

# Your ADHD Discussion Guide

Take a look at the list below and mark any symptoms you've experienced regularly over the last 6 months in the settings below. Be it once a day or multiple times throughout the day. If it's happening, mark it. If it's not, do a little dance.

**Note:** This checklist is not a diagnostic tool. Having some of the symptoms listed below does not necessarily mean you have ADHD. Only a healthcare professional can diagnose ADHD.

This checklist is derived from American Psychiatric Association diagnostic criteria to help you and your healthcare provider find out if Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) symptoms may be present in your life and when.

You have indicated that:

☐

You are diagnosed with ADHD

☒

You think you may have ADHD

## SYMPTOMS OF INATTENTION

## SYMPTOMS OF HYPERACTIVITY AND IMPULSIVITY



HOME



WORK



SOCIAL

### Carelessness

Overlook or miss details? Submit inaccurate work?

☒☒☒

### Trouble staying focused

Trouble focusing throughout meetings or conversations?

☒☒☐

### Poor listening

Do you become distracted during conversations?

☐☒☐

### Easily sidetracked

Do you start tasks then lose focus?

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### Difficulty organizing work

Are you disorganized and messy? Do you miss deadlines?

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### Avoid lengthy mental tasks

Do you avoid paperwork or reviewing lengthy reports?

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### Losing everyday items

Like your keys, phone or glasses?

☒☐☐

### Easily distracted

Does your mind frequently wander?

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### Forgetfulness

Do you forget to return calls, keep appointments or pay bills on time?

☒☒☒

HOME



WORK



SOCIAL

### Fidgeting

Do you tap your hands, feet or squirm in your seat?

☐☐☐

### Can't stay seated

Even when you're expected to?

☐☐☐

### Feeling restless

Are you often on edge?

☒☒☐

### Difficulty with quiet activities

Like sitting through presentations or movies?

☒☒☐

### Always "on the go"

Uncomfortable being still for extended periods of time?

☐☒☐

### Talking excessively

Ignoring or missing social cues in the process?

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### Interrupting others

Do you cut others off, in traffic or conversation?

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### Has trouble waiting in line

In traffic, at the bank, etc.?

☐☐☐

### Intrusiveness

Do you butt into conversations or activities?

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## TALK WITH YOUR DOCTOR IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE ADHD

Maybe you think you have ADHD. You've completed the checklist. Now's the time to talk with your doctor. Here are some ways to help you have that conversation and important things you don't want to forget.



Bring a copy of your completed checklist with you to your appointment.



Write down any questions ahead of time and bring them with you.



Write down things that have happened that made you think you may have ADHD.



Use the Symptom Checklist to help guide your conversation. Note any patterns or symptoms presenting themselves during certain times of your day.



Don't leave the appointment until you write down your doctor's recommended next steps. Go over the next steps one last time before you leave your doctor's office.



Check back in with your doctor regularly to share how you're doing and discuss if anything has changed.

Share what you're **experiencing** rather than how you're **feeling** about these experiences. Your doctor will evaluate your behaviors to help determine if they fit the ADHD diagnosis criteria.

### FOR EXAMPLE:

- I forget my keys four times in one week when leaving office
- I am constantly late for work in the morning



***I felt really defeated. And this is how ADHD can lead to depression. So it was a delicate balance because I didn't understand why I wasn't doing well.***

— DONNA (DIAGNOSED WITH ADHD)



## WHAT TO EXPECT AT YOUR DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENT

- You may be asked about symptoms (current and past), including severity, duration and how they affect your home, work and social life
- They may want to review any school (if a recent grad) or work records if they're available
- You may be asked whether or not there is a family history of ADHD or other psychiatric conditions
- They may perform a physical exam and ask about current and past medical problems to rule out other possible causes for the symptoms

ADULTS WITH ADHD MAY HAVE DIFFICULTY IN **MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS** WITH THE PEOPLE AROUND THEM.



## HOW IS ADHD DIAGNOSED?

There is no simple test for ADHD. However, there is a standardized way that ADHD is diagnosed.

### FOR AN ADULT TO BE DIAGNOSED WITH ADHD, A PERSON MUST:

- Have at least 5 inattentive and/or 5 hyperactive/impulsive symptoms for at least 6 months to a degree that is inconsistent with developmental level and that negatively impacts directly on social and academic/occupational activities. (For people younger than 17 years, at least 6 symptoms in either category must be present.)
- Have had several symptoms before age 12
- Have several symptoms in at least 2 settings (such as home, work, social or school)

### ALSO:

- There must be clear evidence that the symptoms interfere with or reduce the quality of social, academic, or occupational functioning
- The symptoms must not be better explained by another cause

