

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

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