

ADHD

Post Diagnostic Pack



Mental Health & Neurodiversity Centre of Excellence

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Table of Contents

1 What is ADHD?

2 Types of ADHD

4 Treatment for ADHD

4 Helpful Resources

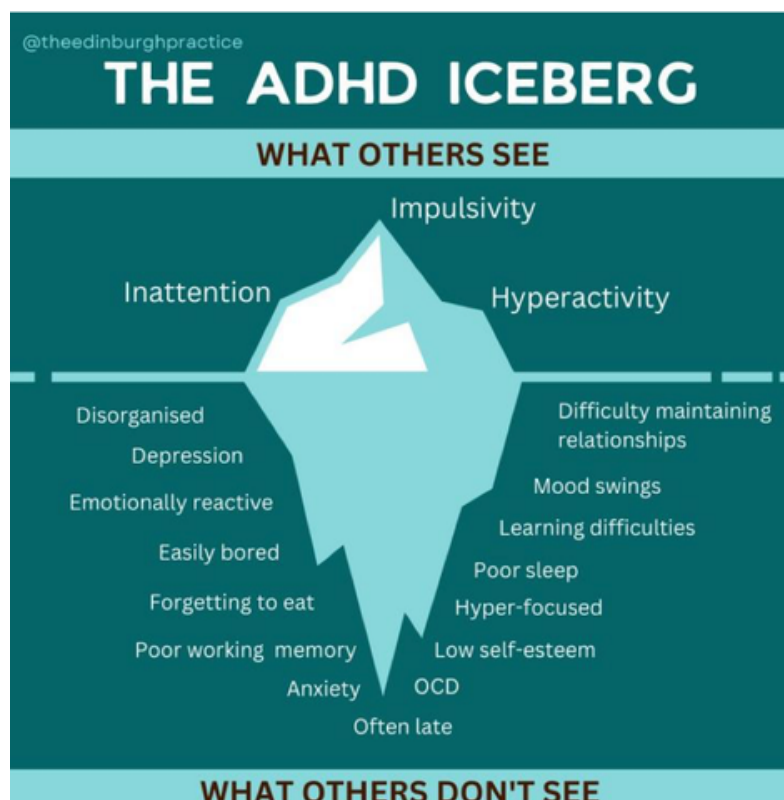
5 Support Groups

6 Helplines

What is ADHD?

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a **neurodevelopmental condition** — meaning it relates to how the brain develops and works.

ADHD affects the way a person manages their attention, impulses, and activity levels. In adults, it can make everyday tasks — like staying organised, finishing projects, managing time, or controlling emotions — genuinely harder than they are for other people.



What is ADHD?

ADHD symptoms must be present in **more than one area of life** (for example, both at work and at home) and cause real difficulties in day-to-day functioning.

Symptoms typically begin in childhood, but many people are not diagnosed until adulthood — sometimes because their difficulties were overlooked or put down to something else.

ADHD is more than just "**being distracted**". Many adults also experience difficulties with emotional regulation — such as feeling emotions very intensely, reacting quickly when frustrated or overwhelmed, or struggling to settle after something upsetting.

Types of ADHD



Predominantly Hyperactive–Impulsive Presentation

Sometimes informally called "**ADHD-HI**".

This type is characterised mainly by restlessness and impulsivity. People with this presentation may:

-  Feel physically restless, fidgety, or find it hard to sit still for long
-  Talk a lot or find themselves interrupting conversations
-  Act or make decisions quickly, without fully thinking things through
-  Find it hard to wait their turn — in conversations, queues, or tasks
-  Take risks or make impulsive choices in relationships, finances, or work



In adults, the physical "**bouncing off the walls**" hyperactivity of childhood often becomes more of an inner restlessness — a sense of always needing to be doing something.

Types of ADHD

2

Predominantly Inattentive Presentation

Sometimes informally called "**ADHD-I**" or, in older literature, "**ADD**".

This type is mainly characterised by difficulties with attention and focus, rather than obvious hyperactivity. People with this presentation may:

- ✿ Struggle to concentrate on tasks, especially ones that feel repetitive or unstimulating
- ✿ Make frequent careless mistakes or overlook details
- ✿ Find it hard to stay organised or manage their time
- ✿ Lose things regularly or be forgetful in daily life
- ✿ Seem to "zone out" or get easily distracted by unrelated thoughts
- ✿ Start tasks but find it hard to follow through and finish them

Types of ADHD

3

Combined Presentation

Sometimes called "**ADHD-C**".

