



# Understanding Adult ADHD: Symptoms, Challenges, and Causes



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Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a neurological condition characterised by unique brain wiring that affects attention and executive functioning. According to the ADD Coach Academy (ADDCA), individuals with ADHD need focused interest and deliberate intention to effectively manage their attention.

Historically, ADHD was diagnosed as either Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or ADHD, but it is now classified into three types:

- Primarily Hyperactive and Impulsive ADHD
- Primarily Inattentive ADHD
- Combined Type ADHD

## What is Adult ADHD?

[Adult ADHD](#) manifests differently compared to children, often affecting various aspects of life. Here are some common symptoms categorised by type:

- **Inattention**

- Poor attention to detail: Making careless mistakes in work or other activities.
- Difficulty starting and completing tasks: Procrastination and struggles with follow-through.
- Difficulty focusing and regulating attention: Easily distracted and having trouble maintaining focus.
- Forgetfulness: Frequently forgetting appointments, obligations, or daily tasks.
- Poor time management and organisational skills: Struggling with planning and keeping track of time.

- **Impulsivity**

- Fidgeting: Constant movement and an inability to stay still.
- Restlessness: Feeling constantly on the go or unable to relax.
- Interrupting frequently: Cutting off others in conversations or activities.
- Talking excessively: Speaking out of turn or dominating conversations.

- **Emotional Dysregulation:** Difficulty managing emotions, leading to intense, sometimes inappropriate responses.

- **Low Frustration Tolerance:** Becoming easily frustrated or impatient.

If your mental health is being affected by your ADHD, make sure to seek help from a trusted provider of psychology services immediately.

## Living with Adult ADHD?

ADHD can significantly impact various aspects of an adult's life, particularly if it remains undiagnosed, untreated, or ineffectively treated. Here are some key areas affected:

- **Study and Work:** Individuals with ADHD often face difficulties in gaining and maintaining employment compared to their neurotypical peers.
- **Relationships:** Challenges with impulsivity and low frustration tolerance can strain intimate relationships, friendships, and familial connections.
- **Legal and Safety:** A systematic review estimates that 26% of prison inmates have adult ADHD.
- **Substance Abuse:** Adults with ADHD are twice as likely to be diagnosed with a substance use disorder (SUD) compared to those without ADHD.
- **Comorbid Conditions:** About 40% of adults with ADHD have been diagnosed with a mood disorder, nearly 50% with an anxiety disorder, and about 15% with a substance use disorder.

If you want to seek diagnosis or support, make sure you connect with reliable mental health services in Perth.

## Causes of ADHD

Research suggests several main factors contributing to the development of ADHD:

- **Genetics or Heredity:** ADHD is highly heritable, with approximately half of parents with ADHD having a child with the condition. Recent genetic research points to several markers associated with ADHD development.
- **Environmental Factors:** Exposure to extreme stress, trauma, or certain toxins, like lead or bisphenol-A, can increase the risk or severity of ADHD symptoms.
- **Disruption of Development:** Brain injuries or events affecting the central nervous system during development, such as preterm birth or alcohol use during pregnancy, may play a major role in ADHD development.

## Embracing Neurodiversity

No two brains are alike; everyone thinks, processes information, learns, and works in different ways. These neurological differences are natural variations in how the brain is wired. An estimated 20% of the population has distinct ways of thinking that differ from the 'typical' or 'majority.'

Neurodiversity advocates view these brain differences as natural and normal rather than deficits. As Edward Hallowell says: “No brain is the same. No brain is the best. Each brain finds its own special way.” It is possible for individuals with ADHD and their support systems to alter their environments to meet their unique needs.

For example, career counselling through a neurodiversity lens can help identify job roles that align with an individual's strengths, interests, and motivations. It's challenging to excel in a job that highlights one's differences and challenges rather than leveraging their unique abilities.

## **Conclusion**

Understanding [Adult ADHD](#) and its impact can help create more supportive environments, enabling individuals with ADHD to thrive. Allied Health for Wellness has a team of trained professionals who can perform ADHD assessments in adults and provide psychology services to help you understand your diagnosis.

By embracing neurodiversity and recognising the unique strengths of different brain wiring, we can foster a more inclusive and understanding society.