

AMA Manual of Style

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Disabilities

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According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/>), “a disability exists when an individual has any physical or psychological illness that ‘substantially limits’ a major life activity, such as walking, learning, breathing, working, or participating in community activities.” Avoid labeling (and thus equating) people with their disabilities or diseases (eg, the blind, schizophrenics, epileptics). Instead, put the person first. Avoid describing persons as victims or with other emotional terms that suggest helplessness (afflicted with, suffering from, stricken with, maimed). Avoid euphemistic descriptors such as physically challenged or special. Avoid metaphors that may be inappropriate and insensitive (blind to the truth, deaf to