

The Scoop On ADHD

by Kirsten Weir



Image 100/Alamy

Maybe you've heard of ADHD. Perhaps your brother, your sister, or a friend has it. You might have received such a diagnosis yourself. But what exactly is ADHD? And what is it like to have it? *Current Health* talked to four students with ADHD. They give us the scoop and offer tips on how to be a helpful friend.

What Is It?

ADHD stands for *attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder*. (In the past, it was just called attention deficit disorder-ADD for short.) In 2013, the American Psychiatric Association reported that 5% of children had ADHD.

The disorder shows itself in different ways. People with ADHD might have trouble paying attention, sitting still, staying focused, or following directions. They might say or do things without thinking.

"I daydream, and I don't really hear what people are saying," said Hannah S. when she was 12 years old. "If there's something on my desk, I play with it."

Shyanne D. could see the way her ADHD symptoms showed up while she was at school in the seventh grade. "I can't sit still. I always get hyper," she said.

Why Do Some Kids Have It?

Researchers aren't sure what causes ADHD, but they think genes play a big part. Genes carry the instructions that make us who we are, and they are passed down from a father and mother to their child. Often, ADHD is passed along from parent to child as well.

Having ADHD can sometimes make it hard for kids to do well in school. Kids with ADHD might have trouble listening to directions or forget to turn in homework. They might get out of their seats a lot, even when the teacher says to sit still. That doesn't mean that they are "bad kids" or aren't smart, Janet S. Reed, a neuropsychologist, told *Current Health*. When kids with ADHD show those behaviors, she said, "It's not their fault."

Kids with ADHD say that having the disorder can be frustrating. "You don't get to choose if you want to pay attention or not. You can't control it," Hannah said.

Shyanne agreed. "Some people think it's an excuse. People sometimes think that you're lying about it. It's not an excuse-it's really something that you have."

Working through ADHD

Luckily, strategies exist for dealing with ADHD. "There are things [kids] can do to work around it," Reed said. Young people with ADHD often take medications to help them stay focused. For many kids, the medicines help them concentrate on their work and do better in school.

"I take medication in the morning," said Lauren K. She said that it helped her focus. "It's enough to get me through the school day, but when I get home I get kind of crazy and have a lot of energy."

If you have a friend with ADHD, you can be a help to him or her. Friends can gently give kids with ADHD reminders about what they're supposed to be doing and help keep them on track, Reed said. The kids *Current Health* spoke with have some helpful pals. "My friend sometimes wakes me up when I'm staring into space," Hannah said.

Everyone's Different

Each student can learn his or her own ways of dealing with symptoms that get in the way of everyday tasks.

"Sometimes I put things where they don't belong," said Lauren. "If you lose something [such as homework], you're going to get a bad grade."

Keeping things organized is a good strategy for staying on top of assignments. Reed recommended that when it's time to study, kids with ADHD find a clean, quiet workspace away from windows, TVs, and other distractions.

Sometimes, relaxing outside can help calm ADHD behaviors. Scientists recently reported that kids with ADHD concentrate better after taking walks in a park.

Counselors and therapists can help each person come up with strategies to calm down and focus.

"I used to not be able to hear what people were saying," said Robert F. at the age of 13. He would sometimes miss something important while he was daydreaming. "Then I taught my ears how to listen," he said.

Up to the Challenge

What do Magic Johnson, Will Smith, and Justin Timberlake all have in common? They're all superstars in their fields, and-you guessed it-all are reported to have ADHD.

Vaughn Soso, from New York City, also has ADHD. He's a champion chess player. Vaughn started playing in second grade and has entered more than 50 tournaments. In 2009, he came in first at the SuperNationals, a huge tournament that happens only once every four years.

Living with ADHD can be a challenge. But people with the disorder can be just as successful as anyone else.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What percentage of kids have had ADHD in 2013?

- A. zero percent
- B. five percent
- C. ten percent
- D. fifteen percent

2. How do the headings help organize the passage's information?

- A. The headings summarize the information in each section.
- B. The headings suggest which parts to read for specific information, because it is not necessary to read the whole passage.
- C. The headings define the difficult terms within the passage.
- D. The headings introduce questions to be answered in each section.