This is the most common type in adults, affecting around **63%** of those with an ADHD diagnosis. Those with the combined presentation experience significant difficulties with both attention and hyperactivity/impulsivity — a blend of the two types described above.

Living with combined type ADHD can feel like constantly trying to manage a busy, fast-moving mind while also struggling to direct it where it needs to go.



Treatment for ADHD

How is ADHD Treated?

There is no single "cure" for ADHD, but with the right support, most people see a significant improvement in their day-to-day life. Treatment works best when it combines different approaches tailored to you as an individual. The goal is not just to reduce symptoms, but to help you build skills, feel better about yourself, and function well at work, in relationships, and at home.

The Main Treatment Approaches:

1. Psychoeducation

One of the most powerful first steps is simply **learning about ADHD**, and **understanding how your brain works**. Psychoeducation may include:

- Learning about how ADHD affects attention, memory, emotions, and impulse control
- Understanding how ADHD has shaped your life story and relationships
- Finding out about practical strategies and supports available to you
- Information for family members or partners who want to understand your experience

Treatment for ADHD

2. Psychological Therapy

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (**CBT**) is the most evidence-based psychological treatment for adult ADHD. It is a structured, practical form of therapy that focuses on the challenges of everyday life with ADHD. CBT for ADHD typically helps with:

- Time management and organisation
- Tackling procrastination and getting started on tasks
- Managing emotional reactions (frustration, overwhelm, shame)
- Challenging unhelpful thinking patterns — such as "I always mess things up" or "I'll never be able to do this"
- Building self-esteem and self-compassion

NICE (the UK body that sets clinical guidelines) recommends that adults with ADHD are offered a structured psychological intervention, either as a standalone treatment or alongside medication.

We have CBT for ADHD available at The Edinburgh Practice, please **get in touch** with our team if you would like to access this.



Treatment for ADHD

3. ADHD Coaching

ADHD coaching is not therapy, but it can be a very useful complement to it. A coach works with you on practical, day-to-day goals — helping you to:

- Set up systems and routines that work for your brain
- Stay accountable on tasks and projects
- Develop strategies for work, study, or managing finances
- Bridge the gap between knowing what to do and actually doing it

Coaching is particularly valued by adults who have already done some therapeutic work and want to focus on real-world application of skills.



Treatment for ADHD

4. Medication

Medication does not work for everyone, and it is not the only option — but for many adults with moderate to severe ADHD, it can make a significant difference.

According to **NICE guidelines**, **lisdexamfetamine** (brand name: Vyvanse/Elvanse) or **methylphenidate** (brand names include Ritalin, Concerta, Equasym) are the recommended first-line medications for adults with ADHD.

There are two main types of ADHD medication:

Stimulant medications (most commonly prescribed)

These work by increasing certain brain chemicals (dopamine and noradrenaline) that help with attention, impulse control, and motivation. They are taken daily and come in short-acting and long-acting forms. Most people notice effects on the same day they start taking them.

Non-stimulant medications

If stimulants are not suitable, not tolerated, or not effective, atomoxetine is the main alternative recommended by NICE. Non-stimulants work differently from stimulants — they tend to build up gradually and take several weeks to reach full effect. They can be a good option for people who also experience anxiety or who have concerns about stimulant medications.

Treatment for ADHD

Important: Medication for ADHD should only be started by a specialist with training in ADHD. Your prescribing clinician will work with you to find the right medication and dose, monitor for side effects, and review progress regularly.

[Click here to learn more about TEP's Titration Package.](#)



5. Lifestyle and Self-Care

While lifestyle changes alone are unlikely to be sufficient for moderate or severe ADHD, they can meaningfully support other treatments.

