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| **Introduction**  (page 1)  "London � In a major report form the British Psychological Society, British physicians and psychologists are warned not to follow the Canadian and U.S. practice of applying the label attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) to such a wide variety of behaviors in children."(http://www.mentalhealth.com/imh-logo.gif)  Attention deficit disorder, a disorder that has brought about such a wide variety of conflicting theories of its causes, is a disorder that not many people really know about. Quite a few of my high school friends have been diagnosed as having attention deficit disorder. Some of these students have had it ever since they were 5 years old. I asked a few of them to describe to me what the cause of their disorder was and to describe to me what the disorder means. I was not prepared for the shock I received when all of them couldn�t tell me what exactly their disorder was. They only had a vague idea of their disorder but none of them could actually describe to me exactly why they had ADD and what the medicine they were taking was for. They knew that the medicine helped them concentrate, but that is about all they knew about the medicine they have been consuming every day of their life for quite a few years.  This is when I decided that I wanted to research ADD. I felt that it was not right for so many children to have this disorder and not really know much about it. I almost seemed to me like nobody knew much about it. The name ADD is widely know but mostly misused. I wanted to get down to the actual facts behind this controversial disease. I wanted to know for myself if this disease was correctly diagnosed. My search for a research project revealing either the careful or careless diagnostic procedures for ADD began. I started out my project with the thought that there exists too much carelessness in the diagnosis of ADD. Than I thought that there has to be a method of diagnosing the disorder that must prevail. So I came up with my final question for my research project: Is there consistency in the diagnosis of ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) among children and if there isn�t consistency are some methods more effective than others?  With my determined question I set out to educate myself about the disease. I searched different books and numerous web pages in order to find out what ADD is and I came out with a variety of mixed theories.  One definition of the disease that I came across is "A neurobiological condition characterized by developmentally inappropriate level of attention, concentration, activity, distractibility, and impulsivity." (http://health.yahoo.com/health/dc/00151/0.html)  According to one source there are three sub-categories of Attention deficit Disorder:  Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder: combined type  Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder: predominantly inattentive  Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder: predominantly hyperactive or impulsive  Scientists have determined that there is a neurobiological basis for the disease and this theory has shown throughout my research. My research also showed me that some cases of ADD are due to genetics.  An article I read stated "A new theory suggests the disorder results from a failure in self-control. ADHD may arise when key brain circuits do not develop properly, perhaps because of an altered gene or genes." (http://www.sciam.com/1998/0998issue/IMG/0998barkley\_in\_air.jpg)  Research has found out that ADHD is not really a disorder of attention, but it is rather a developmental failure in the brain circuitry that underlies inhibition and self-control. Because there is lack of self-control other important brain functions crucial for maintaining attention are affected, including the ability to yield instantaneous rewards for later, better gain.  Imaging studies of the brain have been used to study what part of the brain might malfunction within patients with ADHD. If this part of the brain would be found than it would account for the symptoms of the conditions. These studies suggest the involvement of the prefrontal cortex, part of the cerebellum, and at least two of the clusters of nerve cells deep in the brain that are collectively known as the basal ganglia. In 1996 it has also been found by F. Xavier Castellanos, and Judith L. Rapoport that the right prefrontal cortex, the vermis region of the cerebellum, and two basal ganglia called the caudate nucleus and the globus pallidus are significantly smaller than normal in children with ADHD. These areas of the brain are the ones that regulate attention. The right prefrontal cortex is involved in resisting distractions and developing an awareness of self and time, the caudate nucleus and the globus pallidus help to switch off automatic responses to allow more careful calculation by the cortex and to coordinate neurological input among various regions of the cortex. It is unknown why these structures are smaller in the brains of those with ADHD but it is suggested that it is due to mutations in genes. This is not necessarily the cause of ADD; it is just a hypothesis.    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