



# Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

## What is ADHD?

ADHD is a common biopsychosocial disorder that is often broken down into three subtypes:

- **Hyperactive** type, characterized by impulsive and hyperactive behaviors *without* inattention,
- **Inattentive** type, characterized by inattention and distractibility *without* hyperactivity and, finally:
- **Combined** type, where hyperactivity and inattentiveness combine. This is the most common type of ADHD.

## What Should I Keep in Mind?

- ADHD is usually first diagnosed in childhood, but adults can also be diagnosed with ADHD.
- While men are diagnosed more often than women, women are more likely to have their diagnosis missed, so keep in mind that a lack of diagnosis does **not** mean a lack of the condition.
- ADHD says nothing about someone's intelligence.
- ADHD can appear differently at different points in a person's life; someone who thrives in high school might struggle in university.
- ADHD can present differently in different settings. For example, a student might struggle in university but excel in a working environment. ADHD is not a linear condition.
- ADHD is a *different* way of interacting with the world. For example, some people with ADHD might think outside the box, making associations that others might not think of. Other people with ADHD might be good in a crisis, making them more effective in more stressful professions.

## What are some possible signs and symptoms of ADHD?

- Sometimes finding it difficult to pay attention
- Sometimes more easily distracted
- Organization can be challenging
- Might miss appointments/events
- More prone to taking risks
- Possibly more excitable than peers
- Might talk over others
- Might be spontaneous
- Finishing large tasks can be difficult once engaging elements are completed.
- Avoiding tasks that require sustained mental effort
- Stimming; repetitive actions or movements
- Might exhibit emotions openly
- Inability to tolerate boredom
- Hyperfocusing; fixating on one task for an extended period of time

## How Can You Make a More Inclusive Classroom?

- Avoid distracting classroom displays.
- Consider breaking long assignments into smaller parts.
- Limit repetitive assignments.
- In long classes, consider providing activity/stretching breaks.
- Consider adding seminar-style sections to lectures so that students are able to contribute verbally and engage with the material.
- Consider finding varied material in the forms of books, articles, videos, and podcasts.



## Examples of Accommodations for Students with ADHD:

- Audio recording device
- Alternative forms of textbooks
- Distraction-reduced environment
- Frequent breaks
- Noise-cancelling headphones
- Note taker, scribe
- Accessible PDFs,
- Speech-to-text
- Text-to-speech
- Use of a Computer

\*All accommodations are based on individual needs and recommendations.

## For more information:

- CDC. (2020). Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/diagnosis.html>
- Psychological Association. (2021). "Psychology Works" Fact Sheet: Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. Retrieved from [https://cpa.ca/docs/File/Publications/FactSheets/FS\\_AttentionDeficitHyperactivityDisorder\\_EN\\_2021.pdf](https://cpa.ca/docs/File/Publications/FactSheets/FS_AttentionDeficitHyperactivityDisorder_EN_2021.pdf)