

ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

ADHD



## X'inhi l-Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)?

L-Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) hija disturb tal-iżvilupp newroloġiku, u waħda mill-iktar disturbi ta' saħħa mentali li taffetwa t-tfal. Għalkemm id-dijanjozi tal-ADHD ġeneralment tingħata fit-tfulija, is-sintomi jaf jippersistu matul il-ħajja. Tfal u adoloxxenti bl-ADHD ibatu minn sintomi ta' nuqqas ta' attenzjoni, impulsività, u enerġija żejda.

## X'inhuma s-sintomi?

Fit-tfulija huwa normali li t-tfal ikollhom ħafna enerġija u ma jkunux jistgħu jikkoncentraw. Madankollu, fi tfal li jbatu minn ADHD, dawn is-sintomi tant ikunu severi li jesperjenzaw diffikultajiet fl-iskola, mal-ħbieb u anke mal-familjari tagħhom. Fil-maġġoranza tal-każi, dawn is-sintomi jkunu identifikati sakemm jagħlqu 12-il sena, u s-sintomi jmorru għall-aħjar malli t-tfal jibdew jikbru.

Sintomi jinkludu:

- Nuqqas ta' attenzjoni: Il-persuna ssibha diffiċli tikkoncentra u ssegwi istruzzjonijiet. Titlef il-koncentrazzjoni malajr u jkollha problem torganizza lilha nnifisha.
- Enerġija żejda: Il-persuna jkollha ħafna enerġija, li taħliha billi per eżempju tibda tiċċaqlaq ħafna f'sitwazzjonijiet mhux adegwati, ma jkollix sabar toqgħod bilqiegħda, tibda titkellem ħafna, ma tilgħabx fil-kwiet u anke tiffitta lill-oħrajn.
- Impulsività: Il-persuna taġixxi mingħajr ma taħseb fuq il-konsegwenzi. Din taf tidher bħala nuqqas ta' kontroll, għalkemm ħafna drabi tintfiehem bħala sens ta' gratifikazzjoni.

Is-sintomi kollha jridu jippersistu għal mill-inqas 12-il xahar u jridu jaffetwaw l-aspetti kollha tal-ħajja tal-persuna, inkluż fl-iskola, id-dar u anke attivitajiet oħra ekstrakurrikulari. Dawn is-sintomi jikkawżaw problemi fil-mod ta' kif jif-funzjona l-individwu u l-imġiba ma tkunx adattata għall-età tal-persuna.



## What is attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)?

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder and is one of the most common mental health disorders affecting children. Although ADHD is mostly diagnosed during childhood, symptoms may persist during adulthood. Young people with ADHD may experience symptoms of inattention, impulsivity and hyperactivity.

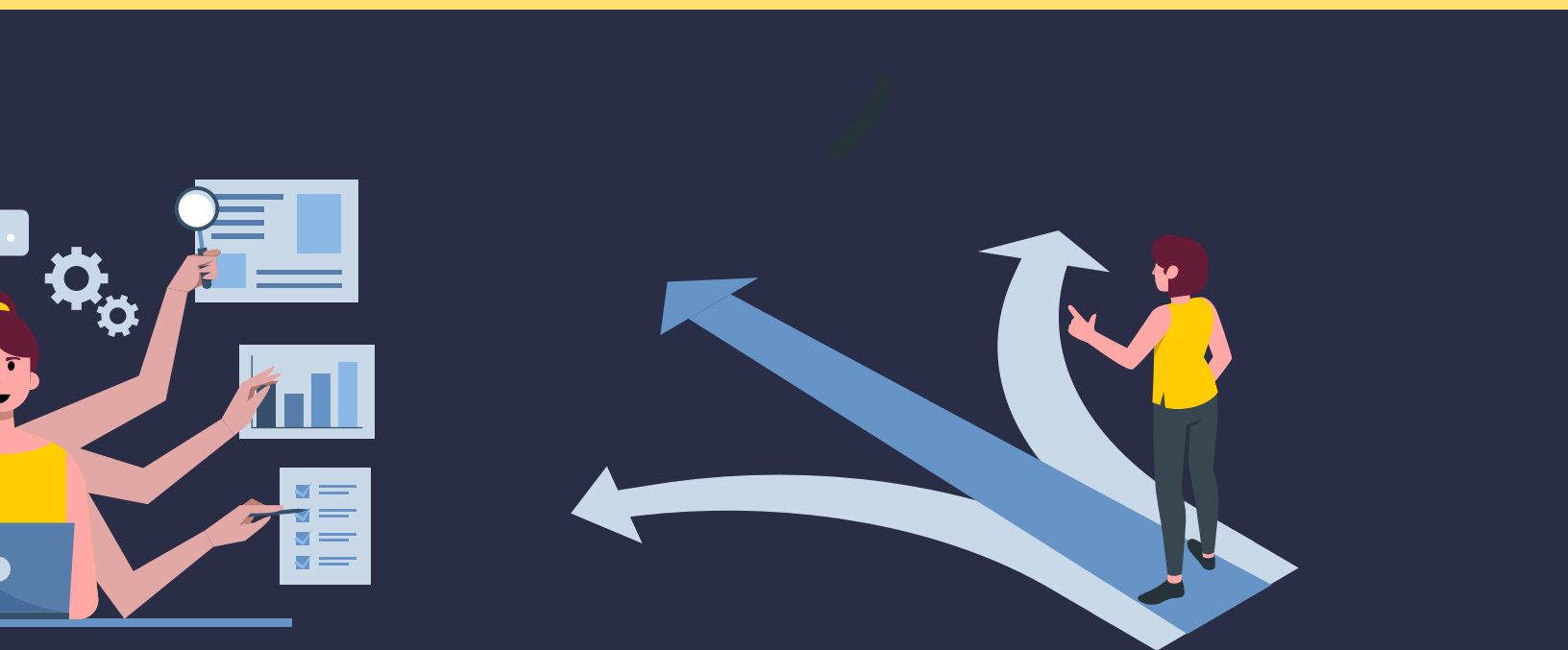
## What are the signs & symptoms?

