

## Fast Facts

### Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

- Condition that affects brain development
- Makes it challenging for a person to comprehend information and socialize with others
  - Repetitive behavior patterns
- Unknown cause (extensive research demonstrates NO link between vaccines and autism)
  - Wide range of symptoms and different levels of severity (low to high functioning)
  - Several conditions fall under broad title (autism, Asperger's syndrome, childhood disintegrative disorder and an unspecified form of pervasive developmental disorder)
  - Boys are four times more likely than girls to be affected
  - Usually symptoms appear during the first year of life

<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Prevention</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Do not respond to their name</li> <li>-Appear not to hear when directly spoken to</li> <li>-Do not like being touched, cuddled or held</li> <li>-Prefer playing alone/retreats into own world</li> <li>-Poor eye contact</li> <li>-Lack facial expressions</li> <li>-Don't speak or have delayed speech</li> <li>-Can't start a conversation or keep one going</li> <li>-Speech is in abnormal tone or rhythm</li> <li>-Can repeat words/phrases verbatim, but don't understand what they mean</li> <li>-Don't comprehend simple questions or directions</li> <li>-Don't express emotions/feelings</li> <li>-Unaware of other people's feelings</li> <li>-Passive/aggressive/disruptive in social situations</li> <li>-Cannot read nonverbal cues (body language)</li> <li>-Repetitive motions (rocking, spinning, hand flapping)</li> <li>-Engage in self-harm activities that could harm themselves (biting or head-banging)</li> <li>-Like routines and can become distressed at a slightest change</li> <li>-Will exhibit clumsiness, odd walking patterns or abnormal body language</li> <li>-Become fascinated by the details of an object, but do not understand the overall purpose of it</li> <li>-Fixate on an object with abnormal intensity/focus</li> <li>-Don't engage in make-believe play</li> <li>-Have sensitivities to light sound or touch, but not pain or temperature</li> <li>-Sensitivities to textures (clothing or food)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Very individualized</li> <li>-Early intervention is key</li> <li> </li> <li>-Therapies: Behavioral, Speech, Communication, Physical, Educational, Occupational, Family</li> <li>-Medications</li> <li>-Treat other medical and mental health conditions</li> <li> </li> <li>For Caregivers:</li> <li>-Have a team of trusted professionals</li> <li>-Keep organized and accurate records</li> <li>-Ask about new technologies, therapies or medications</li> <li>-Learn about the disorder</li> <li>-Seek out other families with children/adults on the spectrum for support</li> <li>-Take time for yourself and other family members away from the individual on the spectrum (makes dealing with daily challenges easier)</li> </ul>	<p>None</p>

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