



LET'S TALK ABOUT LIVING WITH DISABILITIES

Edition 03 | HEALTH EQUITY BEAT
A HEALTH EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

There are over 120,000 people in Erie County living with a disability. Difficulty walking or climbing stairs tops the list of disability types, making it tough for people to move from place to place. However, not all disabilities are visible or apparent on the outside of a person. We build power when we learn about the experience and needs of people with disabilities by becoming more empathetic, understanding and inclusive.

● DISABILITY IS

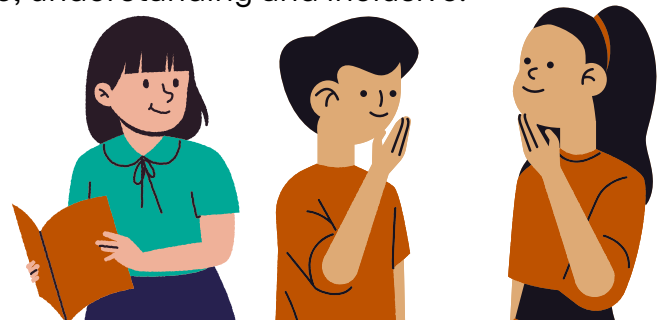
A disability is any condition of the body or mind that makes it more difficult for a person with the condition to do certain activities and interact with the world around them.

Although “people with disabilities” sometimes refers to a single population, this is actually a diverse group of people with a very wide range of needs. Two people with the same type of disability can be affected in very different ways. Some disabilities may be hidden and are not easy to see. Some people live with more than one disability.

There are many types of disabilities and they can affect a person's:

- Concentration
- Communication
- Hearing
- Independence
- Learning
- Mental health
- Movement
- Recall
- Speaking
- Social relationships
- Thinking
- Vision

Learn more: www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth



● RESPECT FOR ALL

People who live with disabilities are entitled to the same respect as people who do not. When interacting with a person with a disability, focus on the fact that they are an individual, just like you, and treat them as a person first.

- Ask before helping a person with a disability.
- Do not assume the person cannot do something.
- When communicating with a deaf person, make eye contact with the person, watch them sign, and speak to them. Do not try to communicate directly with interpreters or companions.
- Ask before touching assistive devices such as wheelchairs.
- Do not assume it is okay to pet or interact with service animals.



Erie County
Department of
Health



Public Health
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OFFICE OF HEALTH EQUITY

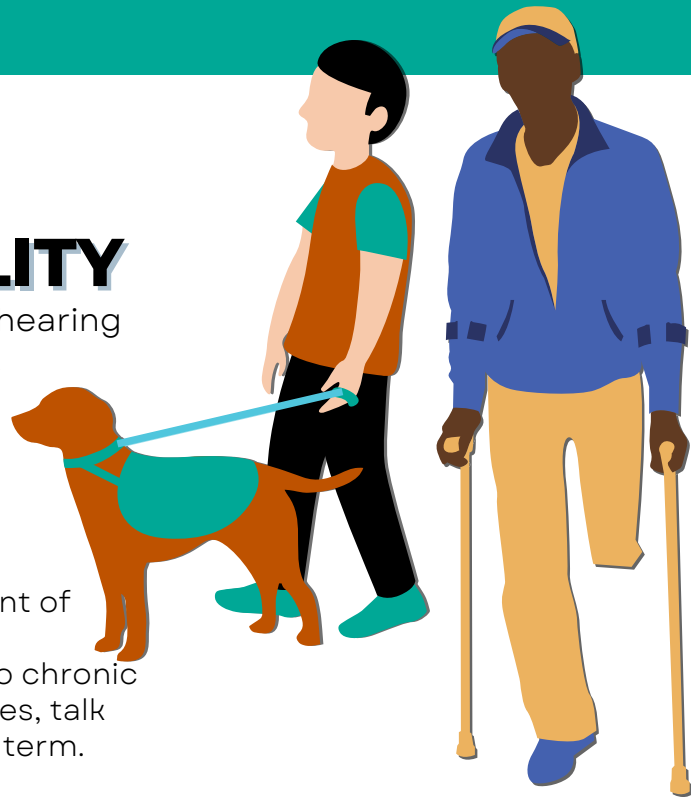
www.erie.gov/health-equity

● DID YOU KNOW? CHRONIC DISEASES CAN LEAD TO DISABILITY

These diseases can lead to blindness, chronic pain, hearing loss, mobility issues, self-care disabilities, and more.

- **Arthritis**
- **Cancer**
- **Diabetes**
- **Heart disease**
- **Obesity**
- **Stroke**

Many of these diseases are avoidable. Focus on eating a nutritious diet, work on getting the recommended amount of exercise, avoid excessive alcohol consumption, and quit smoking tobacco to avoid acquiring disabilities related to chronic disease. If you are living with one of these chronic diseases, talk with your doctor about how you can avoid disability long term.



● HOW TO ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF

Get the best possible care from your doctor and the people around you by learning how to listen to your body and speak up for your needs.

- **You know your body best.** Notice how you feel when you are well and what is different when you are not well. Talk openly with your doctor and caretakers about your concerns.
- **Find healthcare providers** that have experience treating people like you.
- **Ask to make sure** that you can physically get to and get inside your health care provider's office, wait comfortably, and access examining tables as needed.
- **Bring a friend or take notes** if you are concerned you might not remember or fully understand what your provider tells you. Ask as many questions as you need to.
- **Bring a list** of all the medicines you take with you to each visit.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE FORM



Everyone has needs. Do the right people know what yours are?

