

This month's featured term: Hidden/ Invisible Disabilities

Those disabilities that can not be directly identified through observation. They can include cognitive, chronic health, and psychological disabilities. These Disabilities can sometimes or always limit daily activities, range from mild challenges to severe limitations and vary from person to person - [Invisible Disabilities Association - IDA](#)

Generally seeing a person in a wheelchair, wearing a hearing aid, or carrying a white cane tells us a person may be disabled. But what about people with invisible disabilities, such as chronic pain, renal failure, diabetes, or sleep disorder? They are often accused of faking or imagining their disabilities. These symptoms can occur due to chronic illness, injury, birth disorders, etc. and are not always obvious to the onlooker.

Some ways of recognizing the Hidden Disability

- Frequent requests to have information repeated
- Difficulty paying attention
- Confusion
- Difficulty following directions
- Impulsive behavior
- Sudden changes in mood
- Shortness of breath
- Significant fatigue
- Difficulty sitting still or standing for long periods
- Sudden weight loss or gain
- Frequent medical appointments or treatments

Types of Invisible Disabilities:

Chronic Pain: A variety of conditions may cause chronic pain. A few of those reasons may be back problems, bone disease, physical injuries, and any number of other reasons. Chronic pain may not be noticeable to people who do not understand the victims specific medical condition.

Chronic Fatigue: This type of disability refers to an individual who constantly feels tired. This can be extremely debilitating and affect every aspect of a persons every day life.

Mental Illness: There are many mental illnesses that do qualify for disability benefits. Some examples are depression, attention deficit disorder, schizophrenia, agoraphobia, and many others. These diseases can also be completely debilitating to the victim, and can make performing everyday tasks extremely difficult, if not impossible.

People with psychiatric disabilities make up a large segment of the invisibly-disabled population covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Many people living with a hidden physical disability or mental challenge are still able to be active in their hobbies, work and be active in sports. On the other hand, some struggle just to get through their day at work and some cannot work at all.

List of other hidden disabilities

<u>ADHD</u> <u>Anxiety disorders</u> <u>Allergies</u> <u>Asperger Syndrome</u> <u>Asthma</u> <u>Autism</u> <u>Bipolar disorder</u> <u>Brain injuries</u> <u>Chronic fatigue syndrome</u> <u>Chronic pain</u> <u>Coeliac Disease</u> <u>Crohn's disease</u> <u>Depression</u> <u>Diabetes</u> <u>Epilepsy</u> <u>Fibromyalgia</u> <u>Food allergies</u> <u>Hyperhidrosis</u> <u>Hypoglycemia</u>	<u>Irritable Bowel Syndrome</u> <u>Lactose Intolerance</u> <u>Lupus</u> <u>Lyme Disease</u> <u>Major depression</u> <u>Metabolic syndrome</u> <u>Migraines</u> <u>Multiple Sclerosis</u> <u>Multiple Chemical Sensitivity</u> <u>Narcolepsy</u> <i>Personality disorders</i> <i>Primary immunodeficiency</i> <i>Psychiatric disabilities</i> <i>Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy</i> <i>Repetitive stress injuries</i> <u>Rheumatoid arthritis</u> <u>Schizophrenia</u>
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References

Invisible Disabilities Association - The Invisible Disabilities Association (IDA) encourages, educates and connects people and organizations touched by illness, pain and disability around the globe. Formerly known as The Invisible Disabilities Advocate, IDA was founded in 1997 and incorporated in 2004 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit.