

AMPUTATION



DEFINITION:

Amputation: Missing part or all of a limb.

Amputations can be classified into two categories: **Congenital or acquired amputation.**

Congenital amputation (limb deficiency): When an individual is born without a limb. Congenital amputations are classified according to the site or the level of limb absence.

Acquired amputation: When an individual has a limb removed by operation due to trauma, infection, diabetes and/or vascular impairment.

COMMON ABBREVIATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH AMPUTATIONS:

AK: Above or through the knee joint

BK: Below the knee, but through or above the ankle joint

AE: Above or through the elbow joint

BE: Below the elbow, but through or above the wrist joint

A **prosthesis** is a substitute for a missing body part. The purpose of the prosthetic device is to enable the student to function with as few restrictions as possible.

MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- Edema (swelling) of the stump
- Pressure sores from the prosthetic device
- Atrophy of musculature in or around the affected limb or joint
- Replacement of the device due to growth, especially in children
- Poor circulation at the level of amputation
- Contractures

TEACHING TIPS:

- Perform physical activity safely.
- Enable the individual to effectively use the prosthesis.
- Introduce exercises to strengthen muscles around the stump.
- Introduce activities that will improve balance and enhance ambulation.
- Shorten the distance and/or decrease the speed of an activity for the individual (primarily for individuals with lower limb deficiencies).
- Develop strength and flexibility of the unaffected limb.
- Develop and maintain cardiovascular endurance.
- Provide activities in which the individual can succeed or perform equal to or better than other students.
- Supplement physical education instruction with activities that involve gross motor movement.
- Provide opportunities for independent work (i.e., obstacle courses, circuit training).
- Teach appropriate techniques for falling.
- Demonstrate and encourage a normal gait pattern, especially for individuals with lower limb problems.

Information on this sheet contains only suggested guidelines. Each student must be considered individually, and in many cases, a physician's written consent should be obtained.