KEY FEATURES OF WILLIAMS SYNDROME

WILLIAMS SYNDROME IS A GENETIC DISORDER WHICH IS OFTEN UNDIAGNOSED OR MISDIAGNOSED.

Individuals with Williams syndrome share similar facial features. They experience medical and developmental challenges as well as learning and attention disorders, and can exhibit a wide range in overall ability - from mild to moderate cognitive impairments to low average IQ. Individuals with WS receive a variety of classifications for educational placements including LD, Mild MR, Moderate MR or OHI. Individuals with WS often do very well in inclusive education classrooms when provided with the proper support and accommodations. Without knowledge of WS, many parents, doctors and teachers struggle to meet their needs given the unique medical and neuropsychological profile of these individuals.

Typical physical & medical characteristics of Williams syndrome include:

* Similar facial features
* Cardiovascular & kidney problems; especially aortic and/or pulmonary stenosis
* Low-pitched voice
* Early feeding difficulties; prolonged irritability
* Small stature/low muscle tone/joint contractures
* Small or missing teeth/Dental anomalies

Typical neuropsychological & behavioral characteristics include:

* On WISC - III, Verbal score exceeds Performance
* Overly friendly/excessively social personality
* Good language ability
* Perseveration on “favorite” topics
* Poor fine motor/visual motor/spatial perceptual performance
* Relatively good reading and phonics skills
* Enjoyment of, or proficiency in music
* Weak in math and writing skills

For more information about Williams syndrome

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