

ADHD Information Sheet For Teenagers



What is ADHD?

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a well-recognised neurobiological disorder. We do not know the exact cause, but it is believed to be due to an imbalance of certain chemicals in the brain. ADHD can run in families and in your school you will not be the only person with ADHD.

What are characteristic features of ADHD?

- Hyperactivity
- Inattention
- Impulsivity

How can this affect you?

As a teenager with ADHD you may react to some of your problems more rapidly than others and have lower tolerance levels that may cause you to go off at the deep end more frequently.

You may also find that you have more problems with self-esteem and more conflicts with your parents than teenagers without ADHD.

Hyperactivity

- Fidgety
- Uncomfortable with sitting still
- Restless

Impulsivity

- Poor judgment
- Impatience
- Speaking before thinking

Inattention

- Disorganised
- Persistent day dreaming
- May not follow through on instructions
- Often loses things
- Forgetful



What can help

Good communication with family, teachers and your friends is the key to helping you all to work together.

You can help yourself-

- Find out as much as you can about ADHD.

Good ways to do this include:

- Talking to people – doctors, nurses, psychologists and teachers.
 - Reading books about ADHD.
 - Using the internet- there is good information on the ADDISS Website - www.addiss.co.uk
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- Developing a daily routine may help you getting to school/work in the mornings, or doing your homework.
 - Do not be afraid to ask anyone, eg, teachers or your boss to **repeat** instructions – it is better than making them up if you cannot remember them.
 - **Break down** large tasks into smaller one. Set yourself a deadline for completing each step and give yourself a small reward when completed.
 - Make a **'to do list'** for each day.
 - Try working in a **quiet** area, away from possible distractions.
 - Take regular short breaks.
 - Use **post-it notes** to remind yourself to do things. Stick them where you will see them – on the fridge or on the bathroom mirror.

Medication

There are medicines that can help the symptoms of ADHD which your specialist doctor or nurse will discuss with you and your family. Discuss your own wishes regarding medication with your family and specialist. Different amounts are needed depending on each individual young person. It can

take time to get the dosage right and you may need to discuss this with your specialist doctor or nurse between review appointments.

Not every young person benefits from medication, so it may not be right for you. For further information, please see specific ADHD and medication leaflets.

- If you often forget to take your medication think of a way you can be reminded.
- If you find it embarrassing to take the medication during school time, talk to your specialist about alternative methods of medication, to avoid having to take it during school hours.

Who can help?

It is important to work closely with your parents and school.

It may be helpful to identify a member of staff who you feel comfortable with and can approach for support and help. Try to meet with them regularly.

In school you can also access support via learning mentors, pastoral support staff, youth workers and school nurses. **DO NOT BE AFRAID TO ASK.**

