

## Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder ADHD

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is a condition that can make it hard for a person to sit still, control behavior, and pay attention.

### *How Common is ADHD?*

As many as 5 out of every 100 children in school may have ADHD. Boys are three times more likely than girls to have ADHD.

### *What Are the Signs of ADHD?*

The three main signs or symptoms of ADHD are:

- Problems paying attention
- Being very active (hyperactivity)
- Acting before thinking (impulsivity)

Based on these symptoms, there are three types of ADHD which are:

- **Inattentive Type** – the person can't seem to get focused or stay focused on a task or activity.

Children with the inattentive type often:

- Do not pay close attention to details
- Can't stay focused on play or school work
- Don't follow through on instructions or finish school work or chores
- Can't seem to organize tasks and activities
- Get distracted easily
- Lose things such as toys, school work, and books

- **Hyperactive-Impulsive Type** – the person is very active and often acts without thinking.

Being too active is probably the most visible sign of ADHD. This child is “always on the go”. Children with the hyperactive-impulsive type of ADHD often:

- Fidget and squirm
- Get out of their chairs when they're not supposed to
- Run around or climb constantly
- Have trouble playing quietly
- Talk too much
- Blur out answers before questions have been completed
- Have trouble waiting their turn
- Interrupt others when they're talking
- Butt in on the games others are playing

- **Combined Type** – the person is inattentive, impulsive and too active.

Children with the combined type of ADHD have symptoms of both types. They have problems with paying attention, hyperactivity and controlling impulses.

From time to time, all children exhibit these behaviors. With children who have ADHD, *these behaviors are the rule, not the exception.*

### *How Do You Know If a Child Has ADHD?*

When a child shows signs of ADHD, he or she needs to be evaluated by a trained professional. A complete evaluation is the only way to know for sure if the child has ADHD. It is also important to rule out other reasons for the child's behavior and find out if the child has other disabilities.

### *Tips For Parents*

- Learn about ADHD. The more you know, the more you can help your child.
- Praise your child when he or she does well. Build your child's abilities. Talk about and encourage strengths and talents.
- Be clear, consistent and positive. Set clear rules. Tell your child what they should do, not just what they shouldn't do. Be clear about what will happen if your child does not follow the rules. Have a reward program for good behavior. Praise your child when he or she shows the behaviors you like.
- Learn about strategies for managing your child's behavior. These include valuable techniques such as: charting, having a reward program, ignoring behaviors, natural consequences, logical consequences, and time-out. Using these strategies will lead to more positive behaviors and cut down on problem behaviors.
- Talk with your doctor about whether medication will help your child.
- Pay attention to your child's mental health (and your own). Be open to counseling. It can help you deal with the challenges of raising a child with ADHD. It can help your child deal with frustration, feel better about themselves and learn more about social skills.
- Talk to other parents whose children have ADHD. Parents can share practical advice and emotional support.

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