

Treating Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder

Appropriate diagnosis of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) requires a comprehensive medical evaluation to rule out potential medical causes of the symptoms.

The reliability of diagnosing improves when appropriate guidelines are used and when history is collected from both parents and teachers. A link to The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) Guidelines for the recognition and treatment of ADHD can be found at providerexpress.com.

A thorough diagnostic assessment requires careful consideration of clinical history, including:

- Assessment of home and classroom settings, and how the child's parents and teachers interact with, and manage, the child
- Evaluation of the child's social adjustment, any other mental health symptoms, and medical history and treatment of ADHD can be found at providerexpress.com

Once a diagnosis has been made, the AACAP recommends the initiation of psychopharmacological treatment for patients. Furthermore, NCQA outlines the following recommendations:

- When children 6-12 years of age are **started on medication for ADHD**, they should have a **follow-up visit with the prescriber within 30 days of the initial treatment**
- They should be seen for **follow-up at least two (2) times within the initial nine (9) months** of starting treatment

Visits occur more frequently in standard practice.

Treatment works best when prescribers, parents, teachers, other health care professionals and the child all work together.

The treatment plan usually includes a combination of behavioral therapy, medication, parent training, and education.

Provider and Patient Resources

Our resources are developed from peer-reviewed research and clinical-expert review:

- providerexpress.com - Best Practice Guidelines
- chadd.org - Children & Adolescents with ADD

You can access patient materials online at: providerexpress.com > Clinical Resources > Live and Work Well (LAWW) clinician center. Patient education materials can be printed and cover topics such as:

- Recognizing Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- ADHD: A Guide for Families

You can also direct patients to our member website for more information:

- liveandworkwell.com

This information is provided by the Optum Quality Management and Improvement Department. We welcome your questions and feedback. Contact us via email: qimail@uhc.com