



## Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder --Diagnostic Criteria

*The year 2000 Diagnostic & Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR) provides criteria for diagnosing ADHD. The criteria are presented here in modified form in order to make them more accessible to the general public. They are listed here for information purposes and should be used only by trained health care providers to diagnose or treat ADHD.*

### **DSM-IV Criteria for ADHD**

#### **I. Either A or B:**

- A) Six or more of the following symptoms of inattention have been present for at least 6 months to a point that is disruptive and inappropriate for developmental level:**

##### *Inattention*

- 1) Often does not give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork, work, or other activities.
- 2) Often has trouble keeping attention on tasks or play activities.
- 3) Often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly.
- 4) Often does not follow instructions and fails to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties in the workplace (not due to oppositional behavior or failure to understand instructions).
- 5) Often has trouble organizing activities.
- 6) Often avoids, dislikes, or doesn't want to do things that take a lot of mental effort for a long period of time (such as schoolwork or homework).
- 7) Often loses things needed for tasks and activities (e.g. toys, school assignments, pencils, books, or tools).
- 8) Is often easily distracted.
- 9) Is often forgetful in daily activities.

- B) Six or more of the following symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity have been present for at least 6 months to an extent that is disruptive and inappropriate for developmental level:**

##### *Hyperactivity*

- 1) Often fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat.
- 2) Often gets up from seat when remaining in seat is expected.
- 3) Often runs about or climbs when and where it is not appropriate (adolescents or adults may feel very restless).
- 4) Often has trouble playing or enjoying leisure activities quietly.
- 5) Is often "on the go" or often acts as if "driven by a motor".
- 6) Often talks excessively.

##### *Impulsivity*

- 7) Often blurts out answers before questions have been finished.
- 8) Often has trouble waiting one's turn.
- 9) Often interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g., butts into conversations or games).

- II.** Some symptoms that cause impairment were present before age 7 years.  
**III.** Some impairment from the symptoms is present in two or more settings (e.g. at school/work and at home).  
**IV.** There must be clear evidence of significant impairment in social, school, or work functioning.  
**V.** The symptoms do not happen only during the course of a Pervasive Developmental Disorder, Schizophrenia, or other Psychotic Disorder. The symptoms are not better accounted for by another mental disorder (e.g. Mood Disorder, Anxiety Disorder, Dissociative Disorder, or a Personality Disorder).

### **Based on these criteria, three types of ADHD are identified:**

- 1) ADHD, *Combined Type*: if both criteria 1A and 1B are met for the past 6 months
- 2) ADHD, *Predominantly Inattentive Type*: if criterion 1A is met but criterion 1B is not met for the past six months
- 3) ADHD, *Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive Type*: if Criterion 1B is met but Criterion 1A is not met for the past six months.

American Psychiatric Association: *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fourth Edition, Text Revision. Washington, DC, American Psychiatric Association, 2000.