

# Symptoms of ADHD

May Appear Differently in Children, Adolescents, and Adults<sup>\*1</sup>

## Inattention

- The Predominantly Inattentive Subtype may not come to clinical attention until late childhood for some children
  - School-aged children may begin to require more sustained attention

## Hyperactivity/Impulsivity

- Hyperactivity may vary with the individual's age and developmental level

### Childhood

- School-aged children may have difficulty remaining seated or squirm in their seats

### Late childhood/Early adolescence

- As children mature, symptoms usually become less conspicuous. Signs of excessive gross motor activity are less common
- Hyperactivity may be confined to fidgetiness or an inner feeling of jitteriness or restlessness

### Late adolescence/Adulthood

- In most individuals, ADHD symptoms (particularly motor hyperactivity) attenuate, although a minority experience the full complement of symptoms of ADHD into mid-adulthood
- Symptoms of hyperactivity take the form of feelings of restlessness and difficulty engaging in quiet sedentary activities

## The following are symptoms of ADHD:

This is not the full list of diagnostic criteria; an accurate diagnosis can only be made through a clinical evaluation.

### INATTENTION

- 1 Often fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork, work, or other activities.
- 2 Has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities.
- 3 Does not seem to listen when spoken to directly.
- 4 Does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish work (not due to oppositional behavior or failure to understand instructions).
- 5 Has difficulty organizing tasks and activities.
- 6 Avoids, dislikes, or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort.
- 7 Loses things necessary for tasks or activities.
- 8 Is easily distracted.
- 9 Is forgetful in daily activities.

### HYPERACTIVITY

- 10 Fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat.
- 11 Leaves seat in classroom or in other situations in which remaining seated is expected.
- 12 Runs about or climbs excessively in situations in which it is inappropriate. (In adolescents or adults, may be limited to subjective feelings of restlessness.)
- 13 Has difficulty playing or engaging in leisure activities quietly.
- 14 Is "on the go" or acts as if "driven by a motor."
- 15 Talks excessively.

### IMPULSIVITY

- 16 Blurts out answers before questions have been completed.
- 17 Has difficulty awaiting turn.
- 18 Interrupts or intrudes on others.

**Children, adolescents, and adults with ADHD may benefit from periodic reassessment.<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>\*</sup>Adapted from *DSM-IV-TR*<sup>®</sup> criteria