



A guide to spotting the signs of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

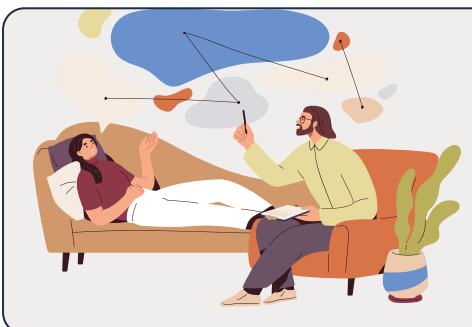
Are you a great problem-solver who is easily distracted? Are you unable to focus on some tasks for more than a few minutes, yet get completely absorbed by others? Do you tend to be spontaneous and adventurous, but sometimes act without thinking things through? If so, you may be showing signs of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

ADHD is a common condition that affects people of all ages. While it is most commonly diagnosed in children, adults can also have ADHD. Symptoms of ADHD include trouble concentrating, impulsivity, and restlessness. If you think you or someone you know may have ADHD, read on for a guide to spotting the signs.



ADHD affects millions of people

Although ADHD does not have one universal definition, it can generally be described as an unpredictably variable combination of symptoms including inattention, impulsivity and hyperactivity. With awareness increasing and new treatments being studied, ADHD can be managed effectively. It is estimated that in 2022, there were an estimated 1.7 million adults in the UK living with undiagnosed ADHD. This number is expected to rise to 2.1 million in 2023.



Misdiagnosing ADHD

It is crucial that any behaviour due to differences in skills and levels of maturity is not labelled as ADHD. It's important that any assessments are carried out by professionals using scientifically validated diagnostic tools. Underdiagnosing ADHD is also possible, and without careful professional assessment people who are in need of support may be unable to access it.

Signs of ADHD

ADHD can be different for each person and its characteristics vary, which makes identifying ADHD challenging. All too often the language used around ADHD focuses on what people can't do well. This can be disheartening and frustrating, and dismissive of the many qualities of people living with ADHD. Here are some areas that can be affected by ADHD and common signs – both positive and challenging – to look out for:



Attention

A person with ADHD may have difficulty paying attention or staying focused on tasks, appear daydreaming often, or have trouble finishing what they started. They may also become hyperfocused on certain tasks, meaning they can be super-efficient and perform at high levels.



Impulsivity

Someone with ADHD might come across as courageous and adventurous, able to appreciate the joy in spontaneity. Acting on impulse might also lead to saying things without thinking or taking risks without thinking about potential consequences.



Activity levels

High levels of energy means many people with ADHD thrive in sports and physical activity. In settings where movement is limited, people with ADHD may fidget a lot, be constantly in motion, talk excessively, or always feel like they need to be doing something. Research suggests that activity levels vary between boys and girls with ADHD.



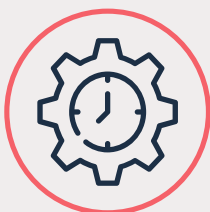
Following instructions

Someone with ADHD might struggle to remember instructions or directions and find it difficult to stay on task for long periods of time without regular breaks. This also means they often approach tasks from a different perspective, so they often come up with highly creative, unusual solutions.



Organisation

People living with ADHD might have trouble staying organised. In order to achieve balance and a sense of fulfilment, they often attain high levels of self-awareness.



Time management skills

Time management can be especially challenging for those with ADHD as they may struggle to estimate how long a task will take them to complete. Many people with ADHD develop strategies to help them manage time successfully and often overcome setbacks, making them highly resilient.



Seeking professional help

If you think that you or someone you know may be dealing with ADHD, it's important to talk to a professional and get the proper support. Be it a doctor, psychologist, or ADHD specialist, there are different channels of help available so you can feel confident in taking the next steps. Talking through potential ADHD symptoms with medical professionals is an excellent way to determine what kind of help is necessary and how to gain access to necessary resources.



Free advice for living with ADHD

ADHD can be challenging, but it doesn't have to be a barrier to personal development and success. There is a wealth of free ADHD resources out there that can provide support and information. Whether you need practical advice on managing ADHD-related issues and coping strategies, or connecting with support services, or ADHD-friendly therapists, here's where to start:

- » [ADHD UK](#) - Created by people with ADHD for those with ADHD. Get free information, support and resources.
- » [The ADHD Foundation](#) – the UK's leading neurodiversity charity, offering a strength-based, lifespan service for those who live with ADHD.
- » [NHS](#) – More information on symptoms and free advice on Living with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- » [MIND](#) - National mental health charity offering information and support about ADHD
- » [ADHD Adult UK](#) – A registered charity and peer support group for adults with ADHD.

Getting the right support

Whether your goal is academic or career advancement, or simply living a happier and more fulfilling life, staying determined and keeping a positive outlook can encourage you to take action in the face of ADHD. With the right attitude, ADHD does not have to limit or define what you can accomplish. Our experts are here to help. Contact your HealthHero or Validium service for more support and advice.