3. What is suggested about the cause of ADHD?

- A. ADHD may be related to genes passed from parent to child.
- B. ADHD may be caused by medicines.
- C. ADHD may be caused by excuses and dishonesty.
- D. ADHD may be related to "bad kids."

4. What is suggested about the possible treatments for ADHD?

- A. Those with ADHD are required to take medicine to stay healthy.
- B. Only medicine can help those with ADHD.
- C. There are strategies and medicine that help treat ADHD.
- D. There is a cure for ADHD.

5. What is this passage mostly about?

- A. how ADHD is different in sisters and brothers
- B. ADHD and how to deal with it
- C. different kids' personalities
- D. famous people with ADHD

6. Why might the author have included statements from four students who live with ADHD?

- A. to include perspectives from those who have the disorder
- B. to attempt to prove that ADHD is not a real disorder
- C. to convince the reader that ADHD is a real disorder
- D. to provide evidence that those with ADHD need a cure

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

People can end up being very successful _____ they have ADHD.

- A. because
- B. including
- C. before
- D. even though

8. What difficulties might people with ADHD have?

9. Read this sentence from the text.

"Luckily, strategies exist for dealing with ADHD."

What should kids with ADHD do when it is time to study? What are two things people with ADHD can do to deal with the disorder? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

10. Read this sentence from the text.

"Living with ADHD can be a challenge. But people with the disorder can be just as successful as anyone else."

How can someone with ADHD be just as successful as anyone else? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Got Allergies?

More people in the United States have allergies today compared with decades ago. Allergies are bad reactions to things around you or that you eat.

In 2010, more than half of Americans were sensitive to at least one allergen. That was the finding of one survey by the National Institutes of Health. Allergens are things that set off allergies. Many allergens-such as dust and mold-are found in the air.

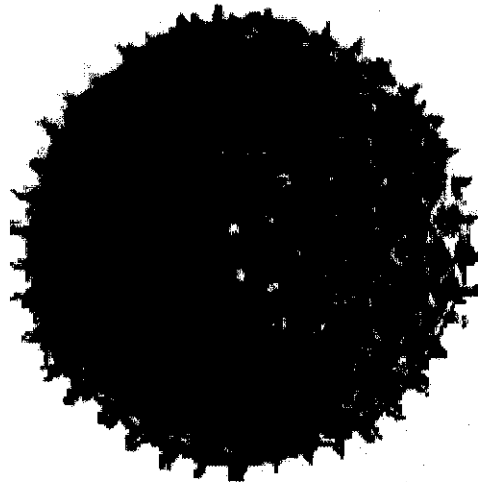
"Allergies [are] increasing over time," said Andy Nish. He is a doctor from Georgia.



Corbis

Allergens in the air aren't the only problem. Kids' food allergies have risen too. Between 1997 and 2007, the number of kids with food allergies jumped 18 percent. Eating milk products and eggs can give some children rashes. Those foods can even cause some people to have trouble breathing.

What's behind the spread of allergies? Some scientists think our immune systems don't have enough to do. Immune systems help our bodies fight germs. But kids today come in contact with fewer germs than their grandparents did. That's in part because more medicine is available. Experts say that when our immune systems have fewer germs to fight, they can get confused. They attack other things, such as milk that we drink, instead.



Getty Images

Other scientists say hotter temperatures are to blame. They say the weather is warmer for longer periods now, so plants bloom longer. Plants release pollen, which is a common allergen.

Doctors do not know for sure what's making allergies increase. But they do know how to treat them with medicine. "There is very good treatment for allergies," Nish says. "No one should suffer with symptoms."

Take Cover!

Dust and other allergens that float into your nose are in for a blast—a cough or a sneeze, that is! Both are natural **reflexes**, or responses, to help keep you from getting sick. Here's a look at the big bursts.

Sneeze

Sneezes start at the back of your throat. Each quick burst can force out up to 40,000 droplets of saliva. The tiny droplets travel at up to 300 miles per hour.

