

Adult Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder Self-Test

Note: The information on these pages should not be used as a substitute for evaluation and treatment by a professional health care provider.

Diagnostic Criteria for Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Inattention (low attention span)

Six or more of the following symptoms of inattention have persisted for at least 6 months to a degree that is maladaptive and inconsistent with developmental level:

- a) Often fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork or other activities.
- b) Often has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities.
- c) Often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly
- d) Often does not follow through on instruction and fails to finish schoolwork, chores or duties in the workplace (not due to oppositional behaviour or failure to understand instructions.)
- e) Often has difficulty organizing tasks and activities.
- f) Often avoids, dislikes or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort (such as schoolwork or homework.)
- g) Often loses things necessary for tasks or activities (e.g., toys school assignments, pencils, books, or tools.)
- h) Is often easily distracted by extraneous stimuli.
- i) Is often forgetful in daily activities.

Hyperactivity-Impulsiveness

Six or more of the following symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity have persisted for at least 6 months to a degree that is maladaptive and inconsistent with developmental level:

- a) Often fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat.
- b) Often leaves seat in classroom or in other situation in which remaining seated is expected.
- c) Often runs about or climbs excessively in situations in which it is inappropriate (in adolescents or adults may be limited to subjective feelings of restlessness.)
- d) Often has difficulty playing or engaging in leisure activities quietly.
- e) Is often "on the go" or often acts as if "driven by a motor."
- f) Often talks excessively.
- g) Often blurts out answers before questions have been completed.
- h) Often has difficulty awaiting turn.
- i) Often interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g., at school or work and at home.)

Additional Considerations

- a) Some hyperactive-impulsive and inattentive symptoms that caused impairment were present before age 7 years.
 - b) Some impairment from the symptoms is present in two or more settings (e.g., at school or work and at home.)
 - c) There must be clear evidence of clinically significant impairment in social, academic or occupational functioning.
 - d) The symptoms do not occur exclusively during the course of a Pervasive Developmental Disorder, Schizophrenic or other Psychotic Disorder and are not better accounted for by another mental disorder (e.g., Mood Disorder, Anxiety Disorder, Dissociate Disorder or a Personality Disorder.)
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Adult ADHD Symptom Self-Test

In conjunction with other diagnostic techniques the following general adult ADHD checklist helps further define ADHD symptoms. No ADHD adult has all of the symptoms, but if you notice a strong presence of more than 20 of these symptoms, there is a strong likelihood of ADHD.

Please read this list of behaviors and rate yourself (or the person who has asked you to rate him or her) on each behavior listed. Print the text below and then, using the following scale, and place the appropriate number next to the item. The scoring procedure is at the end of the test.

- 0 = never
- 1 = rarely
- 2 = occasionally
- 3 = frequently
- 4 = very frequently

IMPORTANT: This is not a tool for self-diagnosis. Its purpose is simply to help you determine whether ADHD may be a factor in the behavior of the person you are assessing using this checklist. An actual diagnosis can be made only by an experienced professional.

Past History

- _____ 1 .History of ADHD symptoms in childhood, such as distractibility, short attention span, impulsiveness or restlessness. ADHD doesn't start at age 30.
- _____ 2 .History of not living up to potential in school or work (report cards with comments such as not living up to potential)
- _____ 3 .History of frequent behavior problems in school (mostly for males)
- _____ 4. History of bed-wetting past age 5
- _____ 5. Family history of ADD, learning problems, mood disorders or substance abuse problems

Short Attention Span/Distractibility

- _____ 6. Short attention span, unless very interested in something
- _____ 7. Easily distracted, tendency to drift away (although at times can be hyperfocused)

- _____ 8. Lacks attention to detail, due to distractibility
- _____ 9. Trouble listening carefully to directions
- _____ 10. Frequently misplaces things
- _____ 11. Skips around while reading or goes to the end first, trouble staying on track
- _____ 12. Difficulty learning new games because it is hard to stay on track during directions
- _____ 13. Easily distracted during sex causing frequent breaks or turnoffs during love making
- _____ 14. Poor listening skills
- _____ 15. Tendency to be easily bored (tunes out)

Restlessness

- _____ 16. Restlessness, constant motion, legs moving, fidgety
- _____ 17. Has to be moving in order to think
- _____ 18. Trouble sitting still, such as trouble sitting in one place for too long, sitting at a desk job for long periods, sitting through a movie
- _____ 19. An internal sense of anxiety or nervousness