If you or a loved one has a disability or special medical need, the people whose job it is to respond when you call for help in an emergency need to know. Having specific details about your unique situation will significantly help emergency responders treat you as quickly and safely as possible.

The information on the form is voluntary and all information is kept confidential. Information is only available to local emergency assistance officials. You may update your information at any time.

Fill out the form here:
bit.ly/ecopdFORM

RESOURCES



ERIE COUNTY OFFICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Erie County Office for People with Disabilities (ECOPD) provides information, referrals, representation, and advocacy. This office can help you and your loved ones find support services and resources to meet your needs.

Types of support ECOPD can connect you with: advocacy, ADA compliance, education, employment, food service, hearing & speech, housing, legal services, mental health, physical challenges, recreation access, respite care, support groups, transportation, and more.

Call

(716) 858-6215
N.Y. Relay 1-800-662-1220

Website

erie.gov/ecopd

Location

95 Franklin Street, Room 651
Buffalo, N.Y. 14202

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

SNAP, HEAP, TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE,
CHILDCARE ASSISTANCE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING

95 Franklin St
Buffalo, N.Y. 14202 (716) 858-8000
erie.gov/socialservices

U.S. SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

DISABILITY, MEDICARE, RETIREMENT BENEFITS
TWO LOCATIONS IN ERIE COUNTY

478 Main St, Buffalo
1900 Ridge Rd, West Seneca 1-800-772-1213
ssa.gov

NYS OFFICE OF TEMPORARY & DISABILITY ASSISTANCE

SNAP, HEAP, TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE,
CHILDCARE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING, AND MORE

otda.ny.gov (518) 473-1090

GET VACCINATED AT HOME WITH ERIE COUNTY VAX VISITS

ERIE COUNTY VAX VISITS BRING THE COVID-19 VACCINE TO YOUR DOOR FOR FREE. AVAILABLE FOR AGES 6 MONTHS+

erie.gov/vax (716) 858-2929

TOOLS YOU CAN USE



DIAL 711 for free TTY-Based Telecommunication Relay Services [↗](#)
Available 24 hours a day

Relay services allow people with hearing or speech difficulty call people with or without these disabilities



Userway Accessibility Widget

This service is designed to make digital content more accessible. Find this icon in the bottom corner of many websites. Features include altering text for size & spacing, color contrast, voice instructions, and more.



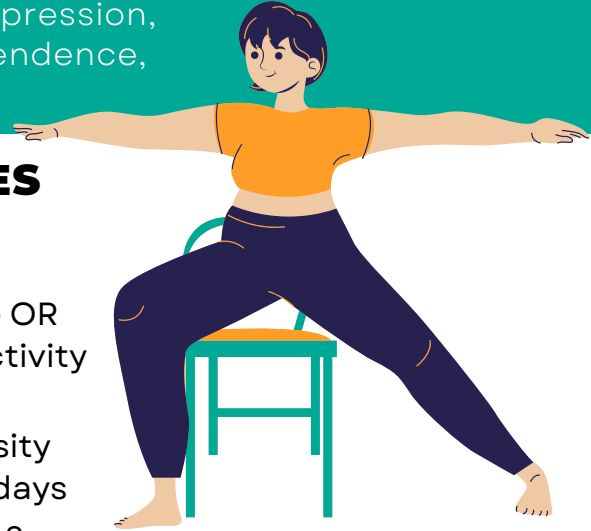
Google Maps Accessible Places

- Street Views allows users to zoom in every part of a street to see if curbs are lowered and find locations of ramps.
- Accessible Places [↗](#) is a feature found on the Google Maps app in settings. Toggle the feature "on" to learn more about a location's layout, entrance, parking, restrooms, and seating options.
- Google Maps [↗](#) is available in any web browser. The app is available on Android or iOS.

● PHYSICAL FITNESS FOR EVERYONE

It is important to stay active. "Active" can look different for people with physical limitations. Work within your abilities to meet these guidelines and you will significantly lower your risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, colon cancer, and diabetes. Physical fitness has lots of benefits! Staying active will increase your stamina and muscle strength, may reduce joint swelling, and will make it generally easier to get around throughout the day.

Fitness can also reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, increase mood and self-confidence, promote independence, build friendships, and improve overall quality of life.



Chair Yoga is a great way to build strength. This gentle yoga practice has lots of mental health benefits, too.

WEEKLY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

FOR ADULTS WITH CHRONIC DISEASES OR DISABILITIES

- 150-300 minutes of light aerobic exercise OR
- 75-150 minutes of moderately intense aerobic exercise OR
- A combination light and moderately intense aerobic activity

Plus

- Muscle-strengthening activities of light to heavy intensity and that involve all major muscle groups on 2 or more days

Note: People living with chronic conditions should consult a healthcare professional or physical activity specialist about the types and amounts of activity appropriate for their abilities and conditions. There is something for everyone!

For more information: <https://health.gov/our-work/nutrition-physical-activity/physical-activity-guidelines> 

A MEDICALLY ORIENTED GYM?!

A Medically Oriented Gym (M.O.G.) offers services that traditional gyms do not including custom exercise programs and nutrition support, activities for physical limitations, and medical staff on-site to ensure safety.

FIND A M.O.G. NEAR YOU

List of M.O.G. gyms themoggroup.com 

Jericho Road Community Health Center MOG  (716) 431-5154



THIS IS A PUBLICATION OF THE

ERIE COUNTY OFFICE OF HEALTH EQUITY

The Erie County Health Equity newsletter is now available in Spanish AND Arabic! Visit erie.gov/health-equity to download.

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