

Physical Disability Crib Sheets

Blind / Visual impairment – PDVI

Definition:

Total blindness is the inability to tell light from dark, or the total inability to see. Visual impairment or low vision is a severe reduction in vision that can't be corrected with standard glasses or contact lenses and reduces a person's ability to function at certain or all tasks. Legal blindness (which is actually a severe visual impairment) refers to a best-corrected central vision of 20/200 or worse in the better eye or a visual acuity of better than 20/200 but with a visual field no greater than 20° (e.g., side vision that is so reduced that it appears as if the person is looking through a tunnel).

There is no legal definition of partial sight. A person may be certified as partially sighted if they are not blind within the meaning of the 1948 Act but are “substantially and permanently handicapped by defective vision, caused by congenital defect or illness or injury”.

Only a very small percentage of blind people have no sight at all. Many people who are registered blind can see light and movement, or more than that but within a restricted field of vision.

Everyone's eye condition is different –

- it might affect their distance or near vision; they might have no central vision or no vision to the sides;
- their sight might be patchy or it might be blurred;
- their sight might vary with their health and with the time of day;
- Some people can see well to get around but not to read, for others reading is no problem but mobility is difficult.

Deaf / Hearing Impairment – PDDHI

Definition:

Hearing loss or a **hearing impairment** is a full or partial decrease in the ability to detect or understand sounds. Caused by a wide range of biological and environmental factors. The term hearing impairment is usually reserved for people who have relative insensitivity to sound in the speech frequencies. The severity of a hearing impairment is categorized according to *how much* louder a sound must be made over the usual levels before the listener can detect it. In profound **deafness**, even the loudest sounds that can be produced by the instrument used to measure hearing (audiometer) may not be detected.

Cochlear Implants

Cochlear Implants have provided substantial benefits to many profoundly deafened children and adults. Benefits vary for each individual, and range from increased perception of environmental sounds, to even the ability to use the telephone!!

Deafblind – PDDB

Definition:

People who have a combined sight and hearing loss which has a significant impact on their ability to cope with daily living tasks. Deaf blindness is more than just a combination of blindness and deafness – it is a separate disability where the deafblind person cannot function as either a deaf person or a blind person.

Fibromyalgia – PDFM

Definition:

FMS is a widespread musculoskeletal pain and fatigue disorder for which the cause is still unknown. Fibromyalgia means pain in the fibrous tissues in the body. The pain comes from the connective tissues, such as the muscles,

tendons, and ligaments. FMS does not involve the joints, as does rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis.

Most patients with fibromyalgia say that they ache all over. Their muscles may feel like they have been pulled or overworked. Sometimes the muscles twitch and at other times they burn. More women than men are afflicted with fibromyalgia, but it shows up in people of all ages.

Mears Irlen Syndrome / Scotopic Sensitivity Syndrome – Pdmis

Definition:

Mears Irlen Syndrome also called Scotopic Sensitivity Syndrome causes eye problems for many people because it alters the way they see things. These eye problems are based on their visual perception. The eyes are not the main source of the problem. The eye problems are caused by the way in which the brain interprets the visual information that is being sent through the eyes. Having Irlen Syndrome keeps many people from reading effectively and efficiently. Individuals with Irlen Syndrome perceive reading material and/or their environment differently. They must constantly make adaptations or compensate for their eye problems. Individuals are often unaware of the extra energy and effort they are putting into reading and perception.

Possible Difficulties:

- Strain working under bright lighting
- Poor concentration
- Lack of attention
- Strain working at a computer
- Glare from bright objects
- Eye strain
- Headaches from:- reading, computers, lighting, TV, supermarkets

- Poor comprehension
- Skips words or lines when reading or avoids reading
- Accident prone
- Difficulty writing on a line

Complex Regional Pain Syndrome – PDRP

Definition:

Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS) is the term used to describe pain and swelling in one part of the body. CRPS usually affects the hands, feet, elbows or knees, but can affect any part of the body.

The pain may start after an injury, where the nerves have been damaged, or there may be no known cause for it to start. The pain usually gets gradually worse and may spread to other parts of the body.

There are two types of CRPS. Type 1 may not have any known cause. It used to be called Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy (RSD), Sudecks Atrophy or Algodystrophy. Type 2 always follows an injury and used to be called causalgia.

CRPS is quite rare (an estimated 11,500 people in the UK have it) and half of all people that develop it recover within a few months.

Repetitive Strain Injury – PDRS

Definition:

The term repetitive strain injury (RSI) is used to describe a range of painful conditions of the muscles, tendons and other soft tissues. It is mainly caused by repetitive use of part of the body. It is usually related to a job or occupation, but leisure activities can also be a cause. Unlike a 'normal' strain following a sudden injury, symptoms of RSI can persist well beyond the time it would take symptoms of a 'normal' strain to ease.

Symptoms depend on what the repetitive actions are. In most cases the symptoms develop in an arm, wrist or hand, as these parts of the body most commonly do repetitive tasks. In recent years it is computer operators, typists, musicians and people doing repetitive tasks in factories who most commonly develop RSI. People who do a lot of DIY around the house may develop RSI, or people who do certain sports which involve repetitive movements.

Symptoms can include: pain, tightness, dull ache, throbbing, numbness, or tingling in the affected area. The symptoms tend to develop gradually. At first the symptoms may only occur whilst you do the repetitive task and ease off when you rest. In time the symptoms can be present all the time, but tend to be made worse by doing the repetitive task. Symptoms can range from mild to severe.

Type 1 RSI

This includes well defined syndromes such as:

- **Carpal tunnel syndrome** (pain and compression in the wrist)
- **Tendonitis** (inflammation of a tendon)
- **Tenosynovitis** (inflammation of a tendon sheath).

Type 2 RSI

This is where symptoms do not fit into a well-defined syndrome. Also, there are no 'objective' or 'measurable' signs such as inflammation, swelling or problems with nerve function. It is sometimes called 'diffuse RSI' or 'non-specific pain syndrome'.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome – PDCT

Definition:

Carpal tunnel syndrome occurs when the median nerve, which runs from the forearm into the hand, becomes pressed or squeezed at the wrist. The median nerve controls sensations to the palm side of the thumb and fingers (although not the little finger), as well as impulses to some small muscles in the hand that allow the fingers and thumb to move. The carpal tunnel - a narrow, rigid passageway of ligament and bones at the base of the hand - houses the median nerve and tendons. Sometimes, thickening from irritated tendons or other swelling narrows the tunnel and causes the median nerve to be compressed. The result may be pain, weakness, or numbness in the hand and wrist, radiating up the arm. Although painful sensations may indicate other conditions, carpal tunnel syndrome is the most common and widely known of the entrapment neuropathies in which the body's peripheral nerves are compressed or traumatized.

Symptoms usually start gradually, with frequent burning, tingling, or itching numbness in the palm of the hand and the fingers, especially the thumb and the index and middle fingers. Some carpal tunnel sufferers say their fingers feel useless and swollen, even though little or no swelling is apparent. The symptoms often first appear in one or both hands during the night, since many people sleep with flexed wrists. A person with carpal tunnel syndrome may wake up feeling the need to "shake out" the hand or wrist. As symptoms worsen, people might feel tingling during the day. Decreased grip strength may make it difficult to form a fist, grasp small objects, or perform other manual tasks. In chronic and/or untreated cases, the muscles at the base of the thumb may waste away. Some people are unable to tell between hot and cold by touch.

Cervical Spondylosis – LDCS

Definition:

Cervical spondylosis is a medical term used to refer to the general 'wear and tear' that occurs in the joints and bones in the neck as people get older. The condition is also known as degenerative osteoarthritis. It can lead to episodes of stiffness and neck pain.

In more serious cases of cervical spondylosis, changes in the structure of bones or joints in the neck can cause nerves to get pinched or compressed. They may also cause them to press against near-by blood vessels, which can temporarily block the flow of blood. This can lead to more serious symptoms such as lack of feeling in their hands and legs, a loss of co-ordination and, less commonly, loss of bladder control.

