

### Educational Implications Continued

- Provide assistance and support. If you have students with physical disabilities in your class, your job may include several physical and manual requirements, such as lifting a student from a wheelchair, setting up computer equipment, emptying urine bag, administering medication, or/and feeding.

### Resources

#### Diabetes

American Diabetes Association

<http://www.diabetes.org/main/application/commercewf>

#### Heart Condition

American Heart Association

<http://www.americanheart.org/children/>

#### Asthma

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology

<http://www.aaaai.org/>

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

<http://www.cs.unc.edu/~kupstas/FAQ.html>

#### Sickle Cell Anemia

American Sickle Cell Anemia Association

<http://www.ascaa.org/>

#### Hemophilia

National Hemophilia Association

<http://www.hemophilia.org/home.htm>

#### Leukemia

The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society

[http://www.leukemia.org/hm\\_lls](http://www.leukemia.org/hm_lls)

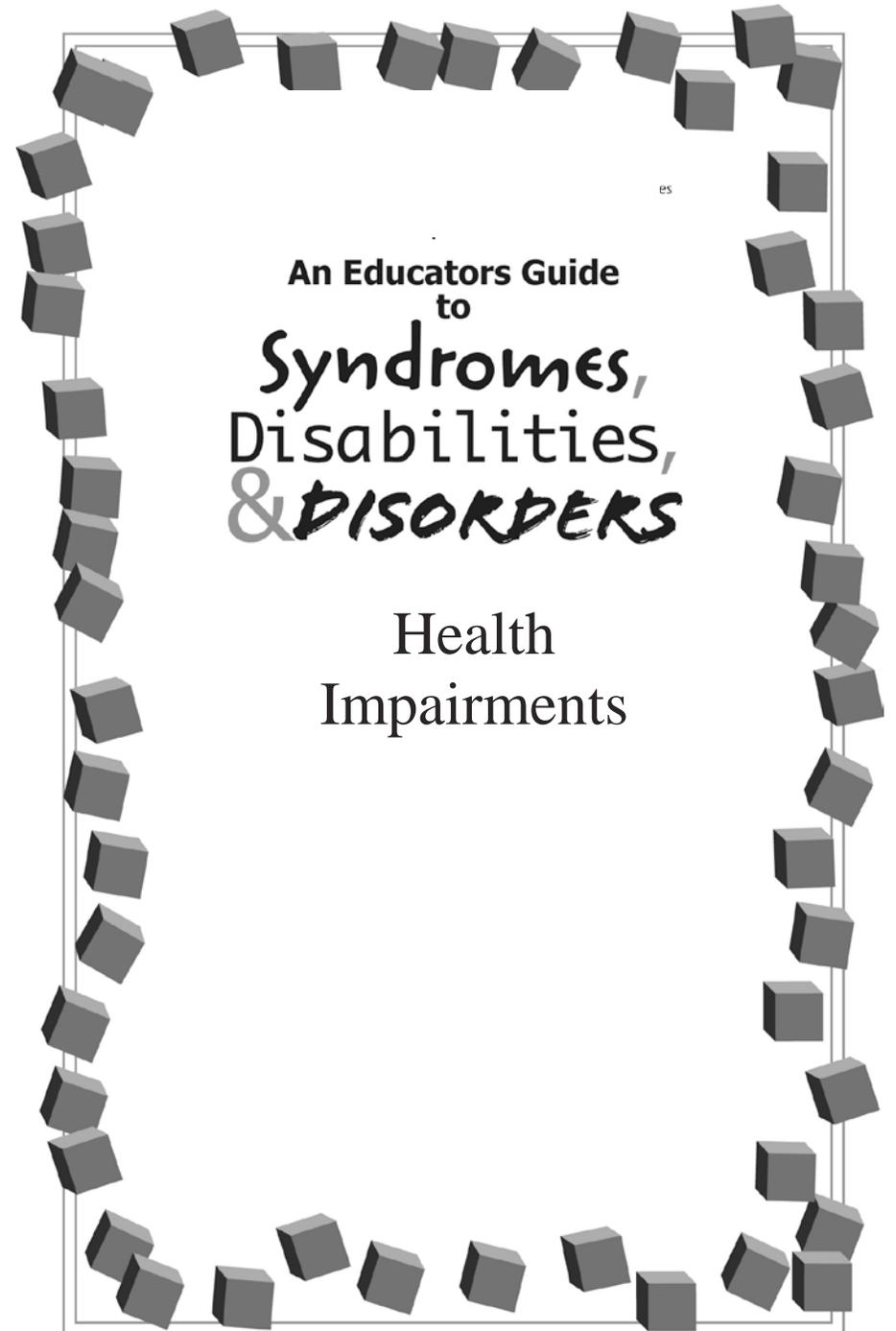
#### Epilepsy Foundation of America

4351 Garden City Dr.

Landover, MD 20785

(800) 332-1000

<http://www.efa.org/>



### *Symptoms or Behaviors*

A Child with a Health Impairment may experience permanent, temporary, or occasional problems. Most students who are served by special education for health problems usually have those problems over long periods of time and don't tend to get better. Some of the most common health impairments include the following:

- Epilepsy (Seizure Disorders). A student with epilepsy experiences seizures. During a seizure, the brain's nerve cells are charged with extra amounts of electricity, causing loss of functions, such as attention, feeling, comprehension, and muscle control.
- Allergies. A student with an allergy shows a strong reaction or intolerance to a substance that doesn't cause problems for most people. The reactions may include sneezing, watering eyes, running nose, tiredness, itching, or a rash. Avoiding the substance and/or taking medication will help the student. Fatigue and absenteeism may cause problems in the student's academic program, and modifications or accommodations may be necessary.
- Asthma. Asthma is usually a result of an allergic reaction that causes the bronchial tubes or lungs (or both) to be blocked by excessive mucus. The student may struggle to breathe, then wheeze, turn pale, and perspire. You may want to check the student's "triggers" to items in the classroom or school—a class pet, food served at lunch, treats at a party, or levels of physical activity.
- Diabetes. A diabetic's body is not able to use and properly store sugar because the body is not able to produce enough of the hormone insulin. If the proper treatment is not followed, serious problems can result. Some potential problems include insulin reaction (or insulin shock), caused by anything that increases the metabolic rate. This could be too much exercise or insulin, too little food, or too much nervous tension. Usually, fruit juice, candy, a soft drink, or a sugar cube can help. A diabetic coma, on the other hand, can occur if the student has had too much sugar. This requires rest and an injection of insulin.

There are many more health impairments that pose problems for students and their education: cancer, HIV, hemophilia, leukemia, sickle-cell anemia, cystic fibrosis, and others.

### *Instructional Strategies and Classroom Accommodations*

- Removal or accommodate barriers. These barriers might include room arrangement, method of expression, time limits, personal needs, the need to be absent frequently, and lack of stamina. Something as simple as rearranging the classroom might make all the difference. Other suggestions include using assistive technology (computers, communication devices, and adapted switches, knobs, and buttons), allowing extra time for movement and transitions, giving instruction and practice in self-care, modifying the length of assignments, shortening instructional times, and planning frequent breaks.
- Compensate for frequent absences. Some physical impairments will mean frequent absences, long periods of absences or both for the student. Sending assignments home, allowing the student to keep an extra set of books at home, arranging for home and hospital instruction, shortening assignments, and allowing a student to take oral test instead of written test are a few common accommodations. Many difficult questions may arise if a child's impairment is severe or terminal. Decisions about a student's program should be made by the IEP team. Don't let sympathy for a student's condition or future cause you to "shortchange" that student while he or she is still able to participate and learn.