

# ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

**Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)** is typically diagnosed in childhood when a child has difficulty sustaining attention, acts impulsively, and/or is hyperactive.

## There are 3 subtypes of ADHD:

1. **ADHD, Primarily Inattentive Type:** many people refer to this subtype as “ADD.” “ADD” is not a separate diagnosis
2. **ADHD, Primarily Hyperactive/Impulsive Type:** a child does not have to be hyperactive to have ADHD. Impulsivity can also be a problem. Children who are impulsive may:
  - a. Act without thinking
  - b. Interrupt others
  - c. Talk a lot
  - d. Start tasks before understanding the objective
3. **ADHD, Combined Type:** this is the most common type of ADHD. It means that a child has symptoms of inattention as well as problems with impulsivity and/or hyperactivity.

## How is ADHD diagnosed?

ADHD is diagnosed by a physician, neuropsychologist or psychologist. ADHD cannot be diagnosed by a school, but teachers’ input is crucial to the diagnosis.

- A physical examination is completed to make sure a medical problem cannot explain the symptoms.
- The provider will gather information from you, your child and his/her teachers. If your child’s presentation is consistent with ADHD, your provider may make the diagnosis at that time or refer your child for additional assessment.
- In a full neuropsychological evaluation objective measures, such as paper-and-pencil or computer tests are used to assess attention and other cognitive abilities in order to rule-out other possible explanations (e.g., learning disability, mood disorder, processing deficit, memory problem). Neuropsychological evaluations also identify strengths and weaknesses to guide treatment and school interventions.



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