Impulsiveness

- _____ 20. Impulsive in words and/or actions (spending)
- _____ 21. Say just what comes to mind without considering its impact (tactless)
- _____ 22. Trouble going through established channels, trouble following proper procedure, an attitude of, "Read the directions only if all else fails."
- _____ 23. Impatient, low frustration tolerance
- _____ 24. A prisoner of the moment
- _____ 25. Frequent traffic violations
- _____ 26. Frequent, impulsive job changes

_____ 27. Tendency to embarrass others

_____ 28. Lying or stealing on impulse

Poor Organization

_____ 29. Poor organization and planning, trouble maintaining an organized work/living area

_____ 30. Chronically late or chronically in a hurry

_____ 31. Often has piles of stuff

_____ 32. Easily overwhelmed by tasks of daily living

_____ 33. Poor financial management (late bills, chequebook a mess, spending unnecessary money on late fees)

_____ 34. Some adults with ADHD are very successful, but often only if they are surrounded with people who organize them.

Problems Getting Started and Following Through

_____ 35. Chronic procrastination or trouble getting started

_____ 36. Starting projects but not finishing them, poor follow through

_____ 37. Enthusiastic beginnings but poor endings

_____ 38. Spends excessive time at work because of inefficiencies

_____ 39. Inconsistent work performance

Negative Internal Feelings

_____ 40. Chronic sense of underachievement, feeling you should be much further along in your life than you are

_____ 41. Chronic problems with self-esteem

_____ 42. Sense of impending doom

_____ 43. Mood swings

_____ 44. Negativity

_____ 45. Frequent feeling of demoralization or that things won't work out for you

Relational Difficulties

- _____ 46. Trouble sustaining friendships or intimate relationships, promiscuity
- _____ 47. Trouble with intimacy
- _____ 48. Tendency to be immature
- _____ 49. Self-centered; immature interests
- _____ 50. Failure to see others' needs or activities as important
- _____ 51. Lack of talking in a relationship
- _____ 52. Verbally abusive to others
- _____ 53. Proneness to hysterical outburst
- _____ 54. Avoids group activities
- _____ 55. Trouble with authority

Short Fuse

- _____ 56. Quick responses to slights that are real or imagined
- _____ 56. Rage outbursts, short fuse

Frequent Search For High Stimulation

- _____ 58. Frequent search for high stimulation (bungee jumping, gambling, race track, high stress jobs, ER doctors, doing many things at once, etc.)
- _____ 59. Tendency to seek conflict, be argumentative or to start disagreements for the fun of it

Tendency To Get Stuck (thoughts or behaviors)

- _____ 60. Tendency to worry needlessly and endlessly
- _____ 61. Tendency toward addictions (food, alcohol, drugs, work)

Switches Things Around

- _____ 62. Switches around numbers, letters or words
- _____ 63. Turn words around in conversations

Writing/Fine Motor Coordination Difficulties

_____ 64. Poor writing skills (hard to get information from brain to pen)

_____ 65. Poor handwriting, often prints

_____ 66. Coordination difficulties

The Harder I Try The Worse It Gets

_____ 67. Performance becomes worse under pressure.

_____ 68. Test anxiety or during tests your mind tends to go blank

_____ 69. The harder you try, the worse it gets

_____ 70. Work or schoolwork deteriorates under pressure

_____ 71. Tendency to turn off or become stuck when asked questions in social situations

_____ 72. Falls asleep or becomes tired while reading

Sleep/Wake Difficulties

_____ 73. Difficulties falling asleep, may be due to too many thoughts at night

_____ 74. Difficulty coming awake (may need coffee or other stimulant or activity before feeling fully awake.)

Low Energy

_____ 75. Periods of low energy, especially early in the morning and in the afternoon

_____ 76. Frequently feeling tired

Sensitive To Noise Or Touch

_____ 77. Easily startled

_____ 78. Sensitive to touch, clothes, noise and light

When you have completed the above checklist, calculate the following:

1. Total Score: _____

2. Total Number of Items with a score of three (3) or more: _____

3. Score for Item #1: _____

4. Score for Item #6: _____

5. Score for Item #7: _____

More than 20 items with a score of three or more indicates a strong tendency toward ADHD. Items 1, 6, and 7 are essential to make the diagnosis.

- [More information on ADD/ADHD](#)
- [ADD/ADHD Information Library](#)