

Signs and symptoms of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is characterised by impairments in social communication, as well as restricted or repetitive patterns of behaviour, interests and activities. The diagnostic process is complex and takes into account the various environmental circumstances the individual engages in.

This checklist is NOT A STANDALONE DIAGNOSTIC TOOL.

A		Social & Communication Deficits		
A1	Problems understanding and responding to emotions in social settings:			
	• Unusual social interaction			
	• Reduced sharing of feelings			
	• Failure to initiate or respond to social interactions			
A2	Difficulties with non-verbal communication in social settings:			
	• Unusual body language when communicating (for example, not using hands)			
	• Unusual eye contact			
	• Poor understanding other's gestures (for example, following the gaze of others)			
A3	Problems developing, maintaining and understanding relationships:			
	• Difficulty adjusting behaviour in different social settings			
	• Lack of interest in peers			
	• Poor understanding of peers and social activities			
	• Difficulty sharing			
	• Poor imaginative play			
B		Restricted, Repetitive Patterns of Behaviour, Interests or Activities		
B1	Stereotyped/repetitive behaviours:			
	• Lining things up/obsessive compulsive like tendencies			
	• Repeating irrelevant words/phrases (for example, dialogue of favourite shows)			
B2	Inflexible demands for sameness in one's environment/routines:			
	• Extreme distress at small changes			
	• Rigid thought patterns (for example, can appear argumentative)			
B3	Highly restricted, fixated interests that are unusually intense			
	• Extreme obsessions with unusual objects/topics			
B4	Unusually sensitive or insensitive to sensory input			
	• Indifference to pain/temperature			
	• Adverse response to sounds/textures			
	• Excessive smelling/touching			
	• Visual fixations to light/movement (for example, spinning)			

*If a child has experienced at least 1 symptom from **each of the A categories** and at least 1 symptom from two **B categories** during their early developmental period and beyond, they may meet criteria for an ASD diagnosis.*