



# YOUR ADHD ACTION GUIDE

Practical **tips and tools** to help you.



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A symptom questionnaire



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### **ACTION STEPS**

Look for the arrow throughout **Your ADHD Action Guide** to identify action steps you can start taking now. But remember, the most important action step is to talk with your doctor.



## Start Here

This symptom questionnaire may help you start a discussion with your doctor. Only a trained health care provider can accurately diagnose ADHD.

## Instructions:

1. Print this chart (for best results, select "landscape").
2. Fill in the circles below based on your symptoms for the past 6 months.
3. Choose only one circle for each statement.
4. Take your completed chart to the doctor to discuss your symptoms.



### Symptoms of Inattention

Do you fail to give close attention to details or make careless mistakes in schoolwork, work, or other activities?

NEVER      SOMETIMES      OFTEN      ALMOST ALWAYS

                

Do you have difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or activities?

                

Do you not listen when spoken to directly?

                

Do you not follow through on instructions and fail to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties in the workplace (not due to failure to understand instructions)?

                

Do you have difficulty organizing tasks and activities?

                

Do you avoid, dislike, or are you reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort (such as school work or homework)?

                

Do you lose things necessary for tasks or activities (eg, school assignments, pencils, books, or tools)?

                

Are you easily distracted by extraneous stimuli?

                

Are you forgetful in daily activities?

                

### Symptoms of Hyperactivity/Impulsivity

Do you fidget with your hands or feet, or squirm in your seat?

                

Do you leave your seat in situations in which remaining seated is expected?

                

Do you feel restless or move about excessively in situations in which it is inappropriate?

                

Do you have difficulty engaging in leisure activities quietly?

                

Are you "on the go" or act as if "driven by a motor"?

                

Do you talk excessively?

                

Do you blurt out answers before questions have been completed?

                

Do you have difficulty awaiting your turn?

                

Do you interrupt or intrude on others (eg, butt into conversations)?

                

### These Symptoms Affect Me the Most:

AT SCHOOL      AT WORK      AT HOME      SCHOOL/WORK/HOME



## Key Facts About ADHD

# THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ADHD

YOUR  
ADHD  
OWN IT

Here are some quick facts that may help you better understand Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

### ADHD is a Real Medical Disorder

ADHD is a neurobehavioral disorder that shows itself as a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity/impulsivity that is more frequent and severe than is typically seen in one's peers. **Only a trained health care provider can accurately diagnose ADHD.**

### ADHD is Not Only a Childhood Disorder

Some people may believe that they outgrow ADHD, but it is estimated that nearly 50% of children with ADHD may continue to meet the criteria for the disorder in adulthood.

### You Are Not Alone

Based on a survey of 3,199 adults ages 18 to 44, it is estimated that 4.4% of US adults have ADHD. That's approximately 10 million people when considered across the full US population 18 and over.

### ADHD May Run in Families

Research suggests that ADHD tends to run in families. However, this does not mean that all adults with ADHD will have children who also have the disorder.

## ACTION STEP

### Understand Your Symptoms

Although adults and children may share the same symptoms of ADHD, sometimes the way these symptoms appear may differ. To prepare yourself to speak with the doctor use the [symptom questionnaire](#) on page 3 and discuss with your doctor.





## Tips That May Help

# MANAGING SCHOOL DAYS

If you're planning to go to college or are currently in school, consider these tips.

### Know What Resources Are Available

Contact your school's student Disability Support office to find out what type of support they offer for students with disabilities. If you haven't chosen a school yet, be sure to find out what the schools on your list offer before you make a decision.

### Get Additional Help

Don't be afraid to ask for special accommodations. Accommodations for students with disabilities may include things like early registration, waived/modified placement exams, using (free) note-takers in class, and getting extra time

on assignments or to meet with your professor. Check with your Student Disability Support office to find out what accommodations are available to you.

### Use Technology to Your Advantage

Technology doesn't have to be a distraction. You may find that voice-activated software, books on tape, personal organizers, and other tools may help you cope with some challenges you face. There are also many apps and programs that can help you get (and stay) organized.

## ACTION STEP

### Recruit a Coach

Working with an ADHD coach may be helpful. Your coach could be a parent, a sibling, a friend, or a professional ADHD coach. If your school doesn't offer professional coaching services, get a referral for one in your community. These services may be offered for a fee. Check out the **ADHD Coaches Organization** for more information.



## Tips That May Help

# SCHEDULING YOUR TIME

Whether you're going to school or working, these tips may help with time management.

### Factor in Downtime

Staying busy may seem like a good strategy for getting things done. But if you have ADHD, you might just end up overwhelming yourself.

If you're in school, plan a schedule that works for you. Scheduling back-to-back classes may help you get school out of the way for the day, but it may present a challenge when you have back-to-back tests or assignments due. To give yourself a break, allow time between classes to review notes, start/finish homework, or just clear your head between topics.

### Break Bigger Projects into Smaller Parts

For example, divide a big paper or project into smaller, more manageable tasks like "create outline" or "find resources" and tackle one piece at a time.

### Find Helpful Tools

Day planners, PDAs, software, and timers may help with time management.

## ACTION STEP

### Time Yourself

Set a timer to go off in 15 minutes and stay with a task for those 15 minutes. When the timer goes off, you can decide if you want to continue for another 15 minutes. If you can't, simply stop and do the same thing later in the day until the task is completed.



## Tips That May Help

# GETTING MORE ORGANIZED

YOUR  
ADHD  
OWN IT

By getting organized, you may spend less time looking for things and more time being productive. This approach may help:

1. Get 3 boxes and a trash bag.
2. Label the boxes:
  - **Keep here.** Place items in here that will stay in the current room/area.
  - **Goes somewhere else.** Place items in here that belong in another room/area.
  - **Not sure.** Place items in here that you're not sure about yet.
3. Pick up one item at a time and place it in the appropriate box — or the trash bag.
4. Take all “goes somewhere else” objects to their proper home.
5. Throw out the trash.
6. Seal the “not sure” box with packing tape and open it in 3 to 6 months. If you haven't looked for any of the items in that time, throw them out or give them away. If you have looked for them, decide where they should go and put them there.



What's Next

# MOVING FORWARD WITH ADHD

YOUR  
ADHD  
OWN IT

## Check Your Symptoms

Use the [questionnaire](#) on page 3 to help determine any ADHD symptoms you may be experiencing, then discuss the results with your doctor.

## Educate Yourself

Read the tips found in this brochure and check out the organizations below to learn more about ADHD.

### Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)

1-800-233-4050

### Attention Deficit Disorder Association (ADDA)

1-800-939-1019

### The ADHD Coaches Organization

1-888-638-3999

### National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

1-800-950-NAMI

## ACTION STEP

### Talk with Your Doctor

Make an appointment to talk with your family or campus doctor about your condition. Be sure to bring the questionnaire with you. It may help you start a conversation with your doctor.