**AOW 2: Adult ADHD: What You Need to Know**

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*(Photo: Shutterstock)*

Many people think attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD, is a childhood problem. The reality is, most people with ADHD have it for life. In fact, some of the world’s most influential people — from CEOs to celebrities — have ADHD. Business moguls including JetBlue founder David Neeleman, Ikea founder Ingvar Kamprad and former Mouseketeer turned superstar Justin Timberlake all reportedly have ADHD.

There’s more awareness about ADHD today than there was even five or 10 years ago, so adults who have the condition may not have been diagnosed when they were children. What’s more, many adults with ADHD might not even realize their brains are wired differently.

Since ADHD is often misunderstood and misdiagnosed, here are answers to some of the most common questions about the disorder:

**Q:How many adults suffer from ADHD?
A:**About three to four percent of U.S. adults have ADHD, but very few people seek treatment for the condition. In fact, every adult who has ADHD had the condition as a child. While it’s easier to pinpoint adult ADHD when the person was diagnosed and treated during childhood, some adults provide historical information that points to ADHD symptoms in childhood that were never addressed. Were you labeled a dreamer or a troublemaker? Did you have trouble paying attention in school or completing projects or tasks? If so, you may have had undiagnosed ADHD as a child – and you may continue to struggle with symptoms as an adult.

**Q: How does the manifestation of ADHD change with age?
A:**There are three types of ADHD: hyperactive type, **inattentive** type and combined type. Research suggests girls may be more likely to have inattentive ADHD and boys may be more prone to the hyperactive type. Over time, regardless of gender, inattention tends to **persist** while the hyperactivity seems to decline with age.

**Q: What are some signs and symptoms of adult ADHD?
A:** ADHD is a neurodevelopmental disorder which impacts a patient’s ability to prioritize, focus and pay attention. Adults with ADHD often report being easily distracted and struggling to complete tasks. They may be **impulsive**, stressed, forgetful and scattered. They may also struggle to stay engaged in conversation and listen carefully. As a result of these symptoms, it is not uncommon for a patient with ADHD to have low self-esteem that can lead to depression and anxiety.

**Q: How is ADHD diagnosed and treated?
A:** Unfortunately, there is no specific test for ADHD. Instead, the diagnosis is based on a careful clinical and family history. ADHD appears to have a genetic link and often runs in families. Risk factors can include having family members with the disorder, a mother who drank alcohol during pregnancy, being born prematurely and exposure to environmental toxins as a child. Adults who are concerned they might have ADHD should see a psychiatrist, preferably one who specializes in the disorder. The primary treatment for ADHD – both in children and adults – is stimulant drugs, including Ritalin and Adderall. Be sure to see a clinician who is knowledgeable in prescribing stimulants so he or she can monitor you for **adverse** side effects.

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Left untreated, ADHD can impact our physical and mental well-being, cause work problems, financial difficulties and relationship strain. The good news is that there are many treatments — from medication to behavior modification — that can help **alleviate** ADHD symptoms.

A person who has ADHD should create structure in their lives using lists and reminders to stay on task. They should also adopt certain lifestyle habits – a regular exercise routine, good [sleep hygiene](http://www.henryfordlivewell.com/the-best-sleep-bible-7-tips-to-maximize-your-zzzs/) and effective time management strategies – to help them stay on track and achieve their goals.

**Directions:**

1-Read the article, highlight with yellow the main idea and write down the meanings of the 5 underlined words using context clues.

2-Highlight the speaker in pink, the audience in orange, the occasion in green and explain in the margin.

3- Identify the tone and underline in red supporting evidence for the tone.

4-Watch a short video and write down some symptoms and treatments/solutions for ADHD.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Symptoms | Treatments |
|  |  |

**5-Write a micro-argument responding to the following:** Is learning more about ADHD and other psychological and neurological conditions important? Support your reasoning with textual evidence.