

Children's Mercy Kansas City

SHARE @ Children's Mercy

Clinical Pathways

Evidence-Based Practice Collaborative

4-2021

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: Assessment

Children's Mercy Kansas City

These guidelines do not establish a standard of care to be followed in every case. It is recognized that each case is different and those individuals involved in providing health care are expected to use their judgment in determining what is in the best interests of the patient based on the circumstances existing at the time. It is impossible to anticipate all possible situations that may exist and to prepare guidelines for each. Accordingly, these guidelines should guide care with the understanding that departures from them may be required at times.

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ADHD Assessment

Concerns about inattention, distractibility,
hyperactivity, or impulsivity

Assessment by primary care clinician (PCC) including:

- Standard history (including development and behavior) and physical exam
- Family and social history (including family behavioral health history)
- Collect ADHD rating scales from two sources preferably from home and school
- [NICHQ Vanderbilt Rating Scale](#)
- Review of [DSM-5](#) criteria for ADHD

Does child meet DSM-5
criteria for ADHD:

1. Six or more symptoms of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity occurring often or very often for at least six months, inconsistent with developmental level ([NICHQ Vanderbilt](#))
2. Several symptoms present prior to the age of 12
3. Several symptoms in two or more settings (e.g., home, school)
4. [Functional impairment](#)
5. Symptoms are not better explained by another mental health disorder

Continue routine developmental
screening and surveillance

Reassess if concerns persist

[Consider alternative diagnosis.](#)

No

Yes

[DSM-5 presentations of ADHD](#)

Is there a
[coexisting condition\(s\)](#)
that is more
impairing?

Yes

Start with treatment of coexisting condition
if that is the most impairing (e.g. anxiety or
depression) and reassess.

No

[ADHD
Treatment
Algorithm](#)

Do
ADHD
symptoms resolve
after treatment of
primary
condition?

No

Yes

Monitor and reassess to response
of treatment

Other Resources:

- [AAP ADHD Toolkit \(available for purchase\)](#)
- [NICHQ Caring for Children with ADHD Toolkit \(Free\)](#)

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