Cough



iStock

Coughs come out of your lungs. Each blast can push out 3,000 saliva droplets as fast as 50 miles per hour. Enough air comes out to almost fill a two-liter bottle.



Alamy

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. According to the text, what are increasing in the United States?

- A. allergens
- B. germs
- C. allergies
- D. reflexes

2. Which of the following best describes the solution proposed in the text for people who suffer from allergies?

- A. The solution is to stay away from dust and mold.
- B. The solution is to stop eating milk products and eggs.
- C. The solution is to hide from anything that causes allergies.
- D. The solution is taking medicine to help with allergy symptoms.

3. Allergies can affect someone's everyday life.

What evidence can be used to support the statement?

- A. "More people in the United States have allergies today compared with decades ago."
- B. "Allergens in the air aren't the only problem."
- C. "Those foods can even cause some people to have trouble breathing."
- D. "But kids today come in contact with fewer germs than their grandparents did."

4. What can be concluded from the passage?

- A. A person with allergies is sick and needs to see a doctor.
- B. A person who sneezes and coughs often may have allergies.
- C. A person who drinks milk and eats eggs will definitely get allergies.
- D. A person who lives in a place with hot weather will never get allergies.

5. What is the main idea of this article?

- A. Allergies are increasing, but simple steps can be taken to cope with them.
- B. Our own human nature has produced more allergies than ever.
- C. Everyday foods have caused a higher proportion of allergies than ever.
- D. Coughs and sneezes are reflexes to allergens.

6. Read the sentences:

"'There is very good treatment for allergies,' Nish says. 'No one should suffer with **symptoms**.'"

As used in the text, what does "**symptoms**" mean?

- A. changes in the body that are signs that a person is sick
- B. changes in temperature that give people allergies
- C. changes in medicine to treat people when they are sick
- D. changes in people's immune systems that cause allergies

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Kids come into contact with fewer germs today, _____ their immune systems get confused and attack other things.

- A. if
- B. after
- C. although
- D. so

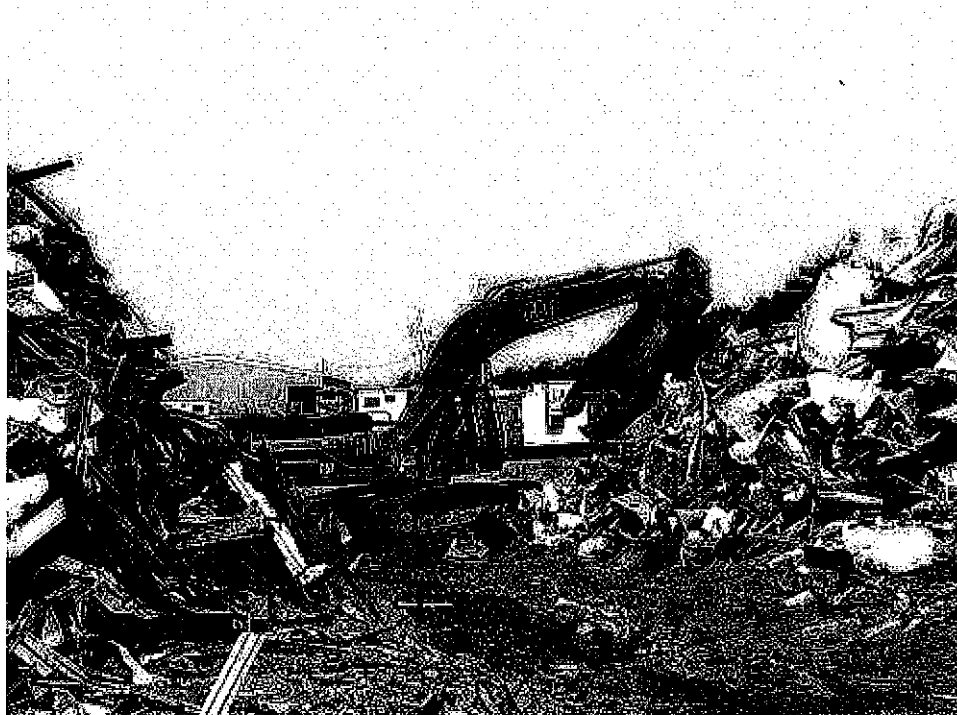
8. What can be concluded from the evidence that coughs and sneezes are natural reflexes and from the evidence that our immune system attacks allergens?

