

such as **fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, arthritis, kidney disease, allergies, cardiovascular problems, cancer, diabetes, and HIV infections**, as well as **respiratory and gastro-intestinal disorders**. Many of the college students who suffer from these conditions have frequent absences due to the effect of medication, fatigue and pain. The disability support office works closely with medical professionals to ensure that the educational implications of these conditions are understood and accommodated. Medical conditions can have an impact on an individual's ability to meet both the cognitive and physical demands of a college program.

Two examples of these chronic illnesses are described below.

**Fibromyalgia (FM)** is a chronic pain disorder with a broad spectrum of psychological and physical symptoms. It is a condition of widespread musculoskeletal pain usually affecting the arms, legs, back, chest, hands, feet and often the jaw. It is typically associated with chronic fatigue, sleep disturbance and generalized stiffness. Many FM patients also experience depression and anxiety as well as concentration and memory problems.

**Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)** is a debilitating disorder characterized by profound tiredness or fatigue. This condition is primarily characterized by extreme fatigue, muscle pain, depression, problems with concentration and memory and extreme flu-like symptoms. Individuals with CFS may become exhausted with only light physical exertion. Anxiety, irritability and problems with concentration and memory are common with this condition.

### **Other Medical Conditions**

**Tourette syndrome** is a neurologically based disorder with a strong genetic component. It is commonly diagnosed by a physician specializing in this disorder. Other conditions that can co-exist with this condition include obsessive-compulsive disorder and mood disorders, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and learning disabilities. Uncontrollable motor and vocal tics characterize this disorder, including eye blinking, head jerking, shoulder shrugging and facial grimacing, or simple vocal tics such as throat clearing and tongue clicking. Echolalic speech can occur (repeating words or phrases just heard) and in rare cases, coprolalia can occur (vocalizing socially unacceptable words).

**Asthma** is an obstruction of the airways, characterized by narrowing of the bronchial tubes, tissue swelling and clogging mucus. Males are twice as likely as females to have it. Many people with asthma improve during adolescence.



loan as well as information about local resources.

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