

adhd:

Does My Child Have It?



What are the signs of ADHD?

ADHD stands for attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder. Many children who have ADHD have signs of both hyperactivity and attention problems. Some children may have only signs of attention problems. This used to be called attention-deficit disorder (ADD). However, ADD is now thought of as a form of ADHD.

Signs of hyperactive behavior

- Almost constantly fidgeting and being restless
- Not sitting in the same seat for very long
- Running or climbing at wrong time or place
- Talking too much
- Always playing too loudly
- Always "on the go"
- Blurting out answers to questions in school
- Cutting in line or being unable to wait for a turn in activities
- Interrupting others

Signs of an attention problem

- Difficulty following instructions
- Not seeming to listen to parents or teachers
- Not being able to focus on activities
- Frequently losing things needed for school or at home
- Not being able to pay attention to details
- Appearing disorganized
- Being unable to plan ahead effectively
- Being forgetful
- Appearing very distractible

Hyperactive children who have ADHD have shown signs of hyperactive behavior since before age seven. Mothers of children who have ADHD sometimes even remember that their baby was very active in the womb. Also, children who have ADHD are often described by their parents as having been fussy and difficult to quiet as babies.

Children who have ADHD show some of the signs of hyperactivity in several different settings, such as in the classroom, on the playground and at home watching TV. ADHD problems often become worse in places where there is more activity and noise.

Children who have ADHD cannot control all of their hyperactive, impulsive behavior. If your child appears off in "another world" and does not respond to you when he or she is climbing or misbehaving in some way, ADHD may be the cause

It's normal for parents to get angry with their children sometimes, especially when children misbehave on purpose. The hyperactivity of children who have ADHD is irritating, but parents can sense that their child simply can't sit still or quiet down. The parents often feel more frustrated than angry.

What should I do if I think my child has ADHD?

Talk to your child's doctor. A diagnosis of ADHD can be made only by getting information about your child's behavior from several people who know your child. Your doctor will do vision and hearing tests if these tests haven't been done recently. Your doctor may want your child to see someone who specializes in helping children who have behavior problems, such as a psychologist.

Source: American Academy of Family Physicians