

# How do I speak with my doctor about

# ADHD?

*Staring back at me*

**After reading the information provided on the Staring Back at Me website, you may recognise some of the signs and symptoms of ADHD in yourself.**

If you are worried or would like to talk through your experiences, it is recommended you make an appointment with your doctor. It can feel daunting to speak to a doctor about ADHD, but they can offer the help and support you may need.

If you suspect you may have ADHD or would like to discuss your symptoms with a doctor, the following tips could support this conversation.



**Read the symptoms list on the Staring Back at Me website and note down any that you experience on a regular basis.**



**Write down your questions ahead of the appointment and bring them with you.**



**Leave the appointment with a plan for your next steps – that could be a referral to a specialist.**



**Go over the outcome of the appointment. You could consider booking in a follow up appointment to confirm your progress.**



**“Before my diagnosis I felt like I didn’t fit in. I felt a little bit broken because I couldn’t understand why I couldn’t do some seemingly simple tasks.”**

*Jenny McLaughlin*

**Staring Back at Me Ambassador**

## Registering and booking an appointment

You must be registered with a local practice to make an appointment. It's easy and quick to register with a practice of your choice in your local area and see any of their doctors.

### What to expect during your doctor's appointment?

During your appointment it's important to be open and honest with the doctor. Opening up about your feelings can be scary, however, doctors are trained to deal with sensitive information in a professional and supportive way. They will ask you questions to get a fuller picture of your health, so be sure to share all the details about how you're feeling or how the symptoms are affecting you. Use the notes you have prepared as a guide if it is helpful.

- You might be asked about past and current symptoms. Your doctor may ask you about your childhood, teenage years and into adulthood
- They may perform a physical exam and ask about any other health issues/concerns
- You could be asked about any other life events past and present. This may include symptoms relating to severity, duration and how they impact your quality of life
- They may ask you if there is any family history of ADHD

**Do not be afraid to ask your own questions and refer to your notes throughout the appointment.**

### What are the symptoms of ADHD?

ADHD is a neurodevelopmental condition that can affect behaviour.<sup>1</sup> The condition presents itself differently in each person but primarily impacts the part of the brain that allows us to organise, plan and focus, as well as manage emotions.<sup>1,2</sup> The key symptoms of ADHD can be categorised into:

#### **Inattentiveness**

Difficulty concentrating and focusing

#### **Hyperactivity**

Feeling restless and constantly on the go

#### **Impulsiveness**

Acting spontaneously, sometimes driven by emotions



**“I couldn't sit still, I couldn't concentrate. I wasn't disruptive but I was very reserved - sitting and listening to my own thoughts rather than a teacher.”**

*Jannine Harris*

**Staring Back at Me Ambassador**

## How is ADHD diagnosed?

There's no simple test to determine whether you have ADHD, but your specialist can make an accurate diagnosis after a detailed assessment.<sup>3</sup>

## Additional support

This campaign has been funded by Takeda UK Ltd. The following organisations have been part of the campaign roll out and could offer additional support.



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### References

1. [Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder \(ADHD\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)
2. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4195638/>
3. [Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder \(ADHD\) - Diagnosis - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

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