



Student Services

A Guide to Diagnosed Disorders Attention Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD)

Educational Implications

Inattentive type of AD/HD: The manifestations of this type include problems with:

- ✓ “Tuning out” or “drifting away” in the middle of reading a page in a book, or in conversations with others or in following a lecture in class
- ✓ The ability to screen out distractions in class and focus on what is said or demonstrated can be a major problem - this can lead to problems with both listening and note-taking
- ✓ Sustaining attention for long periods of time

Impulsivity: Characteristics of this type of Attention Deficit Disorder often results in:

- ✓ A tendency to say what comes to mind without necessarily considering the timing or appropriateness of the remark
- ✓ Being impulsive verbally, interrupting or blurting out answers in class is often noted
- ✓ Other acts of impulse may also be seen behaviorally; e.g. impulsive spending, changing plans, enacting new schemes or career plans

Hyperactivity: This type of Attention Deficit Disorder is often seen with individuals who exhibit excessive restlessness. They have significant problems with

- ✓ Sitting through long lectures without fidgeting or moving
- ✓ They may talk excessively, and appear to be always “on the go”

Other difficulties experienced by students with an Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder lie in the area of:

- ✓ Organization and time management that can affect both academic and social functioning
- ✓ Getting started on a task, organizing and planning the activity, and persisting with the task to completion is often a challenge
- ✓ Missing deadlines on assignments, forgetting test schedules, coming to class on the wrong day or missing appointments are quite common

Instructional Strategies

- ❖ Clear guidelines and expectations about the course, including time-lines
- ❖ Some flexibility in terms of when assignments are due (spacing them out)
- ❖ Encourage the use of student planners; cell phones; BlackBoard; Outlook so that everything is written down - and the student is not relying on oral instructions
- ❖ Multi-faceted lectures such as demonstrations, visuals, internet resources, interactive – with peers, faculty, environmental and materials
- ❖ Provide reminders about homework, assignment and test dates – use of BB/Outlook/outline
- ❖ Students should be encouraged to sit near the front to maximize attention – preferential seating
- ❖ Minimize room distractions
- ❖ Clear course outline expectations with consequences
- ❖ Work closely with AccessAbility Services to ensure a successful learning experience for the student



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Academic Accommodations

Students with disabilities are expected to accomplish the “core competencies” of their programs. To achieve this, accommodations are provided to minimize or eliminate any disadvantage their disability presents. Accommodations are unique to each individual. **AccessAbility Services** makes these recommendations based on confidential documentation that the student provides to the college. Some of the most commonly provided academic accommodations to students with ADHD include:

- Reduced course load
- Provision of a note-taker for lectures/provide notes prior to lecture/ tape recording of lectures (due to problems with listening and note-taking done simultaneously)
- In-class tasks - use of technology to complete
- Provision of extended time for tests and exams - the amount of extra time is determined by **AccessAbility Services** but is usually 1.5 times
- Classroom management - short breaks to help the student refocus attention (testing situations included)
- Writing exams/tests in a distraction reduced environment

Overview and Definition

According to medical research, this disorder is considered neurobiological in origin. Abnormalities of neurochemicals in the brain, as well as a tendency to be transmitted genetically, reflect current thinking about this condition. According to the DSM-IV (the diagnostic manual used by physicians), ADHD can occur in three forms: the **inattentive** type of attention deficit, the **hyperactive-impulsive** type of attention deficit and the **combined** type, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Between 30 to 70 percent of children diagnosed with these deficits continue to have residual symptoms that persist into adulthood that impact to a significant degree in social, academic and occupational functioning. As well, with adults, other conditions often co-exist with attention deficits that include learning disabilities as well as mental health issues including anxiety and depression. This condition is **not** due to poor parenting or diet. It is treatable through a combination of medical intervention, compensatory strategies and accommodations that will manage the symptoms.

Resources – please contact **AccessAbility Services** for further information

CH.A.D.D. Canada Inc. (Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder)

P.O. Box 23007, Ottawa, ON. K2A 4E2

Phone (613) 231-7646

Driven to Distraction, by E. Hallowell, M.D., and J. Ratey, M.D. (also available on audiotape)

Answers to Distraction, by E. Hallowell, M.D., and J. Ratey, M.D. (also available on audiotape)

Educator’s Manual - 2nd edition - Attention Deficit Disorder, by Mary Fowler

ADD Warehouse - 1-800-233-9273

Videos - ADHD in Adults - by Russell Barkley

Attention Deficit Disorder in Adults - by L. Weiss