

## EXPLANATION OF DEFECTS, with photos

**Anencephaly** is a severe congenital condition in which a large part of the skull is absent along with the cerebral hemispheres of the brain. A baby with this condition is unlikely to survive.



**Spina bifida** is a birth defect that occurs when the spine and spinal cord don't form properly. It falls under the broader category of neural tube defects. The baby is born with a split in its back along the spine in which the spinal chord protrudes.



**Heart defects** include many sub categories. The heart does not develop properly. In some cases there is a hole between the chambers of the heart so that it cannot pump properly. The valves may be defective. The arteries may develop wrongly. Tissue can block outflow of blood. In all heart defect cases, there are severe problems with blood circulation and without intervention, the baby dies. These effects can sometimes only be diagnosed when the individual is older and shows symptoms of blood flow insufficiency. They are not necessarily diagnosed at birth.

Cleft palate is a congenital split in the roof of the mouth. The upper palate does not join and there is a gap which has to be closed by surgery.



*Hydrocephalus* is a condition in which an accumulation of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) occurs within the brain. This typically causes increased pressure inside the skull. Older people may have headaches, double vision, poor balance, urinary incontinence, personality changes, or mental impairment.

At birth there are a number of medical interventions but they are costly and have to be carried out as the baby grows. The prognosis is poor.



**Esophageal atresia (EA)** is where the esophagus does not continue to the stomach. If detected early it can be treated by surgery but it is a potentially fatal condition.

**Gastroschisis** is a birth defect of the abdominal (belly) wall. The baby's intestines are found outside of the baby's body, exiting through a hole beside the belly button. The hole can be small or large and sometimes other organs, such as the stomach and liver, can also be found outside of the baby's body.



**Anorectal atresia.** The anus is closed.



Diaphragmatic hernia: There is a hole in the diaphragm so the baby cannot properly breathe.