

ADHD in Teenagers

Although it is commonly believed that children grow out of ADHD by the time they reach adolescence, this is not the case. Symptoms of ADHD may become more subtle but more challenging as tasks and social relationships become more complex and demanding. In fact, in some cases, difficulties associated with ADHD are not evident until adolescence. Teens with ADHD may have trouble keeping track of belongings as they move from classroom to classroom in high school. Some may also struggle with managing homework and meeting deadlines.



Teenagers with ADHD are more likely to have mood problems and problems with school. They are also more likely to take risks. Compared to other teens, they often spend less time with their families and more time with their friends. Teens with ADHD are more likely to have conflicts with their parents (especially mothers) than teens without ADHD. Teens with ADHD are also involved in more angry or intense conflicts with their parents.

It is important to keep in mind that it is normal for teenagers to be impulsive and inattentive sometimes:

- They may be impulsive or take risks, especially when they are with their peers.
- They may be easily distracted from tasks they do not want to do, such as homework or chores.

These symptoms do not necessarily mean that the teenager has ADHD. ADHD would only be diagnosed if the symptoms are much worse than in other children of the same age and sex, and if they are causing problems for the child.

In teens, symptoms of inattention appear as poor organization. Symptoms of hyperactivity and impulsivity appear as impatience and the desire to always move onto something else.

Mood problems

Teens with ADHD may have:

- more negative moods, such as anger, anxiety, stress, and sadness
- fewer positive moods, such as happiness, alertness, and well-being

Problems with school

Teens with ADHD tend to do worse at school than their peers. Compared with their peers, teens with ADHD are three times more likely to drop out of school. On average, people with ADHD have two years less formal education than people without ADHD. However, many students with ADHD graduate from high school and go on to higher education. These students need help and support from parents and teachers.

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