

# Other Health Impairment

## What is Other Health Impairment?

“Having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that—

(a) is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette syndrome; and  
(b) adversely affects a child’s educational performance.”



## What’s Inside?

Causes

Prevention

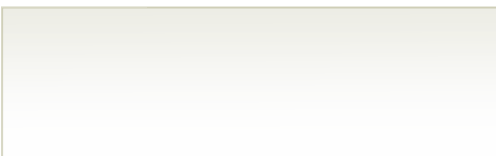
Characteristics

Instructional Strategies

Effects on Adolescents

Effects on Adults

Current Trends





## Causes of Other Health Impairments

The cause of other health impairments varies. Most result from infections, genetic factors, environmental influences, prenatal (before birth) influences, perinatal (during birth) influences, and postnatal (after birth) influences. However, they can be grouped into some general areas:

- Allergies (e.g. Hepatitis)
- Heredity (e.g. Hemophilia)
- Accidents (e.g. seizure disorders)
- Multiple factors (e.g. Epilepsy)
- Unknown

## Prevention of Other Health Impairments:

While there are many different categories of disability listed under Other Health Impairment, it is important to be knowledgeable about the disability and its causes as a way to help prevent the impairment.

Programs such as Head Start and other early intervention programs may be a possible prevention method, as well as ensuring maternal healthcare during pregnancy.

## Current Trends

Special and general education teachers are obtaining higher levels of education and training in working with students with OHI.

Access to technology within the classroom to assist students is ever changing and evolving.



## Instructional Strategies

- Allow extra time for these students to shift from one activity or environment to the next.

- Teach these students specific techniques for organizing their thoughts and materials. Organize the classroom accordingly, and keep all materials in permanent locations for easy access.

- Allow extra time for finishing assignments or for testing.

- For more complex activities, simplify steps to make them more manageable.

- Seat the student close to the teacher and away from any peers that might be distracting.

- Post a daily and weekly schedule that clearly delineates each activity. These schedules can then be used as prompts to direct the student back on task.

- Clearly define your goal.

- Develop objectives to achieve this goal.

- Define the actions necessary to achieve the desired outcome.

## Characteristics

IDEA lists a number of different chronic health problems as possible reasons for the other health impairment label, including asthma, attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, cardiac conditions, hemophilia, leukemia, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and nephritis.

The primary issue in other health impairments, whatever the condition, the resulting symptoms could adversely impact the student's educational performance. If a child has diabetes, but it is controlled through medication and does not impact learning, special education services are not appropriate for that child.

Students with ADHD are categorized according to their characteristics into three distinct subtypes: predominantly inattentive ADHD, predominately hyperactive-impulsive ADHD and combined type ADHD.



# Effects of Disability

## **Effects on Adolescents:**

Cognitive and academic characteristics: Some students may be gifted academically while others are intellectually disabled.

Behavior, emotional, and social characteristics: Some students may act out behaviorally, while others withdraw from social situations.

Physical and medical characteristics: Depending on the health impairment, students may display no physical or medical characteristics, while others may need to take medication, rely on assistive devices for walking or moving.

## **Effects on Adults:**

Depending upon the disability, adults with other health impairments may have no difficulties in finding employment, maneuvering buildings, or building meaningful relationships. Adults with other health impairments may also seek assistance for supported employment or housing when they leave the public school system.

# Online Resources



<http://projectidealonline.org/healthImpairments.php>

<http://www.naset.org/2278.0.html>

<http://nichcy.org/disability/specific/ohi>

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Notes: