

Know What You Are Dealing With





What Is ADHD?

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a neurobehavioral disorder. The essential feature of ADHD is a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity/impulsivity that interferes with functioning or development.

- People with ADHD may be inattentive, may be hyperactive or restless, and may act impulsively.

ADHD is sometimes called AD/HD and ADD (Attention-Deficit Disorder). However, the proper name is ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder), even though not everyone with the disorder is hyperactive.



How Common Is ADHD?

Nearly 17 million Americans are estimated to be affected by ADHD.

It is not just a childhood disorder. ADHD can affect:



Children



Teenagers, and

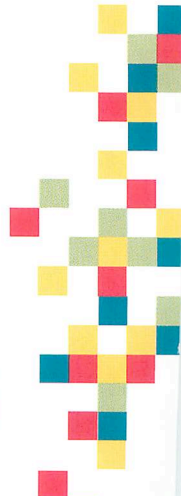


Adults

ADHD starts in childhood but can continue through the teenage years and into adulthood. In the United States, ADHD affects an estimated 11%* of school-aged children and 4.4%† of adults.

*Based on a 2011/12 survey in which parents were asked if a health care practitioner had ever told them their child had ADHD or ADD.

†Based on a survey of 3199 adults ages 18 to 44.





What Are the Possible Causes of ADHD?

The exact cause of ADHD is unknown. Researchers believe the disorder may be caused by 1 or more of the following factors:

- **Brain chemistry**

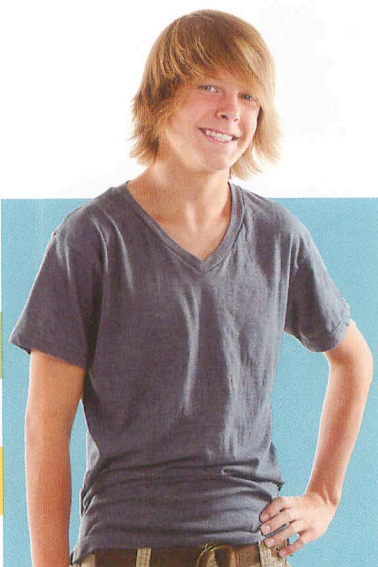
ADHD is thought to be caused by an imbalance of 2 chemical messengers, or neurotransmitters, in the brain. Researchers think that these chemicals might play an important role in ADHD.

- **Genetics**

Research suggests that ADHD tends to run in families. However, this does not mean that all children in a family will have the disorder.

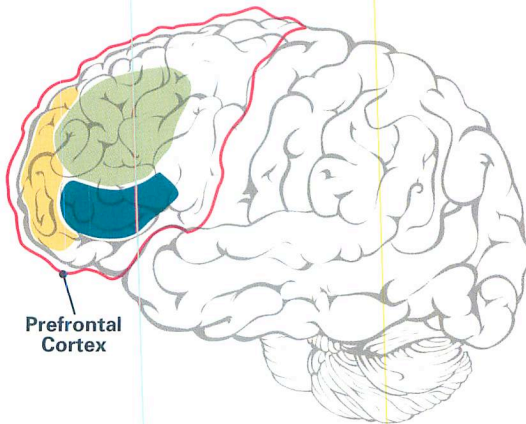
- **Environment**

Certain external factors may contribute to ADHD. These include smoking during pregnancy and complications during pregnancy, delivery, or infancy.



What Parts of the Brain Are Thought to Be Involved in ADHD?

ADHD may be related to problems with a part of the brain called the prefrontal cortex. Certain regions of the prefrontal cortex may not function properly in people with ADHD.



If the areas of the prefrontal cortex shown in green, blue, or yellow are impaired, a person with ADHD may have symptoms such as inattention or distraction, or impulsive or hyperactive behavior.





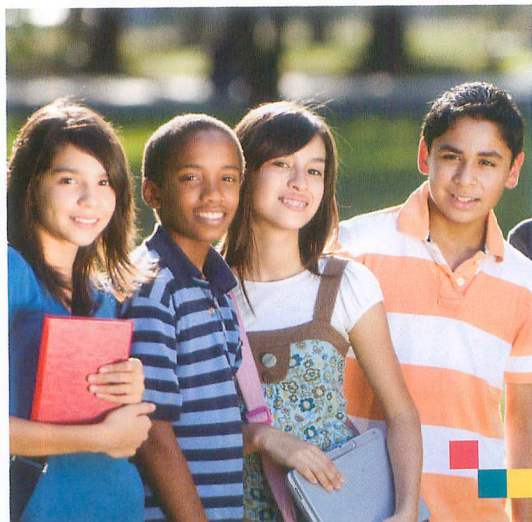
What Are the Symptoms of ADHD?

The 3 core symptoms of ADHD are:

- Inattention
- Hyperactivity
- Impulsivity

ADHD may look different in teenagers and adults than it does in children. The symptoms may be more subtle and less noticeable. However, they are just as important to identify.

The lists of symptoms on the opposite page can be used as a starting point to help you recognize ADHD in yourself or someone else. These lists are not meant to replace discussions with a qualified health care professional. An accurate diagnosis can be made only with a thorough clinical evaluation by a health care professional.



It is important to note that having some of these symptoms does not necessarily mean a person has ADHD. That's why you should speak with a health care professional.

Inattentive Symptoms:

Often...

- has difficulty paying attention to details/makes careless mistakes
- has difficulty sustaining attention
- does not seem to listen when spoken to directly
- unable to follow through on tasks
- has trouble with organization
- avoids tasks requiring sustained mental effort
- loses things
- easily distracted
- forgetful in daily activities

Hyperactive/ impulsive Symptoms:

Often...

- fidgets/squirms
- has trouble staying seated
- runs/climbs or is restless
- has trouble with quiet activities
- is "on the go"
- talks too much
- blurts out answers
- has difficulty awaiting turn
- interrupts or intrudes on others





How Is ADHD Diagnosed?

There is no simple test for ADHD. However, there is a standardized way that ADHD is diagnosed.

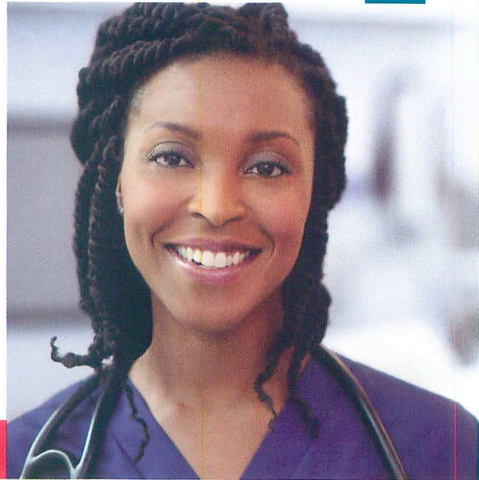
To be diagnosed with ADHD, a person must:

- Have at least 6 inattentive and/or 6 hyperactive/impulsive symptoms for at least 6 months to a degree that is inconsistent with developmental level and that negatively impacts directly on social and academic/occupational activities (for people ages 17 and older; only 5 symptoms must be present)
- Have had several symptoms before age 12
- Have several symptoms in at least 2 settings (such as home, school, or work)
- There is clear evidence that the symptoms interfere with or reduce the quality of social, academic, or occupational functioning
- The symptoms must not be better explained by another cause

These are not the only factors that may be used to diagnose ADHD. An accurate diagnosis should be based on a complete history and evaluation by a qualified health care professional.

To determine whether a person has ADHD, a health care professional may:

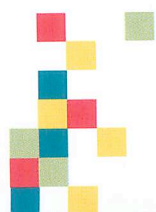
- Ask about symptoms (current and past), including severity, duration, and how they affect life, school, or work
- Review school records
- Ask whether there is a family history of ADHD or other psychiatric conditions
- Perform a physical exam and ask about current and past medical problems, to rule out other possible causes for the symptoms



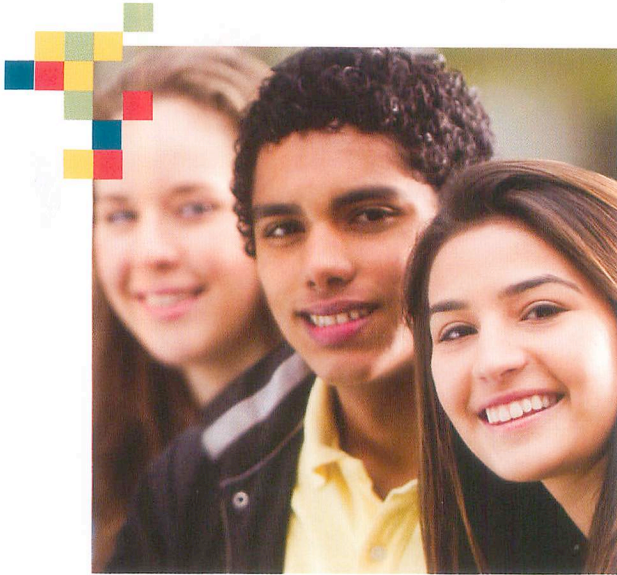


Where can I get more information about ADHD?

For more information, visit www.ADHDandYou.com.







Keep this guide as a handy resource
to learn more about ADHD.

This resource is sponsored by
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