

Turner Syndrome Information Sheet

Turner syndrome (TS) is a chromosomal condition affecting only girls and women. Among the most common chromosomal abnormalities, TS occurs in approximately one out of 5,000 live female births.

A variety of medical and developmental issues can be caused by Turner Syndrome, including short stature, failure to begin puberty, infertility, heart defects and certain learning disabilities. With proper medical care, women with Turner Syndrome can lead full and productive lives.

Hearing loss is common among girls or women with Turner Syndrome. In some cases, this is due to the gradual loss of nerve function. Slight abnormalities in the shape of the skull increase the risk of frequent middle ear infections and hearing loss related to these infections. There is an increased risk of certain immune system disorders, including a condition that causes an underactive thyroid (hypothyroidism). Girls have an increased risk of weak muscle control of eye movements (strabismus) and farsightedness (hyperopia).

Signs and Symptoms

- No growth spurts at expected times in childhood.
- Short stature.
- Lack of sexual changes expected during puberty.
- Sensitivity to noise.

Treatment

The primary treatments for nearly all girls and women include hormone therapies.

Educational Implications

Some students may exhibit learning difficulties. Concerns may include inability to imagine objects in relation to each other, math-related spatial concerns, sense of direction and manual dexterity.

Some students will have difficulty understanding the emotions and reactions of other people.

A student may exhibit associated heart, thyroid, kidney or diabetic conditions. Consider school health plans. A student may be absent from school due to on-going medical care.

Delays in sexual development and physical growth may lead to struggles in social development and self-esteem.

Due to a student's short stature, access to all parts of the educational environment may require accommodations.

Some students may exhibit specific difficulties with large movement activities such as throwing, catching and kicking balls.

Educational Options

Those students whose Turner syndrome adversely affects their educational performance may benefit from special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). To qualify under IDEA, a student must meet eligibility criteria in one of thirteen specific disability categories. IDEA entitles a student with a disability to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and an individualized education program, including individual goals, objectives, related services, accommodations and modifications.

Students that do not qualify for services under IDEA may qualify under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. To qualify under Section 504, a student must have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (for example learning, breathing, thinking, concentrating, walking, bodily functions). Under Section 504, a student is entitled to equal opportunity, and may qualify for a Section 504 plan that provides regular or special education and related aids and services.

A student with a health condition who does not require special instruction and related services can receive, as appropriate, a wide range of supports in the general education classroom, including accommodations, individualized health plans (IHP), emergency care plans (ECP) and local education agency supports.