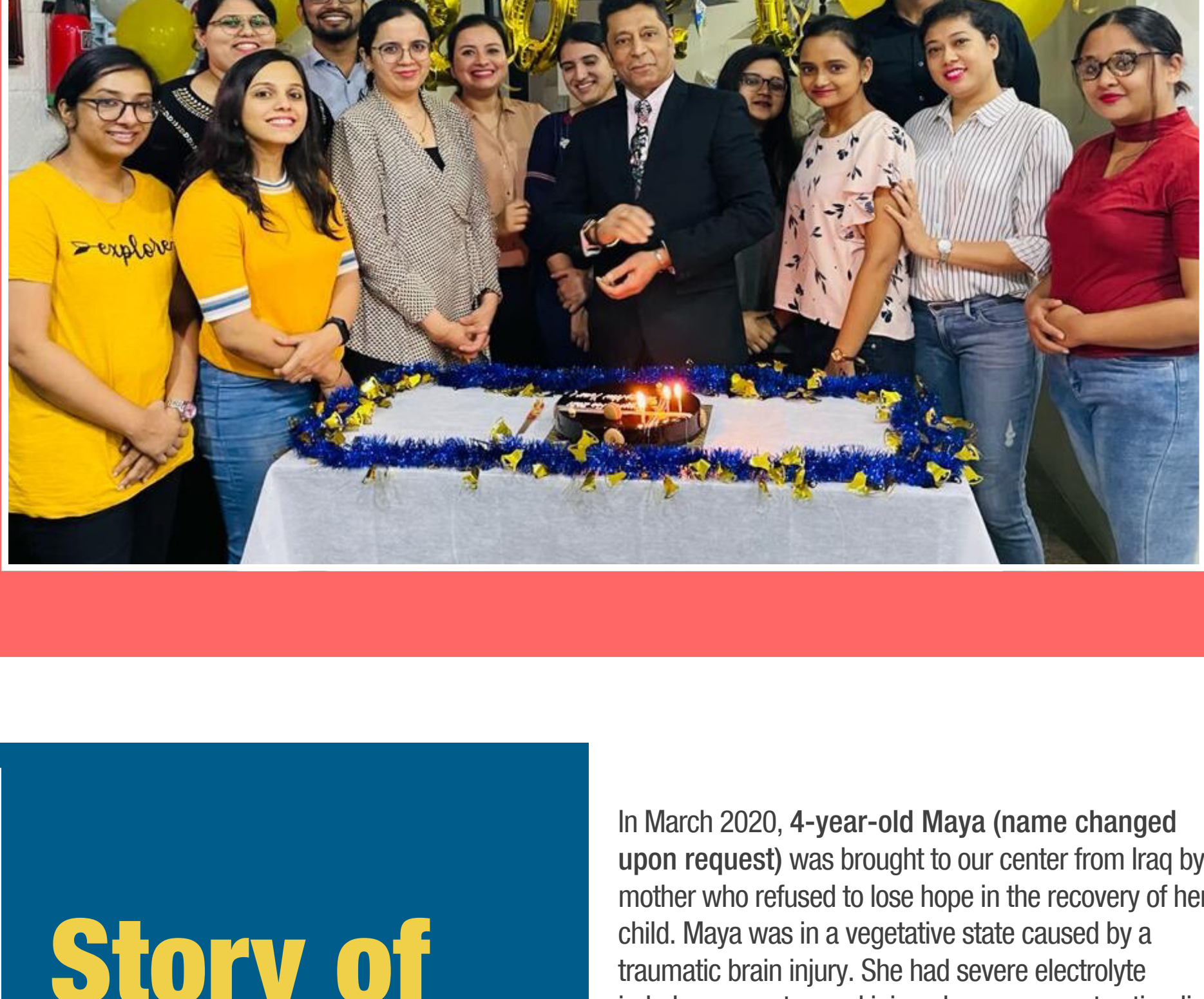
**Above all, be kind to yourself.**

► If you are concerned about your lifestyle and health, contact us at [www.plexusnc.com](http://www.plexusnc.com).

We provide exclusive lifestyle interventions that include simple, customized diet plans combined with nutritive supplements to hasten metabolism and promote quick weight loss.

