

ADHD and Coexisting Conditions: Neurodevelopmental Disorders

More than two-thirds of individuals with ADHD have at least one other coexisting condition.



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National Resource
Center on ADHD

AUTISM

Prevalence: 1 out of 4

Symptoms:

- Overfocused, unable to shift attention
- Low tolerance for change
- Highly sensitive or insensitive to light, noise, touch, pain, smell, or taste
- Food preferences based on color or texture
- Often able to remember detailed facts

Treatment Options:

- Behavior therapy including parent training
- Skills training to cope with daily life
- Medication for ADHD symptoms or irritability
- Dietary therapy to eliminate nutritional gaps

SPEECH PROBLEMS

Prevalence: 1 out of 10

Symptoms:

- Issues with word or sound pronunciation
- Stuttering
- Articulation

Treatment Options:

- Speech therapies

LEARNING DISORDER

Prevalence: 1 out of 2

Symptoms:

- Trouble processing information
- Reading difficulty (dyslexia)
- Handwriting difficulty (dysgraphia)
- Math calculations difficulty (dyscalculia)

Treatment Options:

- Learning accommodations and modifications
- Special education services

TOURETTE SYNDROME

Prevalence: 1 out of 10, but more than 2 out of 3 children with Tourette's have ADHD

Symptoms:

- Motor tics
- Vocal tics

Treatment Options:

- Medication
- Behavior therapy
- School supports and accommodations



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ADHD and Coexisting Conditions: Behavioral and Mood Disorders



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Behavioral Disorders

CONDUCT DISORDER (CD)

Prevalence: 1 out of 4

Symptoms:

- Lying
- Truancy
- Stealing
- Hitting/fighting
- Biting

Treatment Options:

- Behavior therapy (Parent training)
- Counseling
- Medication

OPPOSITIONAL DEFIANT DISORDER (ODD)

Prevalence: 1 out of 2

Symptoms:

- Quick to lose temper
- Argue with adults
- Refuse to follow rules
- Deliberately annoy people
- Blame others for their mistakes
- Anger
- Vindictive

Treatment Options:

- Behavior therapy (Parent training)
- Counseling
- Medication

Mood Disorders

DEPRESSION

Prevalence: 1 out of 10

Symptoms:

- Sadness (or irritability, particularly in children)
- Hopelessness
- Lack of interest in school or social activities
- Suicidal thoughts

Treatment Options:

- Individual therapy
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Medication

BIPOLAR DISORDER

Prevalence: 1 out of 5

Symptoms:

- Mixed states of mania and depression
- Rapid mood swings

Treatment Options:

- Medication, including mood stabilizers and antidepressants



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ADHD and Coexisting Conditions: Other Conditions



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ANXIETY

Prevalence: 1 out of 5

Symptoms:

- Worry excessively about everyday things
- Feel edgy
- Stressed out
- Overly tired
- Tense

Treatment Options:

- Cognitive Behavior Therapy
- Individual therapy
- Medication

SLEEP DISORDER

Prevalence: 1 out of 2

Symptoms:

- Trouble falling asleep
- Trouble staying asleep
- Sleepy during the day

Treatment Options:

- Practice good sleep habits
- Stick to schedule bedtime
- Keep bedroom environment comfortable
- Get plenty of exercise
- Monitor eating times
- Have a routine
- Medication if prescribed by a doctor

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

Prevalence: 1 out of 10

Symptoms:

- Behavior changes (irritability, depressed mood, nervousness, inattention)
- Restlessness
- Loss of coordination, change in gait
- Hallucinations
- Pupil dilation; blurred vision
- Heart palpitations, shakiness, sweating or chills
- Sleep problems
- Change in appetite
- Experiencing withdrawal symptoms when trying to quit

Treatment Options:

- In-patient and out-patient treatment with trained professional



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