

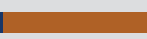


Learning Series - #7

Making sense of medical terminology - AUTISM

A developmental disability which affects verbal and non-verbal communication and social interaction

Although autism is defined by a certain set of behaviors, children and adults can exhibit any combination of the behaviors in any degree of severity.

Prevalence

Population		15-25/1,000
Female : Male		20:80
In Siblings		20%

Co-Morbidities

- Seizures
- Sleep disturbances
- Lead poisoning
- Nutritional issues
- Nervous disorders
- Impaired ADLs

Treatment

Therapy/education: Social communication, interaction and behaviors non medically

Medication: Rx is typically reserved for severe cases or co-morbidities

Alternative Therapies: Many are not yet verifiable and may create additional risks (ie, chelation, cleanses)



Severity	Social communication / Interaction	Repetitive / Restricted behavior
Level 1: Requiring support (Mild)	Noticeable impairment without support – difficulty initiating social interactions, visible social isolation	Behaviors significantly interfere with function – difficulty in switching between behaviors, focus on special interests (trains), general topics or collecting
Level 2: Requiring substantial support (Moderate)	Marked deficits in communication – reduced responses to social cues	Behaviors sufficiently frequent and obvious to casual observer – substantial rigidity in changing focus or attention
Level 3: Requiring very substantial support (Severe)	Severe impairments in functioning – nonverbal or physical gesturing to communicate, presence of echolalia	Behaviors markedly interfere with function – rocking or spinning, flapping, sniffing, handling, mouthing

Underwriting Considerations

- Ascertain social Integration - education and/or employment
- Assess intellectual delay and/or IQ
- Evaluate mental health
- Address any neurological concerns - seizures, etc
- Determine level of severity
- Is any treatment required?
- Understand need for insurance
- Do ADLs require caregiver support?
- Confirm diagnosis - Asperger's Syndrome vs Autism

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