

ADHD Quick Facts

ADHD Presentations

Three Possible ADHD Presentations

Children need to exhibit six or more symptoms in two or more settings for a diagnosis; older teens and adults should have at least five of the symptoms. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) lists three presentations of ADHD—Predominantly Inattentive, Hyperactive-Impulsive, and Combined.

Inattentive



Often:

- Fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes
- Has difficulty sustaining attention
- Does not appear to listen
- Struggles to follow instructions
- Has difficulty with organization
- Avoids or dislikes tasks requiring sustained mental effort
- Loses things
- Is easily distracted
- Is forgetful in daily activities

Hyperactive-impulsive



Often:

- Fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in chair
- Has difficulty remaining seated
- Runs about or climbs excessively; extreme restlessness in adults
- Difficulty engaging in activities quietly
- Acts as if driven by a motor; adults will often feel inside as if they are driven by a motor
- Talk excessively
- Blurts out answers
- Difficulty waiting or taking turns
- Interrupts or intrudes upon others

Combined



Meets the criteria for both inattention and hyperactive-impulsive presentations.

To receive a diagnosis, these symptoms need to start before age 12, be present in more than one setting, interfere with functioning at home, school or work, in social settings, and cannot be better explained by another disorder.