

Overcoming obstacles
**How to get your child evaluated
and treated for ADHD**

Always seek help first from your child's pediatrician, who should first check your child's overall health. The pediatrician may then recommend a behavioral evaluation, which is available either through your child's school or in your community by a mental health professional. Evaluations should include consideration of detailed observations by parents and teachers, the child's behaviors in different settings, and a thorough developmental history of the child. Talk to a doctor (a pediatrician or psychiatrist) about the possible benefits and risks of medication treatment for ADHD. If you have concerns about medications for your child, talk about these concerns in depth with the doctor. If medication is used, it will likely be most effective in conjunction with counseling, which should address behavioral and learning problems, social adjustment, and particular skills for parenting a child with ADHD.

Recognizing strengths
**Benefits of treatment
for your child's ADHD**

We rarely hear of adults with ADHD, and it is true that children and teenagers may "grow out of" some of their ADHD symptoms. Although this is great news, the fact is that serious damage can occur in the meantime. Children and adolescents with ADHD may suffer lasting negative effects on their academic achievement, relationships, and emotional development. In addition, their symptoms often contribute to stress and chaos in the home. Children with ADHD and their families deserve the support and guidance of a specialist to maximize the strengths of the child and family while minimizing the possible long-term effects of ADHD.

Finding solutions

Listening to your child



Overcoming obstacles
**Attention Deficit/
Hyperactivity Disorder**

Recognizing strengths

Finding solutions
Planning for your child

Responding to your c

Finding solutions



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What is ADHD?

Chances are, you've heard of ADHD in the media or at your child's school. Your child may have a schoolmate who is disruptive and "hyper" in the classroom, or you may feel that your own child is hard to discipline or is often out of control despite your best efforts. There are many possible ways that a child may show ADHD symptoms, but they all fit within these three main areas:

Inattention

describes when a child or teenager makes careless mistakes, can't maintain attention, doesn't listen when spoken to, fails to finish tasks or avoids tasks, seems disorganized, loses things, is easily distracted, or is forgetful.

Hyperactivity

includes when a child or teenager is fidgety, can't sit in his/her seat, is always "on the go", or talks a lot.

Impulsivity

means that a child or teenager blurts out answers to questions, can't wait in line or take turns, often interrupts, or acts dangerously without considering risks.

More about ADHD

In one type of ADHD, children have "inattention" symptoms but are not hyperactive or impulsive. These children's difficulties are often harder to recognize because they are not overly disruptive. Although many children normally have some of the behaviors described to the left, ADHD refers to when the behaviors are significant and disruptive to a child's relationships, academic success, and healthy development. It is very common for children and teenagers with ADHD to have other behavioral and emotional problems, including oppositional behaviors, aggression, social skills deficits, and conduct problems. In some children, ADHD can be complicated by learning disabilities. Often, children get a lot of attention for these other problems while underlying ADHD symptoms aren't as easily detected.



What causes ADHD?

It is still somewhat unclear exactly what causes ADHD, but many related factors have been identified, including environmental factors, brain physiology, brain trauma, heredity, and chemical imbalances in the brain. Each child with ADHD may have a unique combination of factors that will affect the particular kind of help the child needs.

When should you seek help?

ADHD has complex causes and symptoms and can be related to other factors in your child's environment. Therefore, you will need to have a thoughtful and patient approach toward identifying your child's particular problems and needs. Even if your child is not showing symptoms of ADHD the home, concerns may arise when he or she begins school and struggles to succeed in a structured classroom. Listen to the concerns of teachers and learn about the potential impact of any symptoms on your child's success. If you develop concerns about your child over time, seek a thorough evaluation.