

Increasing School Nurse Awareness of Turner Syndrome

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Abstract

Turner syndrome, a genetic disorder that affects only females, can cause various physical, emotional, and educational disabilities. This disorder may go undiagnosed until school age or later. Short stature and lack of spontaneous puberty are common characteristics and can lead to teasing by peers. Some experience attention deficit and the inability to notice social cues that can be misinterpreted as behavioral issues. Others have visual-spatial deficits that can lead to math learning disabilities and difficulty driving. Because the child with Turner syndrome often has a higher verbal than nonverbal intelligence, learning disabilities may be difficult to identify and often are overlooked. The school nurse, through mandated screenings and routine student office visits, may be the first to recognize Turner syndrome. School nurses need to be aware of this disorder and related educational disabilities to provide early intervention to maximize student health and educational success.

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