

Other supportive therapies and interventions

Music, art, adaptive exercise, and animal therapy: There are many therapies that are not yet well researched for the treatment of ASD, but may be helpful. These therapies can support social skills, boost self-esteem and build confidence, help develop motor skills, and improve the overall quality of life for an individual with ASD.

Prescription medications

There is no prescription medication designed to treat ASD, but some medications can effectively treat associated symptoms, such as hyperactivity, inattention, aggression, anxiety, depression, sleep disturbance and mood swings. The goal of including prescription medication as a part of treatment is often to reduce an interfering symptom so a person can respond better to the other types of therapies or educational opportunities. It is important to discuss any behavioral changes with your PCP, and to keep your clinical team informed of all medications (including over-the-counter or vitamin/herbal supplements) in order to monitor any related interaction or side effects.

Dietary interventions

Some people report improvements in functioning after changing their diet. The two most common dietary interventions utilized by families experiencing ASD are gluten and casein-free and yeast-free diets. There are professionals such as naturopathic specialists who can provide guidance in this area, while also seeking the advice of your primary doctor. Together, they can help decide if the potential outcome of the dietary restriction outweighs the potential harm. If there are concerns, specific allergy testing may be recommended.



Glossary of Autism-Related Terms

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is the US law that ensures rights for a person with a disability.

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a type of therapy that helps individuals change behaviors through a step-by-step process.

Audiologist is a professional who diagnoses and treats individuals with hearing loss or balance problems.

Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) is an interactive test considered the gold standard for diagnosing ASD. Along with other information (e.g., from interviews and developmental testing), the ADOS is usually incorporated into an autism evaluation.

Chronic constipation is an ongoing condition of having fewer than three bowel movements per week.

Cognitive skills are any mental skills that are used in the process of learning.

Developmental disorder refers to a family of disorders that affect typical development.

Developmental Individual Difference Relationship (DIR) is therapy, known as Floortime.

Developmental milestones skills or behaviors that most children can do by a certain age. These can be found at www.cdc.gov

Developmental pediatrician is a medical doctor who has specialty training in developmental-behavioral pediatrics.

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) is the official system for classification of psychological and psychiatric disorders published by the American Psychiatric Association.

Discrete Trial Teaching (DTT) is a type of behavior therapy.

Dyspraxia is the brain's inability to plan muscle movements and carry them out.

Early Intervention (EI) is a state-funded program designed to identify and treat developmental problems or other disabilities as early as possible. Eligibility for EI is from birth to three years of age.

Echolalia is repeating words or phrases.

Expressive language is communication of intentions, desires, or ideas to others. It includes speech, writing, gestures, signing, use of a communication board and other forms of expression.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) means that education must be provided to all children ages three to twenty-one at public expense.

Floortime is a developmental intervention for children with an ASD.

Fragile X is a genetic disorder that sometimes shares characteristics of ASD. It is generally recommended that individuals receiving a diagnosis of ASD be tested for Fragile X.

Gastroenterologist doctors specialize in disorders of the GI tract, including esophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine, pancreas, liver, gallbladder and biliary system.

General education is a series of "regular education" courses in multiple subjects taught to the same grade level.

Geneticist refers to a medical doctor who specializes in genetic problems.

Gestures are hand and head movements, used to signal communication non-verbally to someone else (such as a give, reach, wave, point, or head shake).

Global Developmental Delay (GDD) is diagnosis in children younger than 6. It means the development is delayed in several areas.

Hyperlexia is the ability to read at an early age. To be hyperlexic, a child does not need to understand what he or she is reading.