9. What two possible reasons for the increase in allergies are explained in the passage? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

10. What can be concluded about the increase of allergies in the future? Use the evidence from the text to support your answer.

Your Recycled House

by ReadWorks



Imagine you are building a new house, but you are not using any new material. A house like this would use construction material like wood and metal from other places. By using old material, you are reusing and recycling material that already exists. If you build your house like this, you are building a house in a way that is friendly to the environment, or eco-friendly.

To reuse material is to use it again; to recycle material is to reuse it, or to find a new use for it. You could get materials to reuse or recycle from old houses being torn down, construction sites, recycling centers, junkyards, and scrap yards. Reusing and recycling can be as simple as buying a used bathtub and putting it in the new house. Or it can be more complicated, like using the metal from old umbrellas to make lighting fixtures. By using your imagination, you can recycle a lot of different things for different uses.

Find a house before it's torn down and get whatever wood you can for the frame of your new house. You could reuse doors and floors from this old house.

If you live near a beach, you can find driftwood and use it for decoration or the railing of your porch. If you live near farms, you can reuse an old grain silo. A tall grain silo gives you a

second floor! If you live near a shipping port, you may find old shipping containers that can make a great existing structure. You can use the bare sides and top as walls and a ceiling. You can then find wooden shipping crates to lay a new floor inside your shipping container.

You can stack old tires from a junkyard to make a wall. Another wall could be made out of scrap metal found in scrap yards. The scrap-metal wall would be shiny and look very different from your tire wall.

Can you imagine your eco-friendly house yet? Make sure you think about what kind of house you want and plan it well. Find the right type and amount of construction material. Also, make sure your construction material is clean and safe for reuse. If you don't plan your eco-friendly house well, you may feel like your house looks more like trash!

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What does it mean to reuse and recycle material?

- A. to throw away old material
- B. use new material that is built from scratch
- C. find a new place and use for material that is already being used
- D. find a new place and use for material no one uses anymore

2. What does the author describe in the passage?

- A. different ways old material can be used to build a new house
- B. different ways new material can be used to build a new house
- C. how new houses can be designed
- D. how construction sites and recycling centers are organized

3. Different structures can be used to build a house, such as a grain silo or an old shipping container. Based on this evidence, what conclusion can be made?

- A. Shipping containers should only be used to build a house if no other structures can be found.
- B. Recycled houses don't have to be built from scratch using old materials.
- C. Recycled houses can't be built by using old materials only.
- D. The material for a recycled house has to come from a shipping port.

4. Eco-friendly means friendly to the environment. Why is using recycled material to build a house an eco-friendly way to build a house?

- A. because it increases the amount of new material used to build the house
- B. because it lessens the amount of new material used to build the house
- C. because it leads to the use of more trees and wood to build the house
- D. because it provides new uses for old shipping containers

5. What is the passage mainly about?

- A. the role of junkyards in society today
- B. popular construction materials used to build houses
- C. different ways a house can be built with recycled materials
- D. the environmental benefits of building recycled houses

6. Read the following sentences.

"If you live near a beach, you can find driftwood and use it for decoration or the railing of your porch. If you live near farms, you can reuse an old grain silo. A tall grain silo gives you a second floor! If you live near a shipping port, you may find old shipping containers that can make a great existing **structure**. They already come with four walls and a ceiling."

As used in the passage, what does the word "**structure**" most nearly mean?

- A. something made of parts connected together in an ordered way
- B. something that does not have any organization or order
- C. something that can only be found near a shipping port
- D. a material used to build walls and ceilings

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Recycled houses take advantage of recycled and reused materials _____ tires, old metal, wood, and more.

- A. certainly
- B. however
- C. previously
- D. such as

8. Based on the text, what is one place where you could get materials to use for your recycled house?

9. According to the text, what are three materials you could use to build a recycled house?

10. The author states, "By using your imagination you can recycle a lot of different things for different uses." Use information from the passage to support this statement.