# Behind the scenes

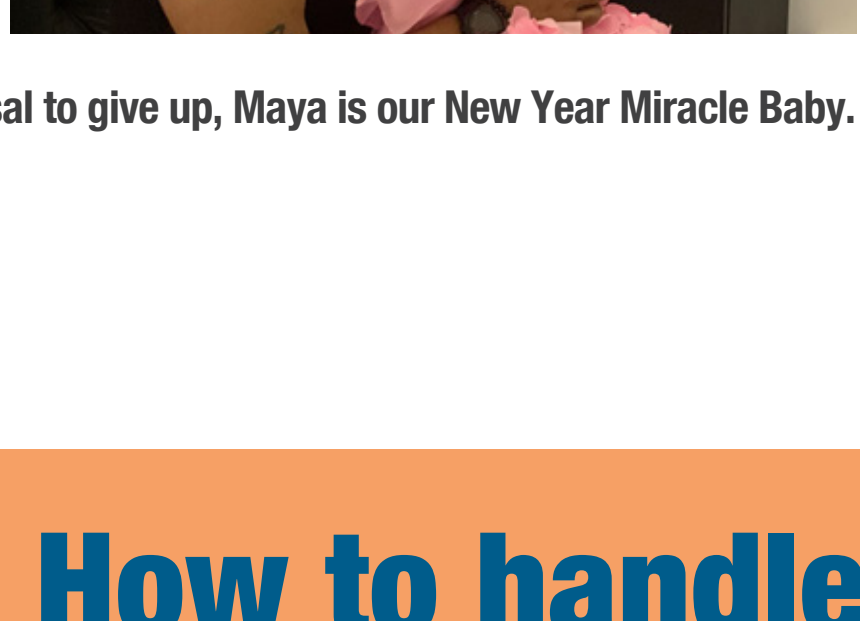
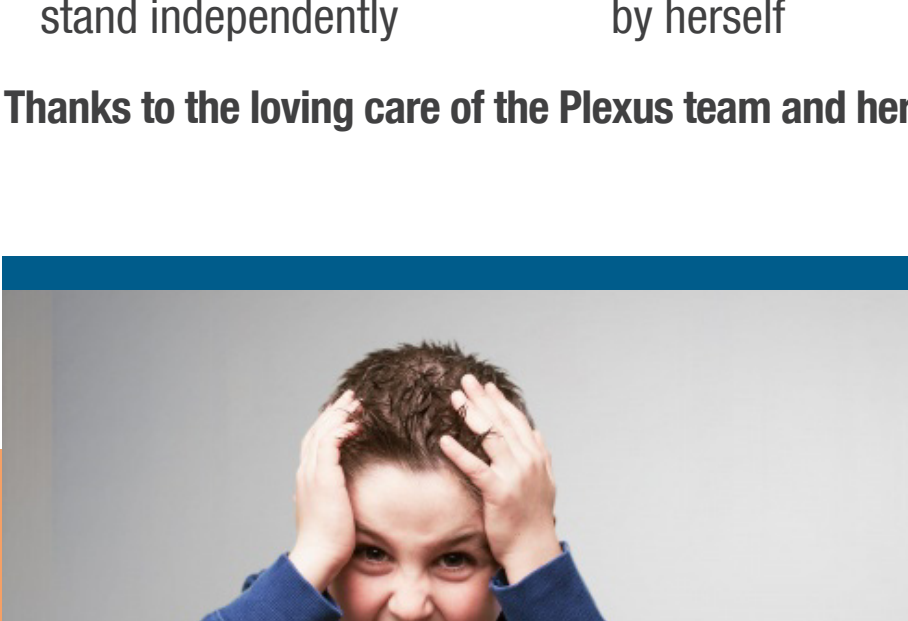
Looking Ahead: Celebrating the New Year with Old Friends



