

AD/HD

Quick Facts

Imagine living in a fast-moving kaleidoscope where sounds, images, and thoughts are constantly shifting. Feeling easily bored yet helpless to keep your mind on tasks you need to complete, you are distracted by unimportant sights and sounds and your mind drives you from one thought or activity to the next. Perhaps you are so wrapped up in a collage of thoughts and images that you don't even notice when someone speaks to you. For many people with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, or AD/HD, this description is their reality.

Effects of AD/HD

People with AD/HD may be unable to sit still, plan ahead, finish tasks, or be fully aware of what's going on around them. To their family and friends, they seem to exist in a whirlwind of disorganized and frenzied activity. Most have normal or above-normal intelligence, but may have trouble in school because their symptoms make learning and completing homework difficult.

Treatment

Medication can be helpful for people with AD/HD, especially when combined with behavioral therapy and emotional counseling. As children with AD/HD grow, they can often learn to suppress their hyperactivity and channel it into more socially acceptable behaviors like physical exercise or low-key fidgeting.

Life with AD/HD

People with AD/HD have natural talents and abilities they can draw on to create successful lives and careers for themselves. Because of their drive for excitement and stimulation, some become successful in business, sports, construction, and public speaking. Because of their ability to think about many things at once, others have won acclaim as artists and inventors.

If you think you or someone you know may be experiencing AD/HD, talk to a parent, teacher, or other trusted adult. Help is available—visit www.macmh.org for a list of disorder-specific resources.



Signs of AD/HD often include:

- A short attention span
- Easily distracted
- Trouble remembering things
- Doesn't seem to listen
- Unable to stay organized
- Fidgeting and squirming
- Unable to stay seated
- Interrupts others

Have an idea for a story, poem, painting, drawing, poster, or photograph that has to do with mental health? **Open•Up**, a literary and visual art magazine created by and for artists ages 5 -21, is now accepting submissions! Go to www.macmh.org for submission guidelines.

