

A "team" of trained people in the State agency—doctors and others who have had experience in seeing the effects of disabling conditions upon people's ability to work—will consider all of the facts in your file. (In some cases the State agency may ask you to get additional evidence or to have a medical examination.)

The medical evidence from your doctor or other sources will show the severity of your condition—to what degree you are unable to do such things as move about, handle things, hear, speak, understand, or reason. Sometimes the evidence shows that despite the presence of disease or injury a person is still able to function with little or no limitation and thus does not qualify for disability benefits. In other cases the medical records will show clearly that a person is so affected by his disease (or injury) that he cannot be expected to do any substantial gainful work.

Here are some examples of conditions which are ordinarily severe enough to make a person "unable to engage in any substantial gainful activity:"

1. Loss of use of both arms, both legs, or a leg and an arm.
2. Progressive diseases which have resulted in the physical loss of a leg or arm or which have caused the limb to become useless. Among these progressive diseases are diabetes, multiple sclerosis, and Buerger's disease.
3. Diseases of heart, lungs, or blood vessels which have resulted in serious loss of heart or lung reserve as shown by X-ray, electrocardiogram, or other tests so that, in spite of medical treatment, there is breathlessness, pain or fatigue on slight exertion, such as walking several blocks, using public transportation, or doing small chores.
4. Cancer which is progressive and cannot be improved or cured by surgery or other treatment.
5. Damage to the brain, or brain abnormality, which has resulted in severe loss of judgment, intellect, orientation, or memory.
6. Mental disease (e.g., psychosis or severe psychoneurosis) requiring constant supervision or continued confinement in an institution.
7. Loss of vision or narrowing of vision to the extent that the individual has central visual acuity of no better than 20/200 in the better eye after best correction, or an equivalent concentric contraction of visual fields.
8. Permanent and total inability to speak.
9. Total deafness (which cannot be corrected by a hearing aid).