

# ***Teaching Students With Medical Disabilities***

## ***Definition***

Medical disabilities are far reaching and diverse and require varied forms of academic support. These disabilities may be acute or chronic, visible or invisible, but all have effects on education. Types of medical conditions that have educational implications include, but are not limited to, asthma, cancer, chronic fatigue syndrome, diabetes, epilepsy, fibromyalgia, HIV, lupus, narcolepsy and tourette syndrome.

## ***Possible Characteristics and Educational Implications***

- Frequent absences
- Extreme fatigue
- Pain
- Confusion
- Poor concentration
- Memory problems
- Impaired cognition
- Anxiety, irritability and/or depression
- Shortness of breath
- Seizures
- Negative side effects of medication

## ***Suggestions and Instructional Strategies for Faculty***

- Summarize information as it its being taught.
- Respond to non-verbal signs of confusion.
- Be aware of procedures if there is a medical emergency (i.e. Seizure protocols).
- Work together with the student and the Disability Resource Center to ensure a successful learning experience for the student.

## ***Possible Academic Accommodations***

- Reduced course load
- Access to class notes/note taker
- Use of tape recorder for lectures
- Extended exam time with allowances for breaks
- Alternate time of day for exams due to fatigue or medication side effects
- Consideration for absences due to medical reasons

*This document is a compilation of resources from CCDI, LD OnLine and NICHCY*



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