During childhood, lack of attention and over activity may be normal and age-appropriate. But for children experiencing ADHD these signs are severe and cause significant difficulty at school, with friends and family. In most cases the symptoms are noted before the age of 12, and generally the symptoms improve by age.

The symptoms include:

- Inattention: The person may have difficulty to sustain focus and follow instructions. May often be easily distracted and has problems with organizational skills.
- Hyperactivity: The person may be seen to experience excessive energy which is generally portrayed as constant movement in situations when it is not appropriate, not sitting still, fidgeting, very talkative, being unable to play quietly and intrudes on others.
- Impulsivity: The person acts without thinking about the long-term consequences. It may also be seen as a difficulty in self-control. Usually, it is also portrayed as a need for immediate gratification.

All symptoms should be present persistently for at least 12 months and should impact all areas of functioning of the young person's i.e., at school, at home, and in other extra-curricular activities. The symptoms should cause impairment to the young person's general functioning and are not within age-appropriate behaviours.



## X'inhuma t-tipi ta' ADHD?

Hemm tliet tipi differenti ta' ADHD, li jiddependu fuq il-preżentazzjoni tal-iktar sintomu prominenti:

1. Il-persuna tesperjenza l-iktar sintomi ta' nuqqas ta' attenzjoni.
2. Il-persuna tesperjenza l-iktar sintomi ta' enerġija żejda u impulsività.
3. Il-persuna tesperjenza sintomi mħallta ta' nuqqas ta' attenzjoni, enerġija eċċessiva u impulsività.



## X'jikkawża l-ADHD?

Għadu mhux magħruf eżatt x'jikkawża l-ADHD, għalkemm ir-riċerka turi li hemm diversi fatturi li jwasslu għall-ADHD.

Dawn jinkludu:

- Ġenetika: Huwa maħsub li l-ġenetika tilgħab rwol important fl-iżvilupp tal-ADHD. Infatti, ir-riċerka turi li dawk li għandhom ġenituri jew aħwa li jbatu minn ADHD għandhom riskju ikbar li jiżviluppaw ADHD huma wkoll.
- Li tkun espost għal kontaminanti ambjentali, bħaċ-ċomb.
- Twelid prematur u piż baxx fit-twelid.
- L-użu tal-alkoħol u tabakk matul it-tqala.

## What are the different types of ADHD?

There are three different types of ADHD depending on the type of symptom that is presented as the strongest in the individual.

1. Pre-dominantly Inattentive Presentation: Mostly the person experience signs of inattention.
2. Pre-dominantly Hyperactive – Impulsive Presentation: Mostly the person experiences signs of hyperactivity and impulsivity.
3. Combined Presentation: The person experiences symptoms of inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity equally.



## What causes ADHD?

The exact cause of ADHD is still not yet conclusive, although several research studies show that it may be a combination of factors that lead to the development of ADHD.

These factors include:

- Genetics: It is thought that genes inherited from the parents may be a significant factor in developing ADHD. In fact, research shows that those who have a parent or a sibling with ADHD are more likely to develop ADHD themselves.
- Exposure to environmental toxins - mainly lead.
- Premature birth and low birth weight
- Alcohol and tobacco use during pregnancy.