Evidence-backed strategies include:

- **Physical activity** — especially aerobic exercise — can boost dopamine and noradrenaline levels in the brain, improving focus, mood, and executive function.
- **Sleep** — Sleep problems are very common in ADHD and can significantly worsen symptoms. Establishing a consistent sleep routine is an important part of managing ADHD well.
- **Structure and routine** — Predictable daily routines, visual reminders, lists, and planning tools (diaries, apps, timers) can reduce the mental load and help compensate for difficulties with organisation and time awareness.
- **Reducing demands on working memory** — Externalising information (writing things down, using alarms, having a dedicated place for important items) takes pressure off a brain that can struggle to hold things in mind reliably.

What to Expect from Treatment

Treatment is rarely a straight line. It may take some time to find the right combination of approaches for you. What works well for one person may work less well for another — and your needs may change over time. Regular review with your treating professional is an important part of managing ADHD well.

Many adults with ADHD find that, with the right support, they are able to thrive — drawing on genuine strengths such as creativity, enthusiasm, and the ability to hyperfocus on things they care about.

**Scan to learn
more about post-
diagnostic support
offered at TEP!**

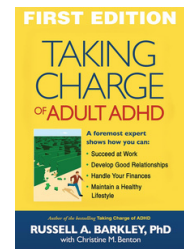


ADHD Resources

Books

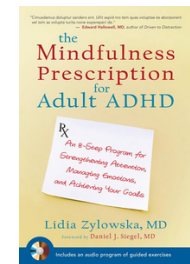
'Taking charge of adult ADHD: Proven strategies to succeed at work, at home, and in relationships' – Russell A. Barkley

This book provides strategies for adults to help manage their ADHD symptoms



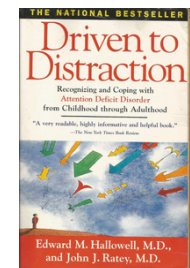
'The mindfulness prescription for Adult ADHD' – Lidia Zylowska

This book provides an 8 step program for mindfulness strategies that have been adapted for those with ADHD



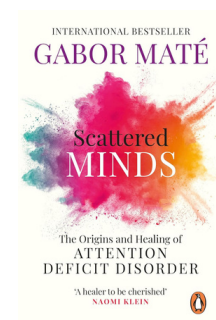
'Driven to distraction' – Ed Hallowell and John Ratey

This book explores varied, and often overlooked manifestations of ADHD in Adults and children, offering practical tools and strategies to help



'Scattered Minds' - Gabor Maté

This was written by a revered physician who specialises in neurology, psychiatry and psychology, and he himself has ADD.



ADHD Resources

Mobile Apps

Forest

A gamified app that supports your focus and helps you stay on task for specified amounts of time



SimpleMind

helps you organise your thoughts with picture maps



Trello

Organisational tool that uses digital boards, lists, and cards



Websites

Government-funded ADHD support

ADHD Foundation

NHS | ADHD in Adults

Understanding ADHD | King's College London Course



ADHD Resources

Support Groups

Procrastination Station

Support for adults with ADHD (run by people with ADHD), including coaching, training, and peer support.

✉ hello@procrastination-station.co.uk

Edinburgh Adult ADHD Meet-Up

Informal peer support group run by Shore Psychology, Leith.

✉ edinburghadhd@mail.com

ADHD Brains Edinburgh

Community meet-up group with peer-led support; social connection and shared experiences.

Neurodivergent Adults Support Group

Peer support for neurodivergent adults in Dunfermline. Join via Facebook (the link above) for updates and events.

Central Wellbeing

Adult Neurodivergent Support Group, open to all neurodivergent adults.

✉ hello@centralwellbeing.org

☎ 01324 274034

Dundee & Angus ADHD Support Group

Support for adults with ADHD, providing advice, support, and community connection

☎ 01382 456 873



Helplines

Autism Advice

To provide emotional
and practical support

email: advice@scottishautism.org

T: 01259 222022 (7 days, 8am to 8pm)

<https://www.scottishautism.org/advice-line-form>

SHOUT

Anyone struggling who would
prefer to chat over text

Text '**SHOUT**': 85258

<https://giveusashout.org>

CALM

Can provide practical advice from
depression to money worries

Phone: 0800 58 58 58

thecalmzone.net

Samaritans

Anyone who is having
a difficult time. Available 24/7

Phone: 116 123

<https://www.samaritans.org>

For urgent help - please contact NHS24 on 111

In an emergency - call 999