



**SNIP**  
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## ADD /ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a common condition affecting several per cent of school age children. It is more common in boys but girls may currently be underdiagnosed. There are three subtypes: ADHD mainly inattentive, ADHD mainly hyperactive-impulsive, and ADHD combined. The first of these is sometimes referred to as ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder). When ADHD is combined with motor-perceptual problems (also referred to as Developmental Coordination Disorder or dyspraxia) some clinicians refer to DAMP (Deficits in Attention, Motor control and Perception). When problems are very severe and all the diagnostic features listed below are present the criteria for Hyperkinetic Disorder may be met. Thus, ADD, DAMP, and Hyperkinetic Disorder are all subtypes of ADHD.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is an impairment of either activity or attention control or both. The problem presents as a child who is always on the go, does not settle to anything, has poor concentration, poor ability to organise activities or to engage in tedious activities or tasks requiring sustained mental effort, or who cannot stay still and cannot wait for others.

The diagnostic features are:

- **Inattentiveness** - very short attention span, over-frequent changes of activity, extreme distractibility
- **Overactivity** - excessive movements, especially in situations expecting calm such as classroom or mealtimes
- **Impulsiveness** - affected person will not wait their turn, acts without thinking, thoughtless rule-breaking

The problems are disabling, start at an early age and they are present in more than one situation, for example home and school. Sometimes affected children show underachievement at school, poor sleep, social interaction difficulties, autistic-type features, speech-language difficulties, discipline problems, temper tantrums, unpopularity, and accident-proneness. However, all these can have other causes too. IQ can be high, normal, low normal or in the learning disability range.

There are several causes. Twin studies indicate a very strong genetic contribution. Environmental causes include brain damage, intolerance to certain foods, hearing impairment, toxic (including maternal alcoholism and heavy smoking) and infective agents during pregnancy. All of these may interact with psychological stress and social problems to create further behavioural and emotional difficulties. There are some specific treatments, including stimulant medication, behaviour therapy and dietary exclusion approaches in selected cases.

### Inheritance patterns

There is a strong inherited contribution. DNA studies have indicated variants of some (including dopamine) genes to be more common in groups of children with ADHD. The significance in individual cases is not yet known.

### Prenatal diagnosis None



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## **NATIONAL SUPPORT GROUPS**

### **The ADHD National Alliance**

Contact a Family  
209-211 City Road  
London EC1V 1JN  
Tel 020 7608 8760  
Fax 020 7608 8701

e-mail: [jim@adhdalliance.org.uk](mailto:jim@adhdalliance.org.uk)

*The ADHD National Alliance is a project of Contact a Family. It is not a parent support group but it seeks to act as a forum to raise awareness, exchange information and bring together all interested parties. The Alliance is a democratic parent, family and user led membership body. Free membership is offered to parents, adults and support groups*

### **Hyperactive Children's Support Group**

71 Whyke Lane  
Chichester PO19 2LD  
Tel 01243 551313  
Fax 01243 552019

e-mail: [hacsg@hacsg.org.uk](mailto:hacsg@hacsg.org.uk)

Web Site: <http://www.hacsg.org.uk>

*Provides support, information and a range of literature including "The Journal" newsletter three times a year. Also provides training and awareness raising events at their Wimbledon Branch in London, Tel 020 8946 4444*

### **The Henry Spink Foundation**

6 Sugden Road  
Battersea  
London SW11 5EF  
Tel 020 7228 6272

e-mail: [info@henryspink.org](mailto:info@henryspink.org)

Web Site: <http://www.henryspink.org>

*Provides information on a range of therapies and treatments with an emphasis on alternative/complimentary approaches that may prove beneficial in the treatment of ADHD.*

### **CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder)**

Web Site: <http://www.chadd.org>

*A US national ADHD support group which provides comprehensive information, advice and support services to children, parents, adults and professional workers*

### **ADDA (National Attention Deficit Disorder Association)**

Web Site: <http://www.add.org>

*A well established US national association which provides comprehensive information*



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### **NARA (National Action & Research for ADHD)**

Glenrosa  
Lightlands Lane  
Cookham SL6 9DH  
Tel/Fax 01628 523539  
e-mail: [AngieT8282@aol.com](mailto:AngieT8282@aol.com)

*Aims to fundraise to promote and assist in furthering research into ADD/ADHD. Provides professional workers with information and research articles*

### **Young Minds**

2nd Floor  
102-108 Clerkenwell Road  
London EC1M 5SA  
Tel 0800 018 2138 Parents Information Service  
e-mail: [enquiries@youngminds.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@youngminds.org.uk)

Web Site: <http://www.youngminds.org.uk>

*Provides information (including ADHD) leaflets, seminars, consultancy and publishes the Young Minds Magazine. Services are aimed at young people, parents and professional workers*

### **The Child Psychotherapy Trust**

Star House  
104-108 Grafton Road  
London NW5 4BD  
Tel 020 7485 5510 Professional Helpline (Mon-Thur, 9am-5pm)  
Fax 020 7284 2755  
e-mail: [cpt@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:cpt@globalnet.co.uk)

*Volunteers and professional workers can access a team of professional therapists with a range of specific skills in working with children and parents. Also provides information on specific emotional and behavioural problems including ADHD. The helpline operates on a maximum 50 minute call back basis. Calls can be pre-arranged*

### **adders.org**

Web Site: <http://www.adders.org>

*A comprehensive website covering a wide range of information on ADHD. Adders objective is to promote awareness of ADHD and to provide information and practical help to adults and children with the condition and their families*

### **ADDiss Information Services**

PO Box 340  
Edgware HA8 9HL  
Tel 020 8906 9068  
Fax 020 8959 0727  
e-mail: [books@addiss.co.uk](mailto:books@addiss.co.uk)  
Web Site: <http://www.addiss.co.uk>

*Organises local and national seminars and provides information, support, training and resources on*



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*ADHD for both parents and professional workers. A large number of books and videos are for sale*

### **The Mental Health Foundation**

20-21 Cornwall Terrace  
London NW1 4QL  
Tel 020 7535 7400  
Fax 020 7535 7474

e-mail: [mhf@mhf.org.uk](mailto:mhf@mhf.org.uk)

Web Site: <http://www.mhf.org.uk>

*Works to meet the needs of people with mental health problems and aims to improve people's lives, reduce stigma surrounding mental health issues and to promote understanding. The Foundation undertakes research and provides information (including ADHD) for the general public and health and social care professional workers*

### **Parentline plus**

Endway House  
Hadleigh SS7 2AN  
Tel 0808 800 2222

Helpline 0800 783 6783 Text

e-mail: [helpline@parentlineplus.org.uk](mailto:helpline@parentlineplus.org.uk)

Web Site: <http://www.parentline.co.uk>

*Provides emotional support for parents and families concerning ADHD. Also refers to organisations for appropriate help, advice and information about ADHD.*

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The information above is from Contact A Family's website ([www.cafamily.org](http://www.cafamily.org)). Contact a Family is a UK charity which helps families who care for children with any disability or special need. They are a main source of information about rare disorders and are able to assist affected adults as well as children.

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## **Local information and support**

### **ADHD Parent and Carer Support Group**

Community Education  
The Prentice Centre  
1 Granton Mains Avenue  
Edinburgh EH4 4AG  
Tel 0131 551 2197

*The support group exists to give parents and carers the chance to meet other people who have children with ADHD and share experiences. Regular meetings and creche.*



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### **North West ADHD Team**

Pennywell House  
1b Pennywell Gardens  
Edinburgh EH14 4NX  
Tel 0131 315 8036

*Supporting the management of children and young people with ADHD.*

*Referrals to the team are made via Child and Family Mental Health Services at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children.*

### **Edinburgh ADHD Support Group**

(Edinburgh ADDers)  
Email : [edinburghadders@aol.com](mailto:edinburghadders@aol.com)  
Tel 0131 661 1675

*Meet at the VOCAL Carers Centre, Johnston Terrace, Edinburgh once a month from 10am-12pm.*

### **ADHD Support Group for Parents**

Pennypit Sports Centre  
Rope Walk  
Prestonpans  
East Lothian  
EH32 9BN  
Tel 01875 814 897

*A support group for East Lothian parents with children who have ADHD. The group meets on the third Wednesday of each month in the Pennypit Sports Centre, from 7-9pm.*

### **ADD-PINS Support Group for Parents/Carers in West Lothian**

Tel : 07787 888 743

Snip information sheets can be produced in a number of formats : in Braille, on tape, on disk or CD, and in community languages. Please contact us on **0131 536 0360** if you would like this information sheet in a different format.