



Neurodevelopmental Disorder - ADHD

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Neurodevelopmental Disorders

Neurodevelopmental disorders are conditions that *affect how your brain functions*. They range from mild impairments, allowing those affected to live fairly normal lives, to severe disorders that require lifelong care.

Examples of neurodevelopmental disorders include:

- * ADHD
- * Speech and language disorders
- * Tourette syndrome
- * Schizophrenia
- * Fragile X syndrome
- * Autism

Neurodevelopmental Disorder Symptoms

Signs and symptoms of neurodevelopmental disorders vary, depending on the specific disorder:

- * **Schizophrenia:** Withdrawing from friends and family, disorganized thoughts, delusions, and hallucinations
- * **ADHD:** Inattention, distractibility, impulsivity, and hyperactivity
- * **Autism:** Little or no eye contact, difficulty communicating, resisting touch, and self-harm
- * **Tourette Syndrome:** Tics such as eye blinking, shoulder shrugging, and grunting or coughing

Causes of Neurodevelopmental Disorders

The causes of neurodevelopmental disorders are still largely unknown. In some cases, there may be a genetic factor; a neurodevelopmental disorder may run in certain families. Researchers also believe that certain things related to or that occurred during pregnancy may play a role in the development of these disorders, such as:

- Low birth weight
- Environmental contaminants, such as lead
- Fetal exposure to smoking, alcohol, recreational drugs, or medications during pregnancy
- Premature birth

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

ADHD is one of the most common *neurodevelopmental* disorders of childhood. It is usually first diagnosed in childhood and often lasts into adulthood. Children with ADHD may have trouble paying attention, controlling impulsive behaviors (may act without thinking about what the result will be), or be overly active.

Children with ADHD may also struggle with low self-esteem, troubled relationships and poor performance in school. Symptoms sometimes lessen with age. However, some people never completely outgrow their ADHD symptoms. But they can learn strategies to be successful.

Signs & Symptoms

It is normal for children to have trouble focusing and behaving at one time or another. A child with ADHD might:

- * Daydream a lot
- * Forget or lose things a lot
- * Squirm or fidget
- * Talk too much
- * Make careless mistakes or take unnecessary risks
- * Have a hard time resisting temptation
- * Have trouble taking turns
- * Have difficulty getting along with others

Types of ADHD

There are three different ways ADHD presents itself, depending on which types of symptoms are strongest in the individual:

1. Predominantly Inattentive Presentation: It is hard for the individual to organize or finish a task, to pay attention to details, or to follow instructions or conversations. The person is easily distracted or forgets details of daily routines.

Types of ADHD

2. Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive Presentation: The person fidgets and talks a lot. It is hard to sit still for long (e.g., for a meal or while doing homework). Smaller children may run, jump or climb constantly. The individual feels restless and has trouble with impulsivity. A person with impulsiveness may have more accidents and injuries than others.

3. Combined Presentation: Symptoms of the above two types are equally present in the person.

Causes of ADHD

Scientists are studying cause(s) and risk factors in an effort to find better ways to manage and reduce the chances of a person having ADHD. The cause(s) and risk factors for ADHD are unknown, but current research shows that **genetics** plays an important role. Recent studies link genetic factors with ADHD.

Causes of ADHD

In addition to genetics, scientists are studying other possible causes and risk factors including:

1. Brain injury
2. Exposure to environmental risks (e.g., lead) during pregnancy or at a young age
3. Alcohol and tobacco use during pregnancy
4. Premature delivery
5. Low birth weight

Causes of ADHD

Research ***does not support*** the popularly held views that ADHD is caused by eating too much sugar, watching too much television, parenting, or social and environmental factors such as poverty or family chaos. Of course, many things, including these, might make symptoms worse, especially in certain people. But the evidence is not strong enough to conclude that they are the main causes of ADHD.

Managing Symptoms

Being healthy is important for all children and can be especially important for children with ADHD. In addition to behavioral therapy and medication, having a healthy lifestyle can make it easier for your child to deal with ADHD symptoms. Here are some healthy behaviors that may help:

- * Developing healthy eating habits such as eating plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains and choosing lean protein sources
- * Participating in daily physical activity based on age
- * Limiting the amount of daily screen time from TVs, computers, phones, and other electronics
- * Getting the recommended amount of sleep each night based on age

Questions

1. What is ADHD ? Explain the types of ADHD.
2. What are the symptoms and causes of ADHD ?
3. What do you mean by ADHD ? Explain.
4. How the symptoms of ADHD can be managed ?