

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

3 Types

- the inattentive type (ADD)
- the hyperactive and impulsive type
- the inattentive, hyperactive and impulsive type

Conditions Generally Exhibited

- Poor attention in class
- Poor classroom participation and failure to ask teachers for necessary help
- Poor understanding of material taught (unless they are gifted with high IQ)
- Poor study skills
- Poor organization skills (ie. does not know how to organize time and work)
- Great difficulty in doing homework
- Failure to complete (and hand up) homework
- Sloppy or illegible handwriting
- Disrupting the classroom
- Getting into fights with peers (due to poor social skills)
- Low self esteem

Causes

- Genetic disposition - e.g. strong right-brain dominance or creativity but poor left-brained orientation for detailed analytical skills- Children with ADHD/ADD just learn/behave differently from the majority of children because they are genetically wired up to do so.
- Partial brain damage during gestation - fall during gestation period or difficult delivery is sometimes indicated as one of the causes for the ADHD/ADD behaviour

- Inadequacy of chemicals necessary for transmission of various messages in the brain. Ritalin or other stimulant drugs work by increasing the activity of these neuro-chemicals to make up for this inadequacy.
- Dietary causes / Allergy problems

Children are eating too much chocolate, sweets, high-carbohydrate foods or are allergic to milk or other products. The latter condition may be linked to excessive use of antibiotics, and the subsequent infestation by candida yeast.

- Farmer / Hunter Theory

ADHD children just have the "hunter" genes that make them behave the way they do. They are more alert, active and adaptable to changes as required in hunting race. Man has evolved from being hunters to a farmer about 10,000 years ago, but some remnant "hunter" genes are still in existence.

The majority of children have "farmer" genes that make them more orderly and more ready to comply with rules created by the society; some of these children may even feel "lost" when there are no fixed rules and tasks to guide their daily activities.

- Other learning disabilities that make the child lose interest/ motivation.

Many other learning disabilities (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, hearing problems, etc.) result in the child losing interest in what is being taught

Misconception

Parenting style is not the cause for the misbehavior of the ADHD / ADD child.

(Although good parenting style can help the ADHD / ADD child behave better.)

Diagnostic Criteria

At present, no laboratory test exists to determine if a child has this disorder. The AD/HD diagnosis is made on the basis of the observable behavioral symptoms. The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (2000) recommends that clinicians collect the following information when evaluating a child for AD/HD:

- A thorough medical and family history.
- A medical examination for general health and neurologic status.
- A comprehensive interview with the parents, teachers, and child.

- Standardized behavior rating scales, including AD/HD-specific ones completed by parents, teacher(s), and the child when appropriate.

(Know that people with AD/HD typically are not great at accurately reporting symptoms of the disorder, because it causes them to have poor insight into their own behavior.)

- Observation of the child.
- A variety of psychological tests to measure IQ and social and emotional adjustment. These tests also help to determine the presence of specific learning disabilities, which can co-occur with AD/HD.

(http://www.helpguide.org/mental/adhd_add_diagnosis.htm)

Co-Occurring Conditions / Related Problems

- Oppositional Defiant Disorder
- Conduct Disorder
- Mood Disorder
- Anxiety Disorder
- Learning Difficulties

Support Groups

- SPARK (Society for the Promotion of ADHD)
- SFE (School Family Education)
- ETS Care Corner Educational Therapy Services
- Student Care Services – Educational Psychology Service (EPS)
- The Learning to Learn Centre
- Mailing Support Group ADHD_Singapore@yahoogroups.com

Websites on ADD/ADHD

- www.spark.org.sg
- www.adhd.com
- www.chadd.com
- www.ThomHartmann.com
- www.ADDresources.org
- www.ADHDSupportcompany.com

Resources

- <http://www.psychiatrictimes.com/scales/ADHD>
- http://www.helpguide.org/mental/adhd_add_diagnosis.htm

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