

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Factsheet

What is ADHD?

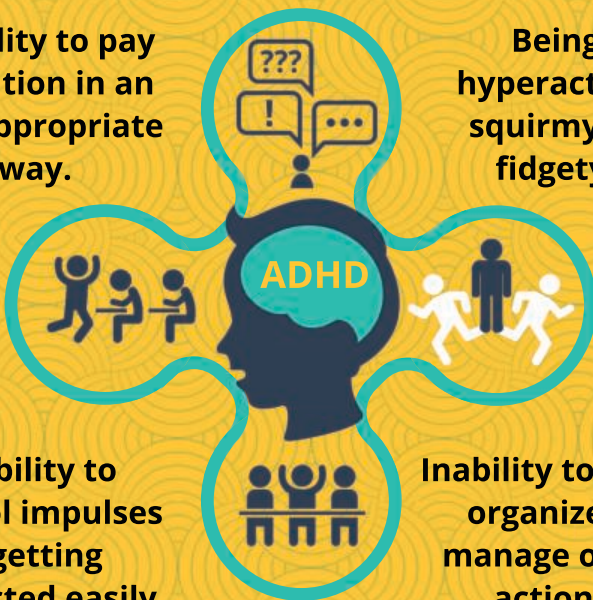
ADHD is a developmental disorder of the brain that presents as a combination of characteristics, such as –

Inability to pay attention in an age-appropriate way.

Being hyperactive, squirmy or fidgety.

Inability to control impulses & getting distracted easily.

Inability to plan, organize & manage one's actions



What are the early signs of ADHD in children who are four years of age or older?

If your child is,

- Easily distracted
- Unable to stay still when expected
- Has difficulty sensing danger
- Always looking towards another task without completing the one
- Prone to frequent accidents
- Messy
- Prone to losing things



Then, you need to get a proper assessment of your child.

However, these signs may be present for other reasons – a professional opinion is essential.

Whom to approach when I spot early signs of ADHD?

If you notice early signs of ADHD, please approach one of the following professionals qualified to do assessments.

Pediatrician/
Developmental Pediatrician



Psychologist/
Child-Psychiatrist

Why did my child develop ADHD?

ADHD has no single cause.

Various factors can contribute towards its onset
Research is still ongoing to know more.



Few risk factors for ADHD have been suggested:

- Hereditary factors where the parents may present signs of ADHD.
- Co-occurrence with genetic disorders such as Neurofibromatosis, Fragile X Syndrome etc.
- Associated with developmental delay, autism and dyspraxia
- Pregnancy & delivery-related risks like low-birth weight & premature birth of the baby.
- Exposure of fetus to alcohol/drugs during pregnancy



How is ADHD diagnosed?

The practitioner checks to see if the child's behavior meets the criteria for diagnosis.

- A detailed case & family history
- Complete clinical examination of the child
- Child's pattern & consistency of behaviors in school, home & other social settings
- Hearing & visual assessment
- IQ & educational assessment (if required)



After assessment you may encounter two possibilities.

1. ADHD is diagnosed
2. ADHD criteria is not met. Another explanation for the child's health is discussed.

Note : ADHD can co-exist with other conditions.

**NO MEDICAL TESTS CAN DIAGNOSE ADHD
COMPLETE CLINICAL EXAMINATION, DETAILED CASE-HISTORY &
CLINICIAN'S JUDGEMENT IS USED TO DIAGNOSE ADHD**

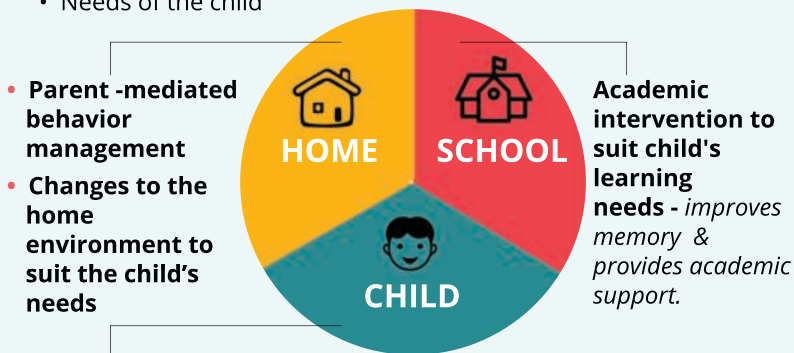
DO NOT HESITATE TO ASK FOR AN ASSESSMENT

Evidence Based Therapies for ADHD management

ADHD management is most effective when there is a combination of therapies working hand in hand.

Recommendation of therapies & medications will differ based on

- Age of the child
- Needs of the child



- **Behavior modification**
Improves attention span, reduces impulse control, develops organization & time management skills.
- **Counselling support**
Helps navigate transitions & challenges, especially during adolescence.
- **Medication (Case specific & Doctor-recommended only)**
Medication does not cure ADHD, rather improves child's concentration by offering a window of opportunity for therapies to be more effective.
- **Speech and Occupational Therapy**
Recommended for challenges that may occur along with ADHD

Common interventions according to age groups



Preschool children (4-6)

- Behavior Management
- Medication is not recommended for this age group



Elementary and Middle School Children (7-11)

- Behavioral Management
- Academic intervention (*as required*)
- Medication (*If recommended*)



Adolescents (12-18)

- Academic intervention (*as required*)
- Medication (*If recommended*)
- Counselling Support

You are not alone – seek help and guidance



Do what is best for your child



- ✓ Learn, think & plan how to help your child
- ✓ Involve the entire family
- ✓ Engage the child in fun activities, one thing at a time,
- ✓ Read a story book everyday with your child
- ✓ Communicate & interact with your child as much as you can
- ✓ Manage behaviour difficulties in a calm yet effective manner (e.g. avoid getting angry and using a raised voice when speaking to the child)
- ✓ Attempt to disengage yourself from the child's behaviors i.e learning to let go of behaviours that are not harmful & picking your battles effectively.
- ✓ Parent-mediated behavior intervention is key to helping a child with ADHD.

Remember, individuals with ADHD -



- ✓ Need a fixed routine and structure
- ✓ Will understand tasks better if they are broken down into small steps with clear & specific instructions.
- ✓ Need to be taught problem solving & organization skills.

Remember to take care of yourself in the process



- ✓ Do not ignore your other children
- ✓ Engage in regular physical activities & relaxation for your well-being
- ✓ Do not forget to interact and spend time with your spouse & other family members.

Help give back to your community

- ✓ Join a peer support group near you.
- ✓ Share your experience with other parents
- ✓ Educate your community and dispel myths about ADHD



Is there a cure for ADHD?



- ADHD is not a disease
- There is no cure for ADHD
- But, with parent intervention, behaviour modification, academic support & timely intervention, children can improve, learn & live happily.
- Each child is different & no solution fits all

ADHD awareness month is October.

- With early intervention, support from family members and educators, individuals diagnosed with ADHD are thriving and leading successful lives
- Do not let a diagnosis get in the way of happiness and well being of that individual



Remember, there is no cure for ADHD

QUACK WATCH

- *Many people will claim to have a cure and try to take advantage of you*
- *Please do not let their claims cloud your judgement. Always do research and keep yourself informed.*
- The more empowered you are, the more you can help your child.*



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