



COULD IT BE ADHD?

A Simple ADHD Symptom Checker for Adults

Do you ever wonder why everyday life feels harder than it seems to be for other people?

Maybe you're constantly forgetting things, running late, losing belongings or putting things off until the last minute. Perhaps your head never seems to switch off. You may have lots of ideas but struggle to finish them, or concentrate for hours on something interesting yet find it almost impossible to start something you know you need to do.

You might have spent years thinking, “Why am I like this?” ADHD could be one possible explanation.

What is ADHD?

ADHD stands for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Despite the name, ADHD isn't simply about having a lack of attention or being hyperactive. ADHD can affect the brain's ability to regulate attention, motivation, impulses, emotions, organisation, working memory, time, and starting or completing tasks.

This is why ADHD can show up in so many different parts of everyday life. You do not need to relate to every ADHD trait, and ADHD can look very different from one person to another.

Important

This guide is designed to help you notice patterns and reflect on your experiences. It is not a diagnostic test and cannot tell you whether you have ADHD. ADHD can overlap with other conditions and life circumstances, and diagnosis requires an appropriate clinical assessment.

Could These Experiences Sound Familiar?

Tick the statements that you regularly recognise in yourself.

Attention & Focus

- ☐ I find it difficult to concentrate on things that don't interest me.
- ☐ I become distracted easily.
- ☐ I start reading something and realise I haven't taken any of it in.
- ☐ I struggle to listen during long conversations or meetings.
- ☐ My mind wanders even when I'm trying hard to concentrate.
- ☐ I make mistakes because I've missed details.
- ☐ I sometimes become completely absorbed in things that interest me and lose track of everything else.

Organisation & Memory

- ☐ I regularly lose things such as my phone, keys, glasses or paperwork.
- ☐ I forget appointments, dates or things I've agreed to do.
- ☐ I rely heavily on reminders, alarms or other people to remember things.
- ☐ My home, desk, bag or paperwork can quickly become disorganised.
- ☐ I know what needs doing but struggle to organise where to begin.
- ☐ I frequently walk into a room and forget why I went there.
- ☐ If something isn't visible, I can completely forget about it.

Time

- ☐ I regularly underestimate how long things will take.
- ☐ I often run late even when I genuinely intended to be on time.
- ☐ I can lose hours without realising how much time has passed.
- ☐ I leave things until the last minute.
- ☐ Deadlines seem far away until suddenly they are urgent.
- ☐ I struggle to plan realistically for the future.

Getting Things Done

- ☐ I procrastinate even over things that are important to me.
- ☐ I can know exactly what I need to do but still feel unable to start.
- ☐ Small jobs can sometimes feel enormous.
- ☐ I start lots of things but struggle to finish them.
- ☐ I work better when there is urgency or a deadline.
- ☐ I frequently move between tasks without completing the first one.
- ☐ I have periods when I feel extremely productive followed by periods when I struggle to do very much at all.

Impulsivity & Restlessness

- ☐ I sometimes speak before I've fully thought about what I'm saying.
- ☐ I interrupt people even though I don't mean to.
- ☐ Waiting can make me unusually impatient or frustrated.
- ☐ I make decisions quickly and sometimes regret them afterwards.
- ☐ I make impulsive purchases.
- ☐ I often feel internally restless.
- ☐ I find it difficult to completely switch off and relax.
- ☐ I constantly need something to occupy or stimulate me.

Emotions & Overwhelm

- ☐ I become overwhelmed easily when there is too much happening.
- ☐ My emotions can feel very intense.
- ☐ Small frustrations can sometimes cause a much bigger reaction than I expected.
- ☐ Criticism can affect me deeply.
- ☐ I spend a lot of time overthinking things I've said or done.
- ☐ I can become exhausted from trying to keep everything together.
- ☐ I sometimes shut down or avoid things when everything feels too much.

Remember

ADHD isn't diagnosed simply by counting ticks. What matters is the overall pattern, how long it has been present, where it shows up, and how much it affects everyday life.

Look Beyond the Checklist

Have these difficulties been present for a long time?

Do they happen in more than one part of my life - for example at home, at work, in education or in relationships?

Do they regularly make everyday life more difficult for me?

Have I developed lots of systems to compensate for things I find difficult?

What About Childhood?

ADHD is a neurodevelopmental condition, which means symptoms begin during childhood, although they may not have been recognised at the time. Think back to when you were younger.

- ☐ Daydreaming?
- ☐ Forgetful?
- ☐ Losing belongings?
- ☐ Talking a lot?
- ☐ Easily distracted?
- ☐ Struggling with homework?
- ☐ Leaving things until the last minute?
- ☐ Disorganised?
- ☐ Restless or constantly on the go?
- ☐ Told you weren't reaching your potential?
- ☐ Struggling to listen or follow instructions?
- ☐ Becoming intensely interested in particular things?

You may not remember everything yourself. Old school reports or conversations with parents, siblings or people who knew you as a child may sometimes help you recognise patterns.

“But I've Managed All My Life”

Many adults develop ways of compensating for their difficulties without ever realising that's what they're doing. You might use endless lists and reminders, arrive extremely early because you're worried about being late, spend much longer than other people preparing, or rely on pressure and last-minute panic to get things done.

Sometimes ADHD becomes more noticeable when life becomes more demanding or when the systems that previously helped us cope stop working. Recognising ADHD later in life doesn't mean the difficulties suddenly appeared. It can mean you're finally beginning to understand a pattern that has been there for much longer.

What Can I Do Now?

1. Notice what you struggle with

For the next week, jot down situations where you find yourself thinking: “Why is this so difficult for me?”

2. Notice what helps

Perhaps you work better with music, deadlines, another person nearby, visual reminders or a very clear first step. Those clues are valuable.

3. Look at your history

Think about childhood, school, work, relationships and everyday life. Are there patterns that keep appearing?

4. Learn more about ADHD

Understanding ADHD can help you make sense of experiences that previously seemed unrelated.

5. Consider seeking professional advice

If these difficulties are having a significant impact on your life, you may want to speak to an appropriate healthcare professional about whether an ADHD assessment should be considered.

My ADHD Reflection

The things I recognised most in myself were:

Something I've always found difficult but never really understood is:

One thing I would like help with is:

The areas of my life most affected are:

- ☐ Work
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Relationships
- ☐ Parenting
- ☐ Home
- ☐ Money
- ☐ Organisation
- ☐ Time management
- ☐ Emotional wellbeing
- ☐ Sleep
- ☐ Other: _____

One Last Thought

Recognising yourself in information about ADHD can bring up lots of different feelings. You may feel relieved that some of your experiences finally make sense. You might feel confused, upset or unsure what to do next. You don't have to work everything out today. Understanding yourself is a good place to start.

ADHD SUPPORT SERVICES

Important: This resource is for information and self-reflection only. It is not an ADHD diagnostic or screening assessment and should not be used as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.