



## How Schools Can Use This Resource

This leaflet is designed to help teachers:

- Understand Sickle Cell Disease and how it may affect students at school.
- Support students during the school day.
- Manage fatigue, pain episodes and absences.
- Support students' physical, social and emotional wellbeing.
- Communicate confidently with families and health professionals.

Support will make a big difference to a child's wellbeing and learning.

## Contact TASCA

### Thalassaemia and Sickle Cell Australia (TASCA)

Room 44 Barry Neve Wing Moorleigh Community Village, 92-94 Bignell Rd, Bentleigh East VIC 3165

Ph: (03) 7015 5637

E: [info@tasca.org.au](mailto:info@tasca.org.au)

Web: [www.tasca.org.au](http://www.tasca.org.au)

For more information, please scan the QR code below



## Important information

Child's name

Class/year

Address

  
  
  

Parent/Guardian  
emergency  
contact name &  
phone number

  
  
  

Hospital contact  
details

  

Haematology  
Consultant  
name/number

  

Haematologist  
Nurse Unit Manager  
name/number

  
  

Any other important  
contact details

  
  
  
  
  


If you teach a child who  
has **Sickle Cell Disease**  
you need to read this  
leaflet.

# Sickle Cell Disease is a genetically inherited blood condition

**Sickle Cell Disease (SCD)** is an inherited blood condition that affects red blood cells. Instead of being flexible and round, red blood cells can become rigid, sticky and sickle-shaped. These cells may block blood flow and reduce oxygen delivery throughout the body.

A child with SCD needs **regular blood exchanges** to manage pain episodes and fatigue. The severity and frequency of symptoms vary from child to child.

With appropriate understanding, flexibility and support, students with SCD can participate safely and confidently in school life.

Contact TASCA for support:  
(03) 7015 5637 | [info@tasca.org.au](mailto:info@tasca.org.au) | [www.tasca.org.au](http://www.tasca.org.au)

## What you need to know about SCD

Students with SCD may:

- Experience **fatigue or reduced stamina**, especially close to their transfusion date.
- Have pain episodes that can occur suddenly.
- Be sensitive to cold, heat, dehydration and over-exertion.
- Require frequent medical appointments or hospitalisation.
- Have increased risk of infections.
- Experience difficulty concentrating during periods of illness or fatigue.

Each student's experience is different. Open communication with families is essential.

## Absence Management

SCD may result in short-term or occasional longer absences due to medical appointments, blood exchanges or treatment-related fatigue.

### Short Term Absences (1-3 days)

Often due to blood exchanges or treatment-related fatigue. Schools can help by:

- Providing classwork or homework in advance.
- Allowing flexible deadlines for assignments.
- Sharing lesson notes or summaries.

### Long-Term Absences (+5 days)

Sometimes students require extended time away for treatment or recovery. Schools can support by:

- Creating an Individual Learning Plan (ILP).
- Offering remote learning options where possible.
- Providing extra time for assessments.
- Staying connected through a class buddy or regular updates.
- Provide modified workloads.
- Collaborating with parents and healthcare teams as needed.

### Attendance Considerations

- Health-related absences should not be penalised.
- Attendance alone should not be used to measure engagement or effort.
- Plan ahead by communicating with families about upcoming appointments.



## Community education

Anyone can be a carrier of Sickle Cell Disease although it is more common in people from the following backgrounds: African, Middle Eastern, Southern European, Indian, Pakistani and Caribbean. It is therefore important to raise awareness of the condition among these communities

Carriers are symptom-free and usually unaware that they carry the condition. A simple blood test can determine whether or not a person is a carrier.

If you would like our community educator to visit your school to give your students information on Thalassaemia please contact the Health Promotions Officer at Thalassaemia and Sickle Cell Australia for more information:  
(03) 7015 5637 | [healthpromotionsofficer@tasca.org.au](mailto:healthpromotionsofficer@tasca.org.au)

## Social and Emotional Considerations

Children with SCD may experience:

- Feelings of frustration due to fatigue or pain.
- Anxiety around missed school or social activities.
- Sensitivity about visible symptoms such as jaundice or tiredness.

Teachers can support students by:

- Encouraging inclusion at the student's pace.
- Supporting participation in school and social activities.
- Promoting understanding and empathy where appropriate.

With understanding and support, students with SCD can thrive academically and socially.