



ADHD

Adult Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Do you find yourself starting projects and never finishing them? Do you have trouble keeping track of multiple tasks on a daily basis? Is it hard for you to sit still in meetings or at work for long periods of time?

If these sound like difficulties that have frustrated you for much of your life then you may be suffering from adult ADHD, a condition for which there is help available.

Studies suggest that there are millions of American adults who suffer each day with ADHD but have never sought help, probably because they are not aware that they have the disorder. Studies also suggest that as many as 60% of children with ADHD may go on to have adult ADHD. Many times adults don't recognize the disorder in their own lives until their children are diagnosed with ADHD.

What is ADHD?

ADHD, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder is a disease that is passed on from parents to their children and is believed to be caused by differences in specific areas of the brain related to concentration, judgment, planning and impulse control.

What is Adult ADHD?

Adult ADHD is very similar to ADHD in children with a few differences. Children tend to be more hyperactive whereas adults may have more of a constant restlessness and an inability to sit still. The impulsive behaviors seen in children may be apparent in adults in an inability to control aggressive behaviors (such as in aggressive driving) and adults with ADHD may appear as inconsiderate to others and have trouble in social situations. The difficulty maintaining focus or attention in children with ADHD can persist into adulthood but can become magnified by the larger, more important tasks that adults must face. These symptoms can make it very difficult for an adult with ADHD to hold down a job or to have a successful marriage.



How can I tell if I am suffering from adult ADHD?

If the symptoms mentioned so far sound familiar to you then the following screening questionnaire may help to show if you might benefit from some type of ADHD treatment.

Adult Self-Report Scale (ASRS - V1.1) Screener from WHO Composite International Diagnostic Interview ©						
Questions						
Check the box that best describes how you have felt and conducted yourself over the past 6 months. Please give the completed questionnaire to your healthcare professional during your next appointment to discuss the results.		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1	How often do you have trouble wrapping up the final details of a project, once the challenging parts have been done?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	How often do you have difficulty getting things in order when you have to do a task that requires organization?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	How often do you have problems remembering appointments or obligations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	When you have a task that requires a lot of thought, how often do you avoid or delay getting started?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	How often do you fidget or squirm with your hands or your feet when you have to sit down for a long time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	How often do you feel overly active and compelled to do things, like you were driven by a motor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Add the number of checkmarks that appear in the dark gray boxes. Four or more checkmarks indicate that your symptoms may be consistent with Adult ADHD. It may be beneficial for you to talk to your healthcare provider about an evaluation.

Treating ADHD

Medication:

Stimulants: Methylphenidates (Concerta, Metadate, Ritalin)

Non stimulants: Atomoxetine (Strattera)

Behavior Modification Therapy:

Coaching: a professional helps you organize your daily living and helps to accomplish specific goals. Not often covered by health insurance.

Therapy: helps you work through very painful feelings and negative or self-defeating beliefs and behaviors. They also deal with cognitive, emotional and behavioral issues that are of clinical concern (anxiety, depression, addictions etc.) Often covered by health insurance.

Combination: Medication and behavioral therapy together.

Additional Resources

Web sites:

1. www.adhd.com : info on adult ADHD, treatment and resources
2. www.chadd.org : info on ADHD, newsletters, and local chapters
3. www.adultadd.com : info on Adult ADHD (symptoms, treatment), tips on living with ADHD

Local:

4. CHADD- chicago: www.chaddonline.org/chapters/chadd947.html
5. Support groups in Chicago area for Adult ADHD: www.addcenters.com/groups.htm
6. ADHD Therapy Group at TriCity Center: www.tricitycenter.org/tcoutpnt.htm