Sciatica – PDSN

Definition:

Sciatica is the name given to any sort of pain that is caused by irritation or compression of the sciatic nerve.

The sciatic nerve is the longest nerve in your body. It runs from the back of your pelvis, through your buttocks, and all the way down both legs, ending at your feet. Anything that compresses or irritates the sciatic nerve can cause a pain that radiates out from your lower back, and travels down your leg to your calf. Pain can range from being mild to very painful.

If you have sciatica, you may have some numbness or muscle weakness in your legs and feet. Some people also experience a tingling sensation ('pins and needles') in their feet. In many cases of sciatica, there is no obvious cause. However, in some people, it is thought that a combination of muscle, joint and bone strain may lead to sciatica.

There are two types of sciatica:

- Acute **sciatica** - is sciatica that does not last longer than six weeks. Most cases of acute sciatica will pass without the need for treatment. Using a combination of over-the-counter (OTC) painkillers, exercise and hot or cold packs can often help to relieve the symptoms of sciatica.
- Chronic **sciatica** - is sciatica that lasts longer than six weeks. In the case of chronic sciatica, you may require some structured physical exercise under the supervision of a physiotherapist. In very rare cases, surgery may be required to control the symptoms.

Multiple Sclerosis – PDMS

Definition:

MS is a condition of the central nervous system (the brain and spinal cord), which controls the body's actions and activities, such as movement and balance.

Each nerve fiber in the central nervous system is surrounded by a substance called myelin. Myelin helps the messages from the brain travel quickly and smoothly to the rest of the body. In MS, the myelin becomes damaged, disrupting the transfer of these messages.

There are four main types of MS: benign MS, relapsing remitting MS, secondary progressive MS and primary progressive MS.

The symptoms of the condition are numerous and unpredictable, and they affect each person differently. Some of the most common conditions include problems with mobility and balance, pain, muscle spasms and muscle tightness.

Muscular Dystrophy – PDMD

Definition:

Muscular dystrophy is a genetic (inherited) condition where slow, progressive, muscle wasting leads to increasing weakness and disability. There are over 20 types of genetic muscular disorders, each differing in their symptoms and severity. Most types of muscular dystrophy are very rare, with about one in 20,000 babies being born with the condition in the UK each year.

Most forms of muscular dystrophy are caused by mutations (cellular changes) in the genes that are responsible for the structure and functioning of a person's muscles. The mutations bring about changes to the muscle fibers, and interfere with their ability to shorten (contract). As muscle contraction plays an essential part in the functioning of muscles, muscular dystrophy often results in severe disability.

Some of the main types of muscular dystrophy include:

- Duchene
- Becker
- limb-girdle
- facioscapulohumeral
- oculopharyngeal
- myotonic dystrophy

ME / Chronic Fatigue Syndrome – PDME

Definition:

Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) is long-term tiredness (fatigue) that does not go away with sleep or rest, and affects everyday life.

CFS is also known as ME (myalgic encephalomyelitis). 'Myalgia' is muscle pain, and 'encephalomyelitis' is inflammation of the brain and spinal cord. ME is a

commonly used term, although it is thought to be too specific to cover all the symptoms.

CFS is the term that is often used to describe long-term tiredness by GPs and medical professionals. This is because in the majority of cases, the main symptom is chronic fatigue. This is usually the preferred term, rather than ME, as in CFS, there is little evidence that inflammation of the brain and spinal cord occurs.

It is estimated that 150,000 people in the UK have CFS. Anyone can get CFS, although it is more common in women than in men. It usually develops in the early twenties to mid-forties. Children can also be affected, most commonly between the ages of 13–15.

Cystic Fibrosis – PDCF

Definition:

Cystic fibrosis is a common inherited condition that affects over 8,000 children and adults in the UK. Five babies are born with the condition every week. Cystic fibrosis is a genetic disorder in which internal bodily secretions become thick and sticky, and hinder the function of certain organs, such as the lungs and digestive system.