## Kif tingħata d-dijanjoži?

Sabiex tingħata d-dijanjoži ta' ADHD hemm bżonn ta' numru ta' affarijiet. L-ewwel irid isir eżami fiżiku sabiex jiġu eliminati kundizzjonijiet mediċi li jixbhu lill-ADHD. Ikun hemm bżonn li jsiru numru ta' assessments minn professjonist fil-kura tas-saħħa mentali mat-tifel/tifla li qed tiġi eżaminata u l-kuratur primarju. Jintalbu wkoll li jsiru intervisti u jingabru rapporti minn persuni oħra, bhall- għalliema u l-ġenituri

## Kif tiġi ttrattata l-ADHD?

It-trattament tal-ADHD ma jfejjaqx il-kundizzjoni, imma jtejjeb is-sintomi. It-trattament ħafna drabi jinvolvi l-mediċina kif ukoll interventi psikoloġiċi. Dawn jinkludu interventi minħabba l-imġiba, gwida lill-ġenituri u programmi edukattivi.

## X'għajnuna tista' ttiprovdi l-familja?

- Kun pożittiv. Iffoka fuq dak li wieħed irnexxielu jwettaq, iktar milli fuq l-ostakli u d-diffikultajiet,
- Żomm skeda għar-rutina ta' kuljum, sabiex ikunu jafu eżatt x'għandhom jistennew,
- Ikteb ir-regoli u għamilhom f'post fejn tarahom. Spjega x'inhuma l-konsegwenzi meta r-regoli ma jiġux obduti, filwaqt li meta jobdu kun ċert li tippremjahom. Il-premji m'għandhomx ikunu f'forma ta' ħelu jew rigali, imma għandhom ikunu attivitajiet li jinkoraġġixxu l-iżvilupp ta' relazzjonijiet,
- Inkoraġġixxi l-moviment u l-irqad. Organizza attivitajiet li jgħinjom jeħlu l-enerġija b'mod kostruttiv. Rutina qabel l-irqad tgħin ukoll sabiex jorqdu aħjar,
- Agħti prijorità lill-ħiliet soċjali. Kun mudell ta' ħiliet soċjali tajba, u għinjom jibnu kuntatti siewja ma' familjari u ħbieb,
- Involvi l-iskejjel. Iddiskuti mal-għalliema jew counsellors dwar l-ADHD u identifika mezzi li jistgħu jgħinu jtejbju t-tagħlim, bħal:
  - o Homeworks, mezzi ta' assessjar u deadlines differenti;
  - o Rapportj kontinwi fuq il-progress fl-iskola;
  - o Assistenza individwali;
  - o Thalli l-istudent jagħmel il-qadi tal-għalliema, sabiex jaħli l-enerġija;
  - o Ipoġġu bilqegħda viċin tal-għalliema u 'l bogħod minn affarijiet li jistgħu itellfu l-attenzjoni.

## How is ADHD diagnosed?

The diagnosis of ADHD requires a number of steps. Initially, a physical examination is performed to rule out any medical concerns which may be portrayed like ADHD. A series of interviews by a mental health care professional needs to be carried out with the young person and the main care-giver. Furthermore, interviews and reports from significant persons such as teachers and parents will be essential.

## How is ADHD treated?

Treatment for ADHD is not targeted to cure the condition, but to improve the symptoms. Often treatment entails both psychological and medical interventions. These include behavioural interventions, parent training, and education programmes

## How can families provide support?

- Maintain a positive attitude. Focus on the successes and victories, rather than the challenges and obstacles,
- Create and maintain a schedule for regular tasks, so they know what to expect every day,
- Write down rules and expectations and place them somewhere visible. Explain the consequences when rules are broken and reward them when they are obeyed. Rewards should not be in the form of sweets or gifts, but activities that encourage bonding and connection,
- Encourage movement and sleep. Organise activities that help them unleash their energy in a healthy way. Having a night routine helps develop a healthy sleep cycle,
- Prioritise social skills. Demonstrate appropriate social skills and help them connect adequately with family and friends,
- Involve schools. Discuss with teachers or counsellors about ADHD and identify adjustments that can help in learning, such as:
  - o Modified homeworks, deadlines and testing methods,
  - o Continuous progress reports,
  - o One-to-one assistance,
  - o Letting student do errands for teacher, to burn energy,
  - o Sitting close to the teacher and away from distractions.

## Aktar Informazzjoni / Further information:

### Websites:

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd>

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/facts.html>

<https://www.acamh.org/topic/adhd/>

### Kuntatti / Contacts:

Helpline	<b>1579</b>
Qormi Mental Health Clinic	<b>2330 4450</b>
Paola Mental Health Clinic	<b>2330 4550</b>
Cospicua Mental Health Clinic	<b>2330 4570</b>
Floriana Mental Health Clinic	<b>2330 4910</b>
Mosta Mental Health Clinic	<b>2330 4780</b>
Mtarfa Mental Health Clinic	<b>2330 4541</b>
Crisis Resolution Home Treatment (CRHT)	<b>2330 4500/4501</b>
Children & Young People Psychiatric Services (CYPS)	<b>2330 4750</b>

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HELP!**



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