

KINDRED

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Kindred ADHD Information Sheet

What is ADHD?

Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by symptoms of inattention, hyperfocus, excess energy, and impulsivity which are pervasive, impairing, distressing, and age inappropriate. The executive function impairments that occur in ADHD individuals result in problems with organisation, time keeping, excessive procrastination, ignoring distractions, regulating emotions, and remembering details amongst others. Studies report varying rates of ADHD of up to 10% in children and 5% in adults. Rates of diagnosis have been increasing in recent decades. ADHD comprises two symptom domains: inattentiveness and hyperactivity-impulsivity.

Inattentiveness:

- Difficulty remaining focused on tasks that are not enjoyable
- Frequent careless mistakes in work
- Difficulty with planning and organisation
- Easily distracted from or rapidly bored with a task and shifting from one incomplete activity to another
- Avoiding or procrastinating tasks that require mental effort
- Difficulty remaining focused on 1:1 conversations
- Losing property or forgetting equipment

Hyperactivity-Impulsivity:

- Difficulty sitting still with excessive fidgeting
- Restless and always on the go
- Excessive talking
- Interrupting or intruding on others
- Difficulty awaiting turn in conversations and groups

People with ADHD will have exhibited these behaviours over many years, and these behaviours may have harmed their social relationships and educational achievements. ADHD often first presents with depression and suicidality. ADHD is frequently associated with anxiety. ADHD can overlap in neurodiversity with Dyslexia and Autism Spectrum Disorder.

People diagnosed with ADHD have weaknesses in the areas outlined above but they have strengths in other areas. The potential advantages of having an ADHD brain include:

- Ability to see the 'big picture'
- Being creative and inventive
- Ability to hyperfocus intensely for prolonged periods on subjects of interest
- High levels of energy
- Multi-tasking

What treatment is available for ADHD?

Medications such as Ritalin, Concerta and Adderall are available and highly effective for ADHD.

Psychotherapy including supportive coaching and other talking therapies can help manage the symptoms of ADHD and associated conditions such as depression and anxiety.

Educational support is essential and usually includes informing the school or college of the diagnosis and being provided with academic accommodations such as extra time in exams.

The student should be encouraged to take ownership of dealing with all aspects of ADHD. Approaches to a student with ADHD might include:

- Consideration of seating arrangements
- Integration of regular stretch breaks or relaxation exercises
- Focus on tangible, short-term steps rather than long-term plans
- Structure and routine. Get yourself ready for university at the same time, in the same way, every day

- Sound recording of lectures and other meetings
- An hourly alarm on a phone or watch to keep track of time
- Colour-coded ring binders / notebooks for each subject area
- Daily reminder schedules or 'To do' lists which highlight or star the most important tasks
- Positive self talk and internal locus of control
- Feedback and encouragement
- Monitoring via phone, video calls or email
- When necessary, ask the tutor to repeat instructions
- Break large assignments into small tasks. Set a deadline for each task and reward yourself as you complete each one
- Each day, make a list of what you need to do. Plan the best order for doing each task. Then make a schedule for doing them. Use a calendar or daily planner to keep yourself on track
- Work in a quiet area. Do one thing at a time. Give yourself short breaks
- Organise your workplace and store similar things together
- Exercise, meditate, eat a healthy balanced diet and get enough sleep

Websites

www.additudemag.com ADHD information for children and adults.

www.chadd.org/ Children and Adults with ADHD.

www.add.org ADD association.

www.aadduk.org UK website made by and for adults with ADHD.

Apps

inflow

Books

Driven to Distraction: Recognizing and Coping with Attention Deficit Disorder by Edward M. Hallowell.

ADHD Nation: The disorder. The drugs. The inside story. by Alan Schwarz.

Scattered Minds by Gabor Mate.

ADHD: Living without Breaks by Martin Kutscher.

Kids in the Syndrome Mix of ADHD, LD, Autism Spectrum, Tourette's, Anxiety and More by Martin Kutscher, second edition published by Jessica Kingsley.

Taking Charge of ADHD, Revised Edition: The Complete Authoritative Guide for Parents by Russell Barkley.

Understanding ADHD: A Parent's Guide to Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in Children by Dr Christopher Green and Kit Chee.

The Survival Guide For Kids with ADHD by John F. Taylor.

Super Emotions - A book for Children with ADD/ADHD by Lionel Lowry IV.

Step by Step for Children with ADHD by Cathy Laver-Bradbury, Margaret Thompson, Anne Weeks, David Daley and Edmund J S Sonuga-Barke.