

# ADHD... The Facts

Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) is often a misunderstood diagnosis. October is ADHD Awareness month, therefore, we dedicate this 5M2T to bring some clarity to the issue.

**What is it?** ADHD is a highly genetic, brain-based syndrome that has to do with the regulation of a particular set of brain functions and related behaviors known as executive functioning skills.

**Diagnosis:** In order to get an accurate diagnosis of ADHD, the following symptoms must be present: inattention and hyperactive symptoms before age 12, these symptoms must be present in two or more settings and must interfere with quality of life, school, or work functioning. There are three primary types of ADHD, Predominately inattentive, predominately hyperactive, or combined. See the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual – 5 (DSM-5) for further information.

The diagnosis usually requires psychological testing, a diagnostic interview, and collateral information from parents or caregivers who knew the individual prior to age 12. Therefore, I recommend always seeking diagnostic clarity from a Mental Health Professional or a Pediatrician who has experience diagnosing ADHD.

**Prevalence:** Males are three times more likely to be diagnosed with ADHD than females and about 4 percent of adults in America deal with ADHD on a daily basis.

**Adults:** There is no such thing as adult onset ADHD according to the DSM-5 and the Department of Defense Medical Standards. ADHD is only diagnosed when symptoms are present before age 12, therefore it is considered a preexisting condition to military service. For some, the diagnosis is simply not identified until adulthood when symptoms get in the way of daily functioning... i.e. job tasks.

It is also very common for some adults who have poor attention and/or concentration with no history of ADHD symptoms as a child to mistake their symptoms for ADHD. This is because there is significant symptom overlap between ADHD and anxiety, depression, sleep problems, learning disabilities, substance use disorders, and simply high stress.

For Further information: <https://chadd.org/>