

Other conditions that affect autistic people

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

Symptoms of ADHD include:

- finding it hard to concentrate and getting distracted easily
- acting without thinking
- finding it hard to sit still

People with ADHD may need extra support at school or work. Sometimes they need to take medicine.

Find out more about attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/)

Dyslexia and dyspraxia

Some autistic people have:

- problems with reading, writing and spelling (dyslexia (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/dyslexia/))
- clumsy movements and problems with organisation and following instructions (developmental co-ordination disorder, or dyspraxia (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/developmental-coordination-disorder-dyspraxia/))

Extra support at school can often help.

Problems sleeping (insomnia)

Symptoms of insomnia include:

- finding it hard to go to sleep
- waking up several times during the night
- waking up early and not being able to go back to sleep

Changing your bedtime routine can often help.

Find out more about sleep and autism from the National Autistic Society (Link: <https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/physical-health/sleep>)

Mental health problems

Many autistic people have problems like:

- feeling very worried a lot of the time (anxiety (Link: www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/generalised-anxiety-disorder/overview/))
- feeling unhappy, irritable or hopeless (depression (Link: www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/depression-in-adults/overview/))
- feeling a need to keep doing certain actions (obsessive compulsive disorder, or OCD (Link: www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/obsessive-compulsive-disorder-ocd/overview/))

These conditions can often be treated with talking therapies or medicines.

Learning disabilities

A person with a learning disability may find it hard to:

- understand new or complicated information
- learn new skills
- look after themselves

People with a learning disability often need help with daily life.

Find out more about learning disabilities (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/learning-disabilities/)

Epilepsy

Symptoms of epilepsy include:

- shaking and collapsing (called a "fit" or seizure)
- staring blankly into space
- strange smells or tastes
- tingling in your arms or legs

Epilepsy can often be treated with medicine.

Find out more about epilepsy (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/epilepsy/)

Problems with joints and other parts of the body

Some autistic people may have:

- flexible or painful joints
- skin that stretches or bruises easily
- diarrhoea or constipation that does not go away

These can be caused by conditions like joint hypermobility syndrome (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/joint-hypermobility-syndrome/) or Ehlers-Danlos syndromes (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/ehlers-danlos-syndromes/).

You may need support from a range of health professionals, including a physiotherapist.

See a GP if:

- you're autistic and think you might have another condition
- your child is autistic and you think they might have another condition
- you have another condition and think you might be autistic – if you already see a doctor for your other condition, you could speak to them instead

Find out more

- Advice about medicines and medical appointments (Link: www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/autism-and-everyday-life/advice-about-medicines-and-medical-appointments/)
- National Autistic Society: related conditions (Link: <https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/related-conditions/related-conditions>)