

General Adult ADD Symptom Checklist

IMPORTANT: This checklist is not substitution for a professional diagnosis. Its purpose is simply to increase awareness of whether ADD may be a factor in the behavior of the person being assessed with this checklist. Only an experienced professional can make an actual diagnosis.

I use the following general adult ADD checklist in my office to help diagnose ADD. No adult with ADD has all of the symptoms, but if you notice a strong presence (score of 3 or more) on more than 20 of these symptoms, there is a strong suspicion for it.

Please read this list of behaviors and rate yourself (or the person who has asked you to rate him or her) on each behavior listed. Use the following scale and place the appropriate number next to the item.

0 = never 1 = rarely 2 = occasionally 3 = frequently 4 = very frequently

Past History

1. History of ADD symptoms in childhood, such as distractibility, short attention span, impulsivity or restlessness. ADD doesn't start at age 30.
2. History of not living up to potential in school or work (report cards with comments such as "not living up to potential")
3. History of frequent behavior problems in school (mostly for males)
4. History of bed wetting past age 5
5. Family history of ADD, learning problems, mood disorders or substance abuse problems

Short Attention Span/Distractibility

6. Short attention span, unless very interested in something
7. Easily distracted, tendency to drift away (although at times can be hyper focused)
8. Lacks attention to detail, due to distractibility
9. Trouble listening carefully to directions
10. Frequently misplaces things
11. Skips around while reading, or goes to the end first, trouble staying on track
12. Difficulty learning new games, because it is hard to stay on track during directions
13. Easily distracted during sex, causing frequent breaks or turn-offs during lovemaking
14. Poor listening skills
15. Tendency to be easily bored (tunes out)

Restlessness

16. Restlessness, constant motion, legs moving, fidgetiness
17. Has to be moving in order to think

18. Trouble sitting still, such as trouble sitting in one place for too long, sitting at a desk job for long periods, sitting through a movie or a talk
19. An internal sense of anxiety or nervousness

Impulsivity

20. Impulsive, in words and/or actions (spending)
21. Say just what comes to mind without considering its impact (tactless)
22. Trouble going through established channels, trouble following proper procedure, an attitude of "read the directions when all else fails"
23. Impatient, low frustration tolerance
24. A prisoner of the moment
25. Frequent traffic violations
26. Frequent, impulsive job changes
27. Tendency to embarrass others
28. Lying or stealing on impulse

Poor Organization

29. Poor organization and planning, trouble maintaining an organized work/living area
30. Chronically late or chronically in a hurry
31. Often have piles of stuff
32. Easily overwhelmed by tasks of daily living
33. Poor financial management (late bills, check book a mess, spending unnecessary money on late fees)
34. Some adults with ADD are very successful, but often only if they are surrounded with people who organize them.

Problems Getting Started and Following Through

35. Chronic procrastination or trouble getting started
36. Starting projects but not finishing them, poor follow through
37. Enthusiastic beginnings but poor endings
38. Spends excessive time at work because of inefficiencies
39. Inconsistent work performance

Negative Internal Feelings

40. Chronic sense of underachievement, feeling you should be much further along in your life than you are
41. Chronic problems with self-esteem

- 42. Sense of impending doom
- 43. Mood swings
- 44. Negativity
- 45. Frequent feeling of demoralization or that things won't work out for you

Relational Difficulties

- 46. Trouble sustaining friendships or intimate relationships, promiscuity
- 47. Trouble with intimacy
- 48. Tendency to be immature
- 49. Self-centered; immature interests
- 50. Failure to see others' needs or activities as important
- 51. Lack of talking in a relationship
- 52. Verbally abusive to others
- 53. Proneness to hysterical outburst
- 54. Avoids group activities
- 55. Trouble with authority

Short Fuse

- 56. Quick responses to slights that are real or imagined
- 57. Rage outbursts, short fuse

Frequent Search For High Stimulation

- 58. Frequent search for high stimulation (bungee jumping, gambling, race track, high stress jobs, ER doctors, doing many things at once, etc.)
- 59. Tendency to seek conflict, be argumentative or to start disagreements for the fun of it

Tendency To Get Stuck (thoughts or behaviors)

- 60. Tendency to worry needlessly and endlessly
- 61. Tendency toward addictions (food, alcohol, drugs, work)

Switches Things Around

- 62. Switches around numbers, letters or words
- 63. Turn words around in conversations

Writing/Fine Motor Coordination Difficulties

- 64. Poor writing skills (hard to get information from brain to pen)
- 65. Poor handwriting, often prints
- 66. Coordination difficulties

The Harder I Try The Worse It Gets

- 67. Performance becomes worse under pressure.
- 68. Test anxiety, or during tests your mind tends to go blank
- 69. The harder you try, the worse it gets
- 70. Work or schoolwork deteriorates under pressure
- 71. Tendency to turn off or become stuck when asked questions in social situations
- 72. Falls asleep or becomes tired while reading

Sleep/Wake Difficulties

- 73. Difficulties falling asleep, may be due to too many thoughts at night
- 74. Difficulty coming awake (may need coffee or other stimulant or activity before feeling fully awake)

Low Energy

- 75. Periods of low energy, especially early in the morning and in the afternoon
- 76. Frequently feeling tired

Sensitive To Noise Or Touch

- 77. Startles easily
- 78. Sensitive to touch, clothes, noise and light

When you have completed the above checklist, calculate the following:

- 1. Total Score: _____
- 2. Total Number of Items with a score of *three (3)* or more: _____
- 3. Score for Item #1: _____
- 4. Score for Item #6: _____
- 5. Score for Item #7: _____

Items 1, 6, and 7 are more indicative of people with ADD.