The condition is caused by a faulty gene that controls the movement of salt and water in and out of cells in the body. When cystic fibrosis occurs, too much salt and not enough water passes into the cells and turns the body's secretions, which normally act as a lubricant, into a thick mucus. This mucus then clogs up the body's tubes, ducts and passageways, and makes them ineffective and prone to infection.

Symptoms of cystic fibrosis include recurrent chest infections and poor growth, and the condition can also result in related health problems such as diabetes and infertility, troubling cough and wheeze, Malnutrition, Clubbed fingers and toes, Polyps inside the nostrils, Large, odorous and Salty tasting skin.

Chronic Lung Condition – PDLC

Definition:

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (COLD) is comprised primarily of two related diseases - chronic bronchitis and emphysema. In both diseases, there is chronic obstruction of the flow of air through the airways and out of the lungs, and the obstruction generally is permanent and progressive over time.

Asthma also is a pulmonary disease in which there is obstruction to the flow of air out of the lungs, but unlike chronic bronchitis and emphysema, the obstruction in asthma usually is reversible. Between "attacks" of asthma the flow of air through the airways usually is good.

There are exceptions, however. In some patients with COPD the obstruction can be partially reversed by medications that enlarge or dilate the airways (bronchodilators) as with asthma. Conversely, some patients with asthma can develop permanent airway obstruction if chronic inflammation of the airways leads to scarring and narrowing of the airways. This process is referred to as lung remodelling. These asthma patients with a fixed component of airway obstruction are also considered to have COPD.

Crohn's Disease – PDCD

Definition:

Crohn's disease is a chronic inflammatory disease of the intestines. It primarily causes ulcerations (breaks in the lining) of the small and large intestines, but can affect the digestive system anywhere from the mouth to the anus. It is named after the physician who described the disease in 1932. It also is called granulomatous enteritis or colitis, regional enteritis, ileitis, or terminal ileitis.

Crohn's disease is related closely to another chronic inflammatory condition that involves only the colon called ulcerative colitis. Together, Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis are frequently referred to as inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). Ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease have no medical cure.

Once the diseases begin, they tend to fluctuate between periods of inactivity (remission) and activity (relapse). IBD most commonly begins during adolescence and early adulthood, but it also can begin during childhood and later in life.

Common symptoms of Crohn's disease include abdominal pain, diarrhoea, and weight loss. Less common symptoms include poor appetite, fever, night sweats, rectal pain, and rectal bleeding. The symptoms of Crohn's disease are dependent on the location, the extent, and the severity of the inflammation.

Cancer – PDCAN

Definition:

Cancer is a term that is used to refer to a number of conditions where the body's cells begin to grow and reproduce in an uncontrollable way. This rapid growth of cancerous cells is known as a malignant tumor. These cells can then invade and destroy healthy and organs.

Cancer sometimes begins in one part of the body before spreading to other parts. This process is known as metastasis. The symptoms of cancer vary depending on what part of their body is affected. However, cancer symptoms can be broadly grouped into three categories. These are:

- Local symptoms - these occur when the cancer is contained in one part of the body - unusual swelling, or lumps, pain, jaundice, and ulcers.
- Symptoms of metastasis - these are symptoms caused by the cancer beginning to spread to other parts of their body - swollen glands, coughing blood, and bone pain.
- Systemic symptoms - these are symptoms that are caused by the cancer having spread throughout their body - weight loss, loss of appetite, tiredness, and sweats.

Cerebral Palsy – PDCP

Definition:

Cerebral palsy is a general term used by doctors to refer to a set of neurological conditions (conditions that affect the brain and nervous system), which affect a child's movement and coordination.

Cerebral palsy is caused by damage to the brain, which normally occurs before, during, or soon after birth.

The symptoms of cerebral palsy vary from child to child. Some children will have problems walking, while others will be profoundly disabled and require life-long care.

It is estimated that 1 in every 500 children is born with cerebral palsy.

