

Shining a Light on Autism

What Does it Mean to be 'on the Spectrum'?

Did You Know

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), 1 in every 68 American children is on the Autism spectrum.

AUTISM IS BECOMING MORE COMMON

With Ten Times as Many Diagnosed Than 40 Years Ago

Increased research capabilities have allowed for a better understanding of Autism. Autism is a developmental disorder and one of three of the recognized developmental disorders making up the Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). This group also includes disorders such as Asperger's and Pervasive Developmental Disorder, not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS). Those diagnosed with an ASD generally have difficulty in social interactions, exhibit repetitive behaviors, or show difficulty with verbal and non-verbal communication.

ASD are a group of developmental disorders and tend to begin manifesting when children are between 18 months and 3 years old. There are no cures for ASDs, but early detection and treatment can help with social interaction and speech.

Use the list of common signs below to help determine if additional screening is needed.

Early Indicators of Autism Spectrum Disorder

- No babbling or pointing by the age of one, or two-word phrases by two years.
- The child does not respond to their name, or has poor eye contact or social responses, such as smiling.
- Excessive need to line up toys or objects in a specific order.

Later Indicators of Autism Spectrum Disorder

- Unable to make friends with peers or sustain conversation with others.
- Inflexible when it comes to specific routine or rituals.
- Restricted interests usually with abnormal intensity or focus
- Preoccupation with certain objects or subjects.

If one or more of these symptoms apply speak with your physician about the possibility of further screening. For helpful information and tools to assist in interacting with a child with an ASD, check out the Help Autism Now Society's website:

(<http://www.helpautismnow.com/#>)

References

1. http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/autism/detail_autism.htm#243523082
2. http://www.autism.com/is_it_autism
3. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/facts.html>
4. <http://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism>
5. http://www.helpautismnow.com/ph_slideshow_English.html