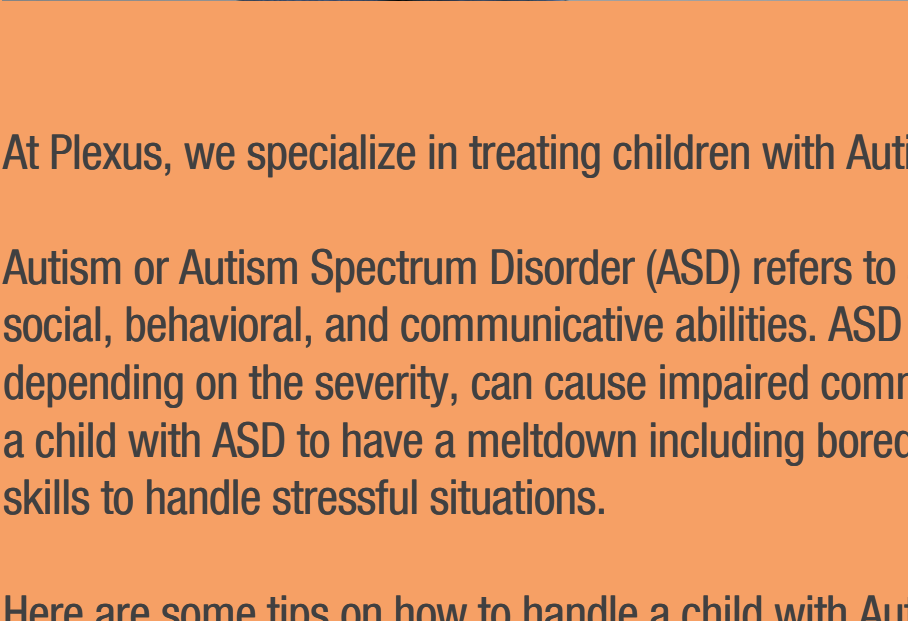
# Story of the month

In March 2020, 4-year-old Maya (name changed upon request) was brought to our center from Iraq by a mother who refused to lose hope in the recovery of her child. Maya was in a vegetative state caused by a traumatic brain injury. She had severe electrolyte imbalance, acute renal injury, low response to stimuli, and had to be kept alive using a nasogastric tube for feeding. At Plexus, Maya underwent Stem Cell Therapy and intensive rehabilitation, which included physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and swallowing therapy.

The improvements in her condition noted on the day of her discharge include:



Thanks to the loving care of the Plexus team and her refusal to give up, Maya is our New Year Miracle Baby.



# How to handle a child with Autism during a meltdown?

At Plexus, we specialize in treating children with Autism by providing a holistic approach to their symptoms.

Autism or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) refers to a range of neurodevelopmental disorders that affect social, behavioral, and communicative abilities. ASD may be present as early as six months of age and, depending on the severity, can cause impaired communication and social skills. Several factors can cause a child with ASD to have a meltdown including boredom, frustration, anxiety, sensory issues, and lack of skills to handle stressful situations.

Here are some tips on how to handle a child with Autism during a meltdown, both in public and at home:

- **Have a calming routine.**  
This could include certain visuals, sounds, or items that the child likes
- **Keep a diary.**  
Taking notes on when and where the meltdown occurs could help in preventing future ones. If you understand what triggers meltdowns, you may be able to stop them beforehand
- **Be calm and empathetic.**  
Listen to the child and understand their situation. Tell them that expressing emotions is okay, and sometimes it can get overwhelming. You mustn't add stress and escalate the situation while your child is having a meltdown. It is essential to make sure your child feels safe, loved, and understood
- **Have a sensory toolkit.**  
Keep a couple of sensory toys within reach to occupy a child when they are overwhelmed. Some common sensory tools include noise-canceling headphones, sunglasses, and fidget toys
- **Always be there.**  
Make sure that you are within reach of your child in case they want you during a meltdown. Keep a neutral face and try to be calm
- **Equip them with coping skills.**  
Meltdowns can't be helped at that very moment. But afterward, you can teach your child how to regulate their emotions. Try relaxing activities like going for walks, breathing exercises, or reading a favorite book
- **Don't leave them alone.**  
Ensure that once your child gets out of a meltdown, they are not left by themselves. This could send a message that they don't deserve to be around the people they love when it gets tough
- **Don't punish.**  
Punishments can make children feel shame, anxiety, fear, and resentment. A child with Autism can't control their meltdowns, so they should be allowed space and freedom to feel their feelings while you let them know you are there to support them along the way

# Disease decoder

## Different types of Spinocerebellar Ataxia & associated symptoms:

Most available information on SCA is based on the four most common types: SCA1 (active reflexes), SCA2 (slow eye motion and loss of memory), SCA3 (Muscle weakness caused by atrophy, also called Machado-Joseph disease), and SCA6 (slow worsening of symptoms)

We always believe that knowledge is power, specifically, knowledge of an illness is the power to take control of it. It can be especially scary to be diagnosed with a hereditary disease, such as Spinocerebellar Ataxia, but our experts help you make informed decisions about how to manage such conditions.

Spinocerebellar Ataxia (SCA) refers to a group of hereditary ataxias that cause degeneration of the cerebellum, the part of the brain which maintains balance and controls movements.

Symptoms include:

- Impaired hand-eye coordination
- Unsteady gait
- Uncontrolled or repetitive eye movements
- Trouble swallowing food
- Slurred speech and stuttering
- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Learning and memory problems

## What Causes Spinocerebellar Ataxia?

SCA is caused by mutations in different genes. Symptoms can present from just one mutated copy of the responsible gene in each cell to trinucleotide repeat expansions, where a section of DNA is repeated many times.

We tackle Spinocerebellar Ataxia at Plexus with various therapies such as Stem Cell Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech Therapy, and Language Therapy.

For further details on the various types of SCA and treatment options, visit [www.plexusnc.com](http://www.plexusnc.com).