



January 2008

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Online Resources

Children and Adults With Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)

<http://www.chadd.org>

CHADD is a national nonprofit organization representing children and adults with ADHD.

National Attention Deficit Disorder Association (ADDA)

<http://www.add.org>

This organization is built around the needs of adults and young adults with attention deficit disorders.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder is one of the most common neurobehavioral disorders, with symptoms typically appearing in childhood and often persisting into the adult years. ADHD is a chronic disorder that can impair many aspects of life, including home, school, work, and relationships.



Principal characteristics of ADHD

- Persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity
- Forgetfulness
- Poor concentration
- Poor impulse control
- Distractibility

Since many normal children display these symptoms to some degree, it is important that children receive a

thorough examination by a qualified professional to obtain an accurate diagnosis. ADHD may be suspected when symptoms begin to impair a child's ability to function academically, socially, and at home. Symptoms may vary with different situations and environments, depending on the demands placed on the child.

There are 3 subtypes of ADHD recognized by mental health professionals:

1. **an inattentive type**, with signs that include:

- inability to pay attention to details or a tendency to make careless errors in schoolwork or other activities
- difficulty with sustained attention in tasks or play activities
- apparent listening problems
- difficulty following instructions
- problems with organization
- avoidance or dislike of tasks that require mental effort
- tendency to lose things like toys, notebooks, or homework

Contact Us

Hours: Monday – Friday,
8:30-5:00pm. Evening hours
are available on a limited
basis.

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9396

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necessarily endorse and
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- distractibility
- forgetfulness in daily activities

2. **a hyperactive-impulsive type**, with signs that include:

- fidgeting or squirming
- difficulty remaining seated
- excessive running or climbing
- difficulty playing quietly
- always seeming to be "on the go"
- excessive talking
- blurting out answers before hearing the full question
- difficulty waiting for a turn or in line
- problems with interrupting or intruding

3. **a combined type**, which involves a combination of the other two types and is the most common

Although it can often be challenging to raise kids with ADHD, it is important to remember they are not "bad," "acting out," or being difficult on purpose. Children who are diagnosed with ADHD have difficulty controlling their behavior without medication or behavioral therapy.

Common Misconceptions about ADHD

- ADHD is not a real disorder
- Only children have ADHD
- ADHD is over-diagnosed
- Children with ADHD are over-medicated
- ADHD is caused by poor parenting

Despite the overwhelming evidence and general consensus among scientists and professionals that ADHD is a true disorder, many people still regard ADHD as a business promotion tool for pharmaceutical companies and private practices. ADHD is also incorrectly assumed to be a disorder exclusive to children,

when in fact its consequences are lifelong. ADHD is often thought to be over-diagnosed, and ADHD children over-medicated, but there is little research to substantiate these claims. The prevalence of ADHD in the population ranges from 2-9%, depending on the diagnostic criteria.



How is ADHD diagnosed?

- A child must display behaviors before age 7.
- These behaviors must be more severe than in other children of the same age.
- The behaviors must last for at least 6 months.
- The behaviors must occur in and negatively affect at least two

areas of a child's life (such as school, home, day-care, or friendships).

The behaviors must also not be linked to stress at home. Children who have experienced abuse, divorce, illness, relocation, or other significant life events may begin to demonstrate some of the signs of ADHD. It is important to consider the significance of major life events and changes to avoid misdiagnosis.

What causes ADHD?

The cause of ADHD is not yet been fully understood, but researchers believe that the root of the disorder is biological. ADHD is **NOT** caused by poor parenting or excessive sugar intake. Scientists have identified certain areas of the brain that are 10-15% smaller in size in activity in children with ADHD. Chemical differences within the brain have been identified as well



Treatment

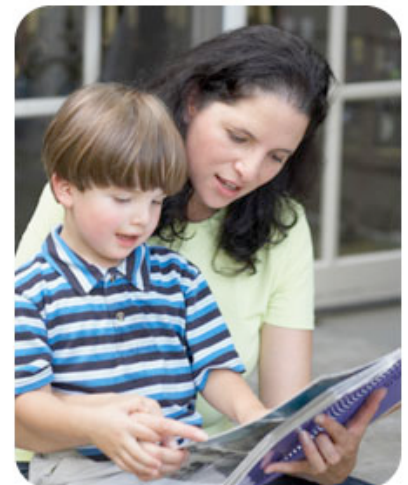
ADHD can not be cured, but it can be successfully managed with a combination of medication and behavior therapy. Doctors treat people by helping them to manage the symptoms most effectively. Because some people have more trouble with the attention side of the disorder and others have more problems with the activity side, doctors tailor their treatment to the person's symptoms. So different people with ADHD may have different treatments. Certain medicines can help people with ADHD by improving their focus and attention and reducing the impulsiveness and hyperactivity

associated with ADHD. Family counseling also helps treat ADHD because it keeps parents informed and also shows them ways they can work with their kids to help.

How can I help my child?

Children who have ADHD may be challenging to parent. Here are some things you can do to help:

1. Follow a schedule
2. Keep directions clear and concise
3. Reward good behavior
4. Establish a homework routine
5. Focus on effort, not grades
6. Collaborate with your child's teachers



References

1. **Source:** National Institute of Mental Health, <http://www.nimh.nih.gov>
2. **Source:** ADHD Info, <http://www.adhdinfo.org>
3. **Source:** Eli Lilly and Company, <http://www.adhd.com>



4. **Source:** Center for Disease Control,
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd>