

**Patient Information about Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**

<http://www.pediatrichealthchannel.com/patient-information-adhd/index.shtml>

ADHD is a neurobehavioral disorder that makes it difficult to pay attention, focus, and control behavior, and causes high levels of activity. When attention deficit occurs without hyperactivity, the condition is called attention deficit disorder or ADD. ADHD and ADD may be associated with learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, or other medical conditions.

Symptoms of ADHD develop before the age of 7, but the disorder may not be diagnosed until adolescence or adulthood. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in children causes different symptoms than adult ADHD and the condition usually manifests differently in boys and men than in girls and women. ADHD risk factors include a combination of hereditary (genetic) and environmental factors and treatment for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder often includes education, medications, and behavioral therapy.

Here are some questions to ask your doctor (e.g., neurologist) or therapist or your child's doctor (e.g., pediatrician, pediatric neurologist) or therapist about ADHD. **Print this page**, mark the questions you would like answered, and bring it with you to your next appointment. Asking the right questions about attention deficit hyperactivity disorder can help doctors, parents, and patients work together to develop an effective ADHD treatment plan.

**Questions to Ask Your Doctor or Your Child's Doctor about ADHD**

- How is attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) classified?
- What exactly are neurobehavioral disorders?
- How does ADHD differ from attention deficit disorder (ADD)?
- Why do you suspect that I or my child has attention deficit hyperactivity disorder?
- What are common genetic, environmental, and social risk factors for ADHD?
- What are possible causes for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder?
- What do you suspect is the underlying cause in this case?
- What are common symptoms of ADHD?
- What other conditions can cause symptoms similar to ADHD?
- Are there other medical conditions or complications associated with ADHD?

- If so, what are the signs and symptoms of these conditions and complications and what should I do if they develop? **Telephone number to call:**
- How can I reduce the risk for ADHD complications?
- What does diagnosing ADHD involve?
- What types of diagnostic tests will be performed to confirm or rule out the diagnosis?
- What is psychological testing?
- Who will be the members of our health care team? **Specialists:**
- What ADHD treatments are available?
- Will treatment help me or my child function better at work or in school?
- What factors are used to determine the recommended treatment?
- What types of medications are commonly used to treat ADHD?
- Might you recommend medication(s)? If so, which ADHD medication do you recommend?
- Why do you recommend this medication?
- What are the benefits, disadvantages, and possible risks and side effects of this treatment for ADHD?
- What should I do if serious side effects occur? **Telephone number to call:**
- About how long does it usually take for this medication to improve ADHD symptoms?
- What does behavioral therapy involve?
- How does this type of ADHD treatment work?
- Might this treatment be helpful? Why or why not?
- If so, what type of behavioral therapy do you recommend? **Therapist: Telephone number:**

- About how long does therapy usually take to improve symptoms of ADHD?
- How will my condition or my child's condition be monitored during therapy?
- If this treatment is not effective or my child's ADHD symptoms worsen, what other therapies might you recommend?
- What do these other treatments involve?
- How might my child's condition change as he or she grows and develops?
- What types of support services are available for our family?
- Can you recommend a support group for people with ADHD?
- Can you recommend a support group for family members of people with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder?
- Can you recommend resources for additional information about neurobehavioral disorders, including ADHD and ADD?
- What new types of ADHD treatment are currently being developed?
- Can ADHD be prevented? If so, what does ADHD prevention involve?

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**Notes/Additional Information**