

Understanding Adult ADHD

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental condition that affects how the brain regulates attention, impulse control, and activity levels.

ADHD is not a childhood phase that people can simply “grow out of.” It persists throughout life and can often be unrecognized due to compensation and coping.



What Adult ADHD Can Look Like:

Inattention

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wandering mid sentence | <input type="checkbox"/> Losing focus during conversations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Misplacing important items | <input type="checkbox"/> Starting many tasks but finishing few |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Struggling to meet deadlines | <input type="checkbox"/> Forgetting appointments or obligations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoiding administrative tasks | <input type="checkbox"/> Losing your train of thought |

Hyperactivity/Impulsivity

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talking excessively | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty relaxing even when tired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty waiting (lines, traffic...) | <input type="checkbox"/> Restlessness, fidgeting, a need to stay busy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Impulsive spending or decisions | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty staying seated for a long time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking without thinking | <input type="checkbox"/> Interrupting others; finishing their sentences |

Common Experiences



Hyperfocus

Intense concentration on preferred tasks, masking inattention in other areas.



Difficulty planning

Struggling to initiate and plan out tasks, even for things that are desired.



Emotional dysregulation

Low frustration tolerance, mood swings, rejection sensitivity. ADHD involves executive dysfunction, making it hard to manage feelings.



Time blindness

Difficulty estimating how long tasks take or sensing time passing, like not getting something done in the morning due to fear of missing an afternoon appointment.

Fact-Checking ADHD Myths

Myth: ADHD is linked to low intelligence



FACT: ADHD has no established relationship with IQ. People all along the intelligence spectrum are able to have ADHD.

Myth: If you can focus on things you enjoy, you don't have ADHD



FACT: Hyperfocus is a hallmark of many folks' experience with ADHD. ADHD affects regulation of attention, not its total absence. Interest, urgency, and novelty can temporarily override inattention symptoms.

Myth: ADHD is only a "boys" or childhood condition



FACT: ADHD is diagnosed across all genders and persists into adulthood. Women and girls are historically underdiagnosed due to differing presentations in symptoms.

Myth: ADHD medication is a crutch or turns people into "zombies"



FACT: Stimulant and non-stimulant medications are evidence based treatments that help regulate neurotransmitter activity. Medication is one tool among several, and is often combined with therapy and skills based support.

Help with Adult ADHD

Don't know where to start? Start with us!

Give Us a Call
202-952-7105