

## ADHD: MYTHS AND FACTS

Myth	Fact
<b>ADHD is not real</b>	ADHD is a real condition of the nervous system. It can cause problems with paying attention, being too active (hyper) and/or being too impulsive (doing things without thinking ahead) in ways that aren't suitable for the child's age.
<b>You can't have ADHD if you're doing well in school</b>	Even children who do well in school may have ADHD.
<b>Poor teaching or poor parenting causes ADHD</b>	Teaching or parenting doesn't cause ADHD (it mostly runs in families). But good quality teaching and parenting can help improve problems for a child with ADHD.
<b>What a child eats (e.g., refined sugar, food additives) causes ADHD</b>	A connection between ADHD and diet has not been proven. A good diet and general health are always important.
<b>ADHD only affects boys</b>	ADHD is more often identified in boys, but it can happen in girls too. Inattentive-type ADHD is more common in girls, while disruptive, impulsive behaviour is more common in boys. Girls with ADHD often have more distress, anxiety and depression compared to boys with ADHD.
<b>There is a test that can diagnose ADHD</b>	There's no test to diagnose ADHD. It's diagnosed by a health care provider after they've looked at a child's symptoms and medical history.
<b>ADHD is diagnosed too often</b>	An increase in children diagnosed with ADHD could be due to a number of reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents and health care providers are more aware of it.</li> <li>• Health care providers ask about it more often.</li> <li>• Better treatments are available.</li> </ul>
<b>All children with ADHD have disruptive behaviours</b>	Only about half of children with ADHD have problems with behaving in a destructive way.
<b>Children with ADHD can never pay attention or complete their work</b>	Sometimes children with ADHD can focus well on stimulating activities (like video games or creative activities such as Lego or drawing) but have problems focusing on other tasks.
<b>All children with ADHD are hyperactive</b>	Not all children with ADHD are hyperactive. In fact, some may seem overly quiet and lack energy.
<b>Children with ADHD are lazy</b>	Everyone finds it easier to focus on and complete an activity that they find interesting. Many children with ADHD can focus well on some activities (as noted above).
<b>Medication alone can manage ADHD</b>	Medication can improve ADHD. But the best approach also includes other measures like education about ADHD, behavioural treatments and supports in school.
<b>Everybody can be inattentive sometimes</b>	Everyone can experience a symptom of ADHD, like forgetting items. But children with ADHD have many more symptoms and many more problems as a result of them.

Adapted with permission from the Canadian ADHD Resource Alliance (CADDRA). Canadian ADHD Practice Guidelines, 4.1 Edition. 2020. [www.caddra.ca](http://www.caddra.ca)

