



ARC Mental Health Information Series

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Adult ADHD

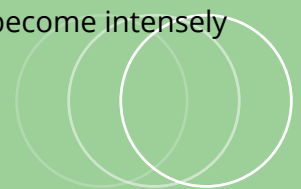
Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that can have a significant impact on an individual's life. While ADHD typically develops during childhood, it often carries over into adulthood. An estimated 4-5 % of the population qualifies for a diagnosis of ADHD. Symptoms of ADHD in adults can lead to various mental, physical, and emotional health challenges. Struggling with everyday tasks can impact an individual's self-esteem, elevate stress levels, and lead to comorbid mental health conditions, including anxiety disorders, depression, personality disorders, and substance use disorders. ADHD can also create conflict in romantic relationships, particularly when one partner lives with ADHD and the other does not.

Additionally, maintaining a career can be difficult for adults who live with ADHD.



Ways ADHD can present as an adult

- **Trouble Cleaning/Organizing** - If you're an adult with ADHD, it can be difficult for you to organize your space and keep it clutter-free. Disorganization can affect your ability to get things done throughout the day, create conflict in relationships, and exacerbate other symptoms of ADHD.
- **Problems Prioritizing** - Adults with ADHD often struggle to place the proper amount of importance on tasks they need to accomplish during the day.
- **Time Blindness** - Time blindness is a common ADHD phenomenon that can cause you to lose track of time and misjudge how long events and tasks will take to complete.
- **Lack of Focus** - Distractibility is an ADHD symptom that can appear in childhood and persist into adulthood. This is often a result of the brain cycling through thoughts or focusing on unrelated external stimuli. A lack of focus can result in communication issues, uncompleted tasks, and a tendency to become overwhelmed.
- **Hyperfocus** - While lack of focus can be a concern, ADHD can also cause adults to become intensely focused on certain tasks, hobbies, or other interests at times.
- **Difficulty Maintaining A Schedule.**



- Starting Projects Without Completing Them - ADHD can create deficits that impact the brain's reward center, which may affect an individual's ability to maintain the motivation needed to complete tasks. You might start on a project, become bored or frustrated by it, then move on to something else.
- Restlessness or Excessive Activity - One sign of ADHD that's often consistent between children and adults is the frequent urge to move around. Restlessness can impact your physical and mental health and impact you at work, school, and home.
- Impulsive Behaviour - Acting without fully thinking something through often leads to less-than-ideal decisions and difficult situations in adults with ADHD. Impulsivity can include driving too fast, spending money in excess, or engaging in other risk-taking behaviors.
- Mood Swings.
- Trouble Coping With Stress - Feeling overwhelmed by external stimuli, having trouble prioritizing tasks, and experiencing other common concerns related to adult ADHD can lead to high levels of stress. Symptoms of ADHD may create stress related to work, relationships, physical health concerns (e.g., sleep disruptions), and a variety of other areas of your life.
- Increased Anger - You might experience emotional dysregulation more often, which can lead to frustration and irritability. Anger may be provoked suddenly and can often last longer than it might in someone without ADHD.

Treatment

- Medications. Stimulant medications are often the first recommended treatment for ADHD but non-stimulant medication is also available.
- Skill-Building- Working with a coach or counselor can help you build practical skills, including planning, goal setting, time management, and organizing.
- Psychotherapy including cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) in conjunction with medication therapy can reduce symptoms of ADHD. Additionally, a mental health professional can help adults with ADHD meet the challenges of work, relationships, and social situations.

Resources available

Clinique TDAH Monteregie
635 Avenue Notre-Dame Saint-Lambert, Quebec, J4P 2K8
(514) 962-8324

Allan Memorial Institute at McGill University Health Centre
1033 Pine Ave W, Montreal, Quebec H3A 0G1
(514) 934-1934 ext. 34284

CLSC St-Hubert (450) 443-7400

CLSC Brossard (450) 445-4452

CLSC St-Jean-sur-Richelieu (450) 358-2572

CLSC Richelieu (450) 658-7561

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