

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD/ADHD)

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (AD/HD) is an increasingly common issue facing college students today. AD/HD symptoms show up in various situations, such as in the college classroom, and may create difficulties getting work done. Symptoms may also affect relationships with friends and family.

While AD/HD symptoms are frequently present prior to 7 years of age and are most commonly diagnosed in children, AD/HD often goes undiagnosed until adulthood. This can have a negative effect on an individual's sense of self-worth. For example, those with misunderstood AD/HD symptoms may have taken in negative perceptions of themselves as "lazy," "dumb," or "slow." To complicate matters further, men may be over-diagnosed and women may be under-diagnosed.

The hallmark symptoms of AD/HD include:

- Difficulty focusing attention
- Hyperactivity
- Impulsivity

It is not unusual for college students to experience some symptoms of AD/HD at some time in their college careers. For instance, at some point in their schooling, college students may find that they have difficulty focusing on schoolwork or make impulsive, poorly thought-out decisions; these characteristics alone are not reflective of AD/HD.

Rather, symptoms must be present in two or more settings including school, home, and work and interfere significantly with daily functioning. Further, symptoms of depression or anxiety may be mistakenly understood as AD/HD. If you have questions about AD/HD, the counselors in Guilford's Counseling Center can direct you to providers in the area who specialize in this issue.

Signs of AD/HD include:

- Difficulty sustaining attention in tasks
- Being easily distracted or forgetful in daily activities
- Making careless mistakes in schoolwork, work, or other activities
- Lack of follow through in completing homework, chores, or responsibilities at work
- Losing things necessary for tasks or activities
- Fidgety or difficulty remaining still
- Talking excessively or not seeming to listen when spoken to
- Interrupting others or blurting out answers before questions have been completed

If you would like to talk about any of these issues, call the Counseling Center at (336) 316-2163.
