

Glossary

OTHER DISEASES AND DISABILITIES

A

allergy a reaction by the body's immune system to a harmless substance

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) wide-ranging legislation intended to make American society more accessible to people who have disabilities

arthritis inflammation of the joints

asthma a disorder that causes the airways that carry air into the lungs to become narrow and to become clogged with mucus

autoimmune disease a disease in which the immune system attacks the cells of the body that the immune system normally protects

D

disability a physical or mental impairment or deficiency that interferes with a person's normal activity

G

gene a segment of DNA located on a chromosome that codes for a specific hereditary trait and that is passed from parent to offspring

gene therapy a technique that places a healthy copy of a gene into the cells of a person whose copy of the gene is defective

genetic counseling the process of informing a person or couple about their genetic makeup

H

heredity (huh RED i tee) the passing down of traits from parents to their biological child

Human Genome Project a research effort to determine the locations of all human genes on the chromosomes and to read the coded instructions in the genes

M

multiple sclerosis an autoimmune disease in which the body mistakenly attacks myelin, the fatty insulation on nerves in the brain and spinal cord

T

tinnitus (ti NIET es) a buzzing, ringing, or whistling sound in one or both ears that occurs even when no sound is present