

AUTISM – FACTS, SYMPTOMS & NEXT STEPS

National Autism Awareness Month

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports that 1 in 68 children in America are afflicted with Autism. With this number on the rise since the early 1940s, we continually struggle to better understand the origin of neurological and psychological disorders such as this disease.

Family members of a child with a diagnosis of such a debilitating disorder can be affected emotionally and now face an adaptive challenge in understanding why this happened and what to do next. In every effort to add value to this unexpected experience, this guide is a resource that will explain the facts, possible symptoms and next steps.

01 | AUTISM FACTS

- Autism is a mental and neurological disease that affects the development of the brain.
- The Autism Spectrum is comprised of several disorders which are diagnosed independently: Autistic Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS), and Asperger Syndrome.
- Boys are five times as likely to be diagnosed with Autism as girls are.
- Autism can affect any child with or without a family medical history of mental disabilities.
- Families can incur additional medical costs up to six times more than the average patient.

02 | EARLY SIGNS AND/OR SYMPTOMS

Signs of Autism, or other mental and developmental disorders, become prevalent prior to the young age of three. Here are some symptoms to be aware of:

- Difficulty communicating or articulating

- Repetitive behaviors
- Lack of comprehension
- Poor eye contact
- Impaired social interaction
- Impulsive behaviors, gestures or responses
- Resistance to change
- Self-destructive behaviors
- Inability to interact in social settings

03 | NEXT STEPS

If you feel that your child exhibits one or several typical autistic behaviors, contact your medical provider for diagnostic testing. If there is an Autism diagnosis, work directly with your provider to establish a road map for care.

To learn more about Autism, including symptoms, resources and various next steps, visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/facts.html>

Did You Know?
Autism is the fastest growing developmental disability

References

<http://www.webmd.com/brain/autism/parenting-child-with-autism-special-challenges?page=2>

<http://positivemed.com/2013/05/24/autism-spectrum-disorder-chart/>