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Signs of ADHD in people of all ages

Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder affects millions of people. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that a 2016 survey of parents found that 6.1 million children, which equated to roughly 9.4 percent of the childhood population that year, had been diagnosed with ADHD. ADHD is the most prevalent childhood psychiatric disorder in Canada.

ADHD does not just affect children. A 10-year study published in JAMA Network Open found that ADHD diagnoses among adults have been growing four times faster than those among children in the United States.

The health and wellness information site Healthline says ADHD is a complex neurodevelopmental disorder that can affect various components of daily life. The Mayo Clinic reports that ADHD can cause per-

sistent problems, such as difficulty paying attention, hyperactivity and impulsive behavior, in both adults and children. ADHD can affect relationships, academic performance and even people's careers.

People concerned about ADHD should know that there is no single test to diagnose it. Furthermore, other psychiatric conditions or learning disabilities can produce similar symptoms as ADHD. Health care providers use the guidelines in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Fifth edition (DSM-5) to help diagnose ADHD. Key criteria for the condition include six or more of the following symptoms for children and five or more for those ages 17 and older:

- Inattention, which includes not holding attention on tasks or play activities. Failure to pay close attention

to details or making careless mistakes. Often the person has trouble organizing tasks and activities.

- Hyperactivity that can affect the ability to take part in activities quietly. One may act as if driven by a motor, and often squirms or fidgets.

A person may have trouble waiting turns or keeping emotions in check.

- Impulsivity which can mean talking excessively or blurting out an answer before a question has been completed. Adults may have a hot temper or low frustration tolerance. Impulsivity can lead to risky behavior or substance and alcohol misuse.

- Daydreaming can occur as well,



as not all symptoms of ADHD include loudness and being rambunctious. Some people may disappear into themselves and be quieter and less involved than they once were.

ADHD is a medical condition that is being diagnosed more readily, helping adults and children get treatment that can help them lead full lives.

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