

# Key ADHD information

## What is it?

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is one of the most common disorders that occur in childhood and adolescence.

Unsupported, it can lead to major social and educational exclusion.

## There are three main features:

- **Innattentiveness**

A very short attention span, doesn't seem to listen, easily distracted, makes careless mistakes, finds it hard to organise and complete tasks, loses things easily.

- **Overactivity**

Fidgety, has difficulty playing quietly, hard to sit still, always on the go, talks excessively, runs excitedly and inappropriately.

- **Impulsivity**

Has difficulty taking turns, frequently interups, blurts out answers, intrudes upon others, disobeys instructions, speaks 'without thinking', 'in the head, out of the mouth'.

## These symptoms must:

- Have been present before the age of seven
- Have been present for more than six months
- Occur in more than one setting, e.g. home and school
- Be causing significant difficulties

And cannot be explained by any other disorder, e.g. learning difficulties, anxiety, depression.



## How is it diagnosed?

Your doctor will have taken a detailed description of your child's medical and behavioural history and your family / social history, and will approach your child's school for a more detailed report.

Behavioural questionnaires completed by parents and school are often used to provide extra information to help make the diagnosis. If your child has also seen other professionals, this information will be requested. There is no specific test for ADHD.

## What is the treatment?

The treatment is a combination of three approaches:

- Behavioural management
- Education
- Medication



## How common is ADHD?

According to studies, ADHD affects approximately 5% of school age children. That means in most classrooms, there will be at least one pupil with ADHD.

## Does every child with ADHD have the same symptoms?

There are 3 ADHD subtypes:

- Mostly hyperactive and impulsive
- Mostly inattentive
- A combination of hyperactive, impulsive and inattentive