

Presenter's Script:

Today we will be talking about health conditions and symptoms that affect not only the individuals you will be supporting, but also others...even you. You may be able to use much of what you learn today in your own life.

People with developmental disabilities may also have other types of medical conditions and diseases which may or may not be related. Sometimes their disability could "predispose" them (or make them more likely to have) a second condition. These conditions and diseases may include high blood pressure, heart disease, asthma, cancer, diabetes, cold, flu, etc.

How do you know when someone has one of these or other diseases? The person will usually have **symptoms**. How do people who are sick act? Can you think of behaviors you or someone you know has exhibited when they were ill? How might people who feel ill position their bodies?

The topics we will be covering will help you identify and report **symptoms** and **signs** of illnesses.

Trainer's Note: The OJT's in this section are for practice only. They are not meant to replace performance of the OJT/CBTAs in Appendix 3.

REPORTING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

One of the things you will be reporting will be signs and symptoms of illness.

Think of as many signs and symptoms as you can that might be included in a progress note report.

(Explain that they are to write only the symptoms, not a diagnosis.)

Look at the list of signs and symptoms and choose a few to identify as either signs or symptoms. Explain why you think they are one or the other.

Review your agency standards on what should be reported, i.e. what may have occurred, what to do about it, to whom to report information, etc.

Documentation Exercise

Scenario 1

9/7/**

At around 4:45 pm, Mary said she had a sore throat and asked for some Tylenol. DSP noticed that Mary had a runny nose and coughed a few times. DSP assisted Mary in taking two Tylenol tablets at 5:00 pm. (See MAR.) DSP will check on Mary in two hours and document outcome of PRN medication use.

Suggested Answers for "Types of Behaviors that Can Indicate a Sign of Illness" Exercise

Discuss any behaviors that can indicate a sign of an illness that the DSP did not mention. Possible answers are listed below:

General Activity Level:

- Quiet
- Restless
- Drowsy
- Alert
- Nervous
- Calm
- Overactive

Specific Behaviors

- Refusing to eat
- Crying
- Holding stomach
- Rubbing elbow
- Jerking movements
- Limping
- Hitting face or head

Body Positioning

- Outstretched
- Twisted
- Bent over
- Cramped
- Fetal position (legs and arms drawn in toward the body)

The "Fatal Four"- Specific risks for people with developmental disabilities

There are four major health issues that are more common in people with developmental disabilities and cause both morbidity and mortality. They are frequently referred to as the "fatal four": aspiration, dehydration, constipation and epileptic seizures.

Aspiration, dehydration, and constipation may be insidious conditions that often go unrecognized until they cause a major illness and/or even death. Many of the symptoms of these conditions are subtle and persons with disabilities may not be able to express their discomfort or give indications that they are not feeling well.

If a person has epileptic seizures, it is the suddenness and the unpredictability of this disorder that places the person at risk. Hospitalizations and/or death may be caused by injury, aspiration, drowning, or status epilepticus. Astuteness of the staff and careful monitoring can greatly minimize the risks and ensure timely interventions. The following information will help the RN identify persons that have "fatal four" risks and help guide them in their assessment, plan of care and protocols.

SEIZURES

**DISTRIBUTE A COPY OF YOUR AGENCY'S
SEIZURE REPORT FORM**

Tardive Dyskinesia

Presenter may wish to share these Youtube videos that show some of the effects of tardive dyskinesia

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W_3bbpFjI68

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJjXgKa4cbE>