

5 QUESTIONS

about diagnosing a child with ADHD



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Q: What is ADHD?
A: ADHD, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, is a neurological disorder which manifests itself in behavioral symptoms that may make it difficult for the child to perform successfully in school and other activities. These symptoms include inattention and/or impulsivity and hyperactivity. ADHD is divided into three subtypes: inattentive type, impulsive type and “combined” type, which combines characteristics of both inattentive and impulsive types.

Q: What are some signs of ADHD in children?
A: The most common symptoms in children vary by subtype, but typically involve inattentive symptoms such as distractibility; difficulty staying on task and completing tasks, schoolwork or chores; frequently losing things (such as schoolwork, books and personal items); and difficulty with organizing tasks and personal items. Children may also appear fidgety and have difficulty sitting still, seem to have endless energy and may talk excessively or blurt out answers before the question is completed. They have difficulty waiting their turn in activities and often butt into or intrude on others’ conversations and activities.

Q: How can a parent differentiate between normal “acting out” and ADHD?
A: Beginning at about 2 years old, children will begin to act out in an attempt to assert their independence. To one degree or another, this “acting out” will continue throughout adolescence into the early 20s. Children with ADHD, on the other hand, have difficulty with maintaining self control and thinking ahead, leading to poor or impulsive decision-making. Children with ADHD can tend to be more argumentative and oppositional with parents and authority figures than their peers who do not have ADHD.

Q: Who should a parent contact if they suspect a problem?
A: If a parent suspects that their child has an attentional deficit, they should contact the child’s pediatrician. Many pediatricians are skilled at assessing and diagnosing the disorder. Parents may also request a referral from their physician to a licensed psychologist, clinical social worker or professional counselor who has training and expertise in assessing and diagnosing ADHD.

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What goes in your cart?



Developing a healthy attitude in kids can lead to better choices

BY ANNE BURKLEY • For The Patriot-News

Years ago, kids asked for packaged food to get toys out of the box or proofs-of-purchase to send away for prizes. Today, kids beg for cereal, fruit snacks, soup, macaroni and cheese and other foods that are in packages that feature their favorite TV shows and movies. If a cartoon character on a food package is a deciding factor when it comes to what goes in your grocery cart, you have plenty of company. According to the Federal Trade Commission, U.S. food and beverage companies spend more than \$1.6 billion a year advertising to children, who in turn nag their parents to buy the products they want.

Although marketing campaigns have influenced children’s eating habits since the days of the Secret Decoder Ring, the recent rise in childhood obesity has experts, researchers — and sometimes even the companies themselves — looking for ways to encourage healthier choices. Abigail Ketchum of Susquehanna Twp. said that her 2-year-old son recently made the transition from wanting everything Elmo to wanting everything “Cars.”

“Up until now, the nagging has been manageable,” she said. In fact, since Elmo tended to be associated with healthy foods, Ketchum said it felt nice to be able to give him something that he wanted. “Since he discovered ‘Cars,’ shopping is starting to be a problem,” she admitted. So far, she’s managed to limit the ‘Cars’-related food purchases to 100 percent juice boxes, but she worries about the day

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HEALTHY PICK OF THE WEEK: PERSIMMONS

Dating to ancient China, this orange-red fruit made its U.S. debut in the 1880s after being introduced in Washington, D.C. Today, California produces hundreds of persimmon varieties.
• NUTRITION: A medium-sized persimmon contains 120 calories and is a good source of fiber and vitamins A and K.
• HOW TO CHOOSE: Select persimmons that are plump with smooth, unblemished skin, and eat ripe ones

immediately.
• HOW TO STORE: Store unripe persimmons at room temperature in a paper bag with an apple or banana to ripen. Or briefly store ripe persimmons in the refrigerator.
• HOW TO USE: With persimmons’ sweet flavor, they make a great addition to desserts. Try a persimmon cheesecake or a traditional persimmon pudding.

SOURCE: FruitsandVeggiesMatter.gov



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