Children with cerebral palsy often have other related conditions. These include:

- Epilepsy
- Learning difficulties
- Incontinence
- Impaired vision and/or hearing
- Difficulties speaking or understanding other people speak
- Delayed growth
- Curved spine (scoliosis)
- Drooling (unintentional loss of saliva from the mouth)

The person may have increased muscle tone which can make them appear stiff or rigid. This is known as hypertonia.

Alternatively, they may have a decreased muscle tone which makes them appear floppy. This is known as hypotonia.

Children with cerebral palsy also tend to favour one side of the body over the other, which can make their posture appear unusual.

Epilepsy – PDEP

Definition:

Epilepsy is not a single medical condition in itself. It is a symptom of a range of other conditions that cause somebody to have repeated fits, which are known as seizures.

Epilepsy is more common in people with certain disabilities. About a third of people with a learning difficulty have some form of epilepsy.

The cells in our brain, known as neurons, communicate with each other by using electrical impulses. During a seizure these electrical impulses are disrupted, which can cause both the brain and the body to behave strangely.

The severity of the seizures can differ from person to person. Some people will just experience a trance-like state for a few seconds or minutes, whereas others will lose consciousness and have convulsions (uncontrollable shaking of the body).

Epilepsy is not normally life-threatening, although physical injury can occur as a result of seizures. In rare cases, epilepsy can cause sudden, unexplained death. This is known as sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP), which kills 500 people in the UK every year.

Diabetes – PDDB

Definition:

Over 2 million people in England are living with diabetes. Many more have the condition but don't know it. Type 1 and type 2 are the most common forms. The causes of both types are different, but both result in too much glucose (sugar) in the blood.

- Type 1 diabetes is caused by the body's failure to produce insulin. Insulin is a hormone released by the pancreas to help control levels of sugar in the blood. It's sometimes called juvenile diabetes or early-onset

diabetes because it usually appears before the age of 40.

- Type 2 diabetes is caused by the body not producing enough insulin or not using what it produces effectively. It's the most common form and accounts for around 90% of all diabetes.

Diabetes can increase the risk of developing other conditions, such as heart disease. It can be managed effectively and many people with diabetes lead a healthy, active life.

Heart Condition – PDHC

Definition:

- **Angina** Angina is an uncomfortable feeling or pain in the chest. In the majority of cases angina occurs as a result of coronary heart disease.
- **Cardiovascular Disease** is also called 'heart and circulatory disease'. It means all diseases of the heart and circulation, including coronary heart disease (angina and heart attack), and stroke.
- **Heart Attack** If one of the coronary arteries becomes blocked - for example, by a blood clot - the heart muscle is starved of blood and oxygen, and may become permanently damaged.
- **Heart Failure** is the term used when the heart becomes less efficient at pumping blood round the body.
- **Problems with Valves** - The job of the four heart valves is to make sure blood flows in one direction through the heart.
- **Cardiomyopathy** is a condition which causes the heart muscle to be abnormally enlarged, thickened or stiff.
- **Congenital Heart Disease** Congenital heart disease is an abnormality of the heart that has been present from birth.
- **Heart Rhythms** Heart rhythm problems occur when there is a disturbance in the electrical activity of the heart

Arthritis – PDART

Definition:

Arthritis is a term used to describe a number of painful conditions of the joints and bones. Two of the main types of arthritis are osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.

Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis. Cartilage (connective tissue) between the bones gradually wastes away (degenerates), and this can lead to painful rubbing of bone on bone in the joints. It may also cause joints to fall out of their natural positions (misalignment). The most frequently affected joints are in the hands, spine, knees and hips.

Rheumatoid arthritis also known as inflammatory arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis is a more severe, but less common condition. The body's immune system attacks and destroys the joint, causing pain and swelling. It can lead to reduction of movement, and the breakdown of bone and cartilage.

- Ankylosing spondylitis.
- Cervical spondylitis.
- Fibromyalgia.
- Systemic lupus erythematosus (lupus).
- Gout.
- Psoriatic arthritis.
- Reiter's syndrome.

Arthritis is often associated with older people, but it can also affect children. About one in 1,000 children develop arthritis. Arthritis in children is often called juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA).