

Diagnosis

It is difficult to diagnose ADHD in children 5 years of age and younger as many preschool children have some ADHD symptoms in various situations.

There is no single test for ADHD. The process requires several steps and involves gathering a lot of information from multiple sources.

To confirm a diagnosis of ADHD, these behaviors must

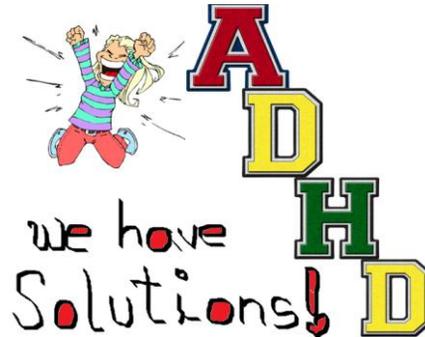
- Occur in more than 1 setting, such as home, school, and social situations.
- Be more severe than in other children the same age
- Start before the child reaches 7 years of age. (However, these may not be recognized as ADHD symptoms until a child is older)
- Continue for more than 6 months
- Make it difficult to function at school, at home, and/or in social situations.

Tips for helping your child control his behavior

- Keep your child on a daily schedule
- Cut down on distractions
- Organize your house
- Reward positive behavior
- Set small, reachable goals
- Help your child stay “on task”
- Limit choices
- Find activities at which your child can succeed
- Use calm discipline



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NEUROPSYCHIATRY AND CHILD
GUIDANCE CLINIC

Understanding ADHD



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What does ADHD mean?

ADHD is a most common chronic condition of the brain that makes it difficult for children to control their behavior. It affects 4% to 12% of school aged children. About 3 times more boys than girls are diagnosed with ADHD. The condition affects behavior in specific ways.

Children with ADHD may have 1 or more of the symptoms mentioned on right. The symptoms usually are classified as the following types of ADHD:

Inattentive only (formerly known as attention deficit disorder ADD) - these children are not overly active as they do not disrupt the classroom/ other activities, their symptoms may not be noticed. This form is most common in girls.

Hyperactive/ Impulsive – these children show both hyperactive and impulsive behavior but can pay attention.

Combined Inattentive/ Hyperactive/ Impulsive – Children with this type of ADHD show all symptoms. This is the most common type of ADHD.

Symptoms of ADHD

Child with inattention

- Has hard time paying attention
- Day dreams
- Does not seem to listen
- Is easily distracted from work or lay
- Does not seem to care about details
- Makes careless mistakes
- Does not follow through on instructions or finish tasks
- Is disorganized
- Loses a lot of important things
- Forgets things
- Does not want to do things that require ongoing mental effort

Child with Hyperactivity

- Is in constant motion, as if "driven by a motor"
- Cannot stay seated, Squirms/fidgets
- Talks too much
- Runs, jumps and climbs when this is not permitted
- Cannot play quietly

Child with Impulsivity

- Acts and speaks without thinking
- May run into the street without looking for traffic first
- Has trouble taking turns
- Cannot wait for things
- Calls out answers before the question is complete
- Interrupts others

What causes ADHD?

ADHD is one of the most studied conditions of childhood. But, the cause of ADHD is still not clear at this time. Research to date has shown the following:

- ADHD is a chemical disorder. Children with ADHD have problems with chemicals that send messages in the brain.
- A lower level of activity in the parts of the brain that control attention and activity level may be associated with ADHD.
- ADHD appears to run in families. Sometimes a parent is diagnosed with ADHD at the same time as the child.
- In very rare case, toxins in the environment may lead to ADHD.
- Very severe cases of head injuries may cause ADHD in some cases

