

## Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

The essential feature of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder is a persistent pattern of inattention, and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that is more frequent and severe than is typically observed in other individuals at a comparable level of development. While normally thought of as a child's disorder, it is also prevalent among adults.

ADHD may be manifested by fidgeting or squirming in one's seat or work that is often messy, performed carelessly and scattered. Children may turn in schoolwork that has numerous mistakes and shows lack of attention to detail.

It is important to remember that children and adults often display these systems, which is completely normal. ADHD is characterized by these systems showing up consistently, for many years, causing significant problems in social and employment or school situations.

While medication may prove necessary in some rare instances, Cruz Clinic generally opposes such use. Medications for ADHD could have unexpected side effects, especially in children. For medication to even be considered, there must be clear evidence of clinically significant impairment in social, academic or occupational functioning.

Even then, it is important to remember that medication is only part of the overall management of ADHD. Parent, teachers, physicians, and other professionals comprise a team that must work together. Medication is meant to complement a program of educational and psychological support that is tailored to meet the needs of each individual patient.

### Your Personal Evaluation for ADHD

#### Instructions

Answer the following questions with "Yes" or "No". The more Yes's than No's may suggest that further evaluation by a professional may be helpful.

#### Inattention

Have six or more of the following symptoms of inattention persisted for at least six months?

1. Often fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork, work or other activities.
2. Often has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities.
3. Often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly.
4. Often does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork, chores or duties in the workplace (not due to occupational behavior or failure to understand instructions).
5. Often avoids, dislikes, or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort (such as schoolwork or homework).
6. Often loses things necessary for tasks or activities (e.g. toys, school assignments, pencils, books or tools).
7. Is often easily distracted by extraneous stimuli.
8. Is often forgetful in daily activities.

#### Hyperactivity

Have six or more of the following symptoms of Hyperactivity/Impulsivity persisted for at least 6 months or more?

1. Often fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat.
2. Often leaves seat in classroom or in other situations in which remaining seated is expected.
3. Often runs about or climbs excessively in situations in which it is inappropriate (in adolescents or adults, may be limited to subjective feelings or restlessness).
4. Often has difficulty playing or engaging quietly in leisure activities.
5. Is often "on the go" or often acts as if "driven by a motor".
6. Often talks excessively.
7. Often blurts out answers before questions have been completed.
8. Often has difficulty awaiting their turn.
9. Often interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g. butts into conversations or games).

Reference: DSM-IV