

JAN'S ACCOMMODATION AND COMPLIANCE SERIES

Introduction

JAN's Accommodation and Compliance Series is designed to help employers determine effective accommodations and comply with Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Each publication in the series addresses a specific medical condition and provides information about the condition, ADA information, accommodation ideas, and resources for additional information.

The Accommodation and Compliance Series is a starting point in the accommodation process and may not address every situation. Accommodations should be made on a case by case basis, considering each employee's individual limitations and accommodation needs. Employers are encouraged to contact JAN to discuss specific situations in more detail.

For information on assistive technology and other accommodation ideas, visit JAN's Searchable Online Accommodation Resource (SOAR) at <http://AskJAN.org/soar>.

Information about Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)

How prevalent is CFS?

It is estimated that perhaps as many as half a million persons in the United States have a CFS-like condition (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011). Typically, women are diagnosed with CFS two to four times as often as men (Mayo Clinic Staff, 2011).

What is CFS?

In order to receive a diagnosis of CFS, a patient must satisfy two criteria. First, an individual must have severe chronic fatigue of six months or longer duration with other known medical conditions excluded by clinical diagnosis (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011). Second, an individual must concurrently have four or more of the following symptoms: substantial impairment in short-term memory or concentration; sore throat; tender lymph nodes; muscle pain; multi-joint pain without swelling or redness; headaches of a new type, pattern, or severity; unrefreshing sleep; and post-exertional malaise lasting more than 24 hours (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011).

What are the symptoms of CFS?

In addition to the primary defining symptoms of CFS, some CFS patients have reported a number of other symptoms. They include abdominal pain, alcohol intolerance, bloating, chest pain, chronic cough, diarrhea, dizziness, dry eyes or mouth, earaches, irregular heartbeat, jaw pain, morning stiffness, nausea, night sweats, photosensitivity, shortness of breath, skin sensations, tingling sensations, and weight loss. A majority of CFS patients also report mild to moderate symptoms of anxiety or depression.