

Describing HD in a Social Security Disability Application

Huntington's disease is a rare condition that is not well-known or understood, especially by Social Security. It is important to include information about what Huntington's disease is and how it impacts a person when submitting a Social Security Disability application. When working with Social Security it is best to provide as much information as possible.

The samples provided below will help you describe HD to Social Security and complete your disability application.

Describing HD:

Huntington's disease is like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease combined.

Sample HD Background information:

Huntington's disease is a progressive genetic disorder that breaks down the nerve cells in a person's brain, causing their mental and physical abilities to deteriorate. HD is known as a quintessential family disease because it is inherited in an autosomal dominant fashion, meaning that every person with HD has a parent that is affected by the disease, and every child has a 50% chance of inheriting the defective gene from that parent. All individuals who have inherited the faulty gene will become symptomatic during their life, typically between the ages of 30 and 50 (during prime working age). Symptoms such as involuntary movement and twitching (chorea), personality changes, impaired mental capacity, mood swings, slurred speech, and impaired gait and balance worsen over a 10 to 25 year period, before HD patients succumb to the disease or a related complication like pneumonia or heart failure. Persons at-risk for HD can obtain a genetic test that will conclude if they carry the genetic marker for the disease, but many individuals choose not to receive genetic testing due to the devastating prognosis. There is currently no cure or treatment to halt the progression of HD. The disease remains a fatal diagnosis for the 30,000 symptomatic Americans, and the 200,000 more that are genetically at-risk for developing symptoms.

Sample Remarks Section (to be used as a guide):

Please note my earnings from 2017 are an estimate. I should be deemed disabled per Adult Listing 11.17 for Huntington's disease (HD). HD is a neurocognitive degenerative disorder that impacts my ability to walk, talk, and reason. My symptoms of chorea, involuntary movements, trouble walking, weight loss, sadness, depression, lack of motivation, difficulty sleeping, memory loss, and intellectual decline prevent me from maintaining substantial gainful activity (only include the symptoms you actually experience). Please flag my claim for CAL processing per DI 23022.923 as HD is a terminal illness.*

*Please note this is a sample and should not be input into a disability application without relevant changes. All of the information included in a disability claim needs to reflect **YOUR** personal symptoms, limitations, and circumstances.