

Symptom observation checklist

How to document symptoms for your clinician

Follow the 'What, Where and When' method

Rather than stating general statements like “my child is always running around” or “he/she never sits still”, record specific behaviors.

What did your child do? (Eg., left the dinner table 3 times)

When did this happen? (Eg., during a structured time, like meals or homework, or during a low-structured time, like free play)

Where did the behavior take place? (Eg., during a social gathering or at home)

Note if there had been any trigger (something that happened right before this behavior which may have caused it)



Could it be ADHD?

Many children show ADHD-like behaviors occasionally.

Many ADHD traits are common human traits. For a formal diagnosis of ADHD, symptoms of either impulsivity/hyperactivity or inattentiveness, or both must be present for 6 or more months. Symptom patterns, severity, and impairment are considered.

Rating scales, clinical interviews, and objective tests may be used to reach a clinical decision. Only trained health care providers can diagnose or treat ADHD.

In the meantime, tracking behavior using checklists can help you explain your child's symptoms better, during your next visit.



The ADHD symptom checklist

Instructions: Simply tick 'yes' or 'no' next to each item on the checklist. ✓ ✕

Inattentive behaviors	
Has difficulty staying focused on a task	☐
Makes careless mistakes or overlooks details	☐
Seems to not listen when spoken to directly	☐
Has difficulty organizing tasks	☐
Avoids or dislikes high mental effort tasks like homework or chores	☐
Easily distracted often	☐
Forgetful in day-to-day activities	☐
Does not follow through on instructions, gets sidetracked	☐
Hyperactive/Impulsive behaviors	
Fidgets or squirms when expected to be still	☐
Leaves seat when expected to be seated	☐
Difficulty playing quietly	☐
Seems to almost always be 'on the go'	☐
Talks excessively	☐
Difficulty waiting turn	☐
Interrupts or intrudes on others	☐
Blurts out answers before the question is completed	☐
Runs or climbs excessively (when inappropriate)	☐