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**PARENTS SUPPORT CIRCLE**

**ARYA, 3, HAS SPINAL MUSCULAR ATROPHY**

**I**n the fall of 2001, Loren Eng and Dinakar Singh, of New York City, learned that their daughter, Arya, suffers from a rare but often deadly neuromuscular disease. They had visited countless doctors in search of answers to why Arya, who had been crawling and walking at age 1,

started losing her motor skills. Spinal muscular atrophy causes weakness in the legs, arms, and neck and eventually leads to bone and spinal deformities.

"If Arya tries to crawl, she crumbles under the weight of her own body," Loren says. "She needs constant care to do things like roll over or sit up. Her mind, however, continues to grow in her weakening body." Loren and Dinakar are hopeful that physical therapy will improve Arya's mobility and that new research will lead to a cure for SMA. They've even helped fund a clinic at New York City's Columbia Presbyterian Hospital to treat kids with the disease. To share info with Arya's family as well as other parents of kids facing health challenges, join the *Parents* Support Circle message boards in the Community Section at

[www.parents.com](http://www.parents.com).