



# NATIONAL ADHD AWARENESS MONTH



Millions of Americans are affected by ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), which is characterized by high levels of inattention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity.<sup>1</sup> However, many individuals go undiagnosed without proper treatment which may lead to serious consequences, such as school failure, family stress, depression, problems with relationships, substance abuse, accidental injuries, job failure, and more. ADHD Awareness Month is observed every October to highlight the experiences of people with ADHD and bring more awareness to effective treatment options. In this infographic, HARC provides information about ADHD symptoms and local data, as well as treatment options and how to get a diagnosis.

## What is ADHD?<sup>2</sup>



Everybody has experienced difficulty paying attention or controlling impulsive behavior; however, for people with ADHD, these problems can be so persistent that they interfere with every aspect of their life.

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by high levels of inattention, impulsivity and hyperactivity. Medical science first documented children exhibiting inattentiveness, impulsivity and hyperactivity in 1902. Today, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Fifth Edition (DSM-5) lists three presentations of ADHD – Predominantly Inattentive, Hyperactive-Impulsive and Combined. Most symptoms are summarized below:

### ADHD Predominantly Inattentive

- Has difficulty sustaining attention
- Fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes
- Has difficulty with organization
- Struggles to follow through with instructions
- Avoids or dislikes tasks requiring sustained mental effort
- Loses things
- Is easily distracted

### ADHD Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive

- Has difficulty remaining seated
- Difficulty engaging in activities quietly
- Fidgets with hands or feet
- Runs about or climbs excessively in children; extreme restlessness in adults
- Feels as if driven by a motor
- Difficulty waiting or taking turns
- Interrupts or intrudes upon others
- Blurts out answers before questions have been completed

### ADHD Combined

- The individual meets the criteria for both inattention and hyperactive-impulsive ADHD.



## Coachella Valley Data<sup>3</sup>

Approximately 18.5% of children in the Coachella Valley age three and older (13,521 children) have been diagnosed with one or more mental health disorders. The most common diagnosis is attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD):



**7.4% of children in the Coachella Valley have been diagnosed with ADHD**

ADHD symptoms typically arise in early childhood, but it is a disorder that **affects all ages**. Although there is no data available on the percentage of adults with ADHD in the Coachella Valley, the National Institute of Mental Health estimates that the overall prevalence of current adult ADHD is 4.4%.<sup>4</sup> ADHD is thought to be underdiagnosed in adults compared to children.

## How is ADHD treated?<sup>5</sup>

Treating ADHD often requires medical, educational, behavioral and psychological intervention. This comprehensive approach to treatment may include the following:



- Parent training
- Medication
- Skills training
- Counseling
- Behavioral therapy
- Educational supports
- Education regarding ADHD



## Diagnosing ADHD<sup>6</sup>

There are several types of professionals who can diagnose ADHD, including clinical psychologists, clinical social workers, nurse practitioners, neurologists, psychiatrists and pediatricians. There is no single test to diagnose ADHD so a comprehensive evaluation is necessary for a diagnosis, using the DSM-5 criteria for ADHD. A diagnosis may also involve gathering information from multiple resources such as standardized behavior rating scales, a detailed history of past and current functioning, and information obtained from family members or significant others who know the person well.

**For a proper diagnosis, please visit your or your child's primary care provider or pediatrician.**



For more data and resources, please visit: [HARCdata.org](https://harcdata.org)



### Sources:

1. <https://chadd.org/awareness-month/>
2. <https://chadd.org/for-adults/diagnosis-of-adhd-in-adults/>
3. Coachella Valley Community Health Survey. (2019). HARC. Available online at: <https://harcdata.org/coachella-valley-community-health-survey/executive-report/>
4. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd>
5. <https://chadd.org/about-adhd/treatment-of-adhd/>
6. <https://chadd.org/about-adhd/diagnosing-adhd/>