Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Brief Informational Guide



Many autistic children can have difficulties with focus, attention, and impulse control. ADHD is common in autistic children. When there are questions about hyperactivity, attention, and impulse control, it is important to talk to your child's healthcare team.

Scan Me

Scan QR code above for more information about ADHD

Characteristics of ADHD

Inattention

- Notices many things at once
- Easily interested in new ideas
- Focuses on the present instead of past details

Hyperactivity

- Full of energy and likes to move
- Focuses better when active
- Enjoys hands-on learning

Impulsivity

- Shares thoughts and ideas quickly
- Gets excited and acts fast
- Works best with help to plan big tasks

ECHO AUTISM COMMUNITIES
echoautism.org

Diagnostic Guidelines

1. Behaviors occur in 2 or more settings (examples: home, school, daycare).
2. Identified between the ages of 4-17 with behaviors starting before the child is 12 years old.
3. Multiple behaviors from different categories have to be present.
4. Behaviors significantly impair your child's ability to function in activities of daily life. (Examples: schoolwork, family relationships, group activities such as sports).
5. Behaviors have continued for more than 6 months.

Next Steps

Resources

1. chadd.org/for-parents/evaluating-for-childhood-adhd_qf/
2. adhdandyou.ca
3. healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/adhd/Pages/Early-Warning-Signs-of-ADHD.aspx

☐ Behavioral Strategies

#1

Parent Training

- Provides parents with tools to effectively communicate and interact with their child in a positive manner to address behavior. Examples include Parent/Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) and Positive Parenting Program (Triple P).

Child Focused Treatment

- Helping children and teens with ADHD learn to develop social, academic, and problem-solving skills.

School Based Interventions

- Working together with teachers and school administrators to meet children's education needs through classroom- and schoolwide-based supports. Examples include:
  - Classroom Supports (timers, visual schedules, sensory stickers, alternative seating)
  - IEP and 504 accommodations (quiet time, extra time for work, small breaks)

Five Points to Incorporate into Behavior Management *adapted from:chadd.org

1. Start with goals the child can achieve in small steps.
2. Be consistent across different times of the day, different settings, and different people.
3. Provide consequences immediately following behavior.
4. Implement behavioral interventions over a long period of time.
5. Teaching and learning new skills takes time. The child's improvement will be gradual.

☐ Medications



Stimulant Medications

- Most widely used for decreasing ADHD symptoms in children.
- Common side effects include decreased appetite, upset stomach, headaches, increased moodiness, and sleep disturbances.
- Common medications include methylphenidate (i.e., Ritalin, Concerta) and amphetamine (i.e., Adderall, Vyvanse)

Non-stimulant Medications

- Used as an alternative to stimulants or when a non-stimulant is preferred.
- Common side effects include sleep problems, fatigue, upset stomach, or dizziness.
- Common medications include atomoxetine (i.e., Strattera), Guanfacine, or Clonidine.

Note: *At this time, genetic testing is not recommended to inform medication choices.*

NOTES:

If you have questions about ADHD, please talk to your healthcare clinician.