

Providing Resources to Patients with Invisible Disabilities Overview:

- Define “invisible disabilities” as conditions that are not visible, yet still present challenges to a person’s activity
- Conditions considered in today’s webinar include chronic pain and autoimmune disorders, sensory and intellectual disabilities, and mental health conditions

Chronic Pain & Autoimmune Diseases with Luke Van Niel:

- Chronic Pain:
 - Can cause feelings of hopelessness, despair, and anxiety due to lack of clear cause and treatment
 - Negative medical experiences may lead to treatment avoidance
 - Treat your patient as the ultimate expert on their bodily sensations
 - Possible Resource: [The U.S. Pain Foundation’s Pain Connection](#)
- Autoimmune Diseases:
 - Difficult to diagnose or define
 - Patients need you to provide them with resources that can improve their quality of life
 - Possible Resource: [The Autoimmune Association](#)

Sensory & Intellectual Disabilities with Rachel Rubino:

- Disability Studies offers distinct frameworks for considering sensory and intellectual disabilities
- Disability terminology is reflected in diagnostic assessment tools (eg: DSM-5), but your patients’ disability experiences are more complex
- Patients’ experiences with health or illness may differ from pathology of their doctor’s prescriptive analysis
- Doctors are encouraged to seek beyond diagnostic definitions to understand disability as a site of rhetoric and patient’s lived experiences
- Possible Resource: [Patient Information | JAMA Network](#)

Mental Health Resources with Blue Lerner:

- 1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness each year, but it can take up to 11 years to receive treatment due to stigma and difficulty to diagnose
- Can co-occur with other medical conditions, intensifying the need for comprehensive care
- Can result in patient non-compliance
- Possible Resource: [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)

- Possible Resource: Talk to your patient about their circumstances and offer support groups and individual therapy options, structured programs, or a crisis helpline

Concluding Thoughts:

- While treating your patient's condition is your job, it is equally crucial to provide compassion, care, and respect to your patient so that they may treat their disability in the way that would best help them live a happy lifestyle.

If you'd like to discuss any of these ideas further please reach out:

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