

Transcript — How is ADHD diagnosed?

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[0:00] Introduction

[Title slide: How is ADHD diagnosed?; [Understood](#) logo]

[Description: A person with gray hair, glasses, and a short, white beard, wearing a blue button-down shirt, sits in a chair in an office setting with a desk and laptop in the background.]

[On-screen text: Thomas E. Brown, Ph.D., Associate Director, Yale Clinic for Attention and Related Disorders]

Thomas: Parents often wonder, how can you get a diagnosis about whether or not a child has ADHD or doesn't?

[0:13] The diagnostic process

There is no one test that makes the determination, does a person have ADHD?

[Description: Thomas counts on his fingers as he lists each item.]

There is no imaging picture that you can take of their brain. There is no blood test. There is no computer test. There is no electroencephalogram. This is not something which is determined by any one single test.

What's really involved in learning about somebody enough to know if they have a diagnosis is a well-conducted interview of a mental health or medical professional who understands ADHD with the parents, with the child. Also, making use of information from school, if they're in school. And from other people who can tell us more about how this child is functioning in aspects of everyday life.

It's usually a conversation, an interview, or possibly a series of a few interviews, between the professional and the parents and the boy or girl to be able to learn more about what is daily life like for them and how does it compare with what you'd normally expect for somebody else in that age.

We want to know a little bit about what's going on in the family, what stressors there might be that are causing pressures.

We want to inquire about whether there are any health problems that have been difficult that may be contributing to some of the difficulties of this child.

We want to know what other people in the family have had. Are there several other people? We know that ADHD is inherited. And are there several other people in the family, close relatives perhaps, who have similar problems, which would increase the likelihood?

[1:54] Common symptoms of ADHD

All the characteristics of ADHD, if you look at that list of symptoms and show it to anybody and say, "Have you ever had this?" Everybody's hand would be up and say, "Sure, of course."

But those symptoms that we all have sometimes:

- Difficulty focusing
- Difficulty getting started
- Getting distracted too much
- Quitting too soon on a task

Those are all things that everybody has some trouble with.

The purpose of the diagnostic interview is to find out from the person and the parents and the teachers how this person really functions day-by-day compared to others of the same age.

[2:31] Key takeaways

[Description: A white screen with a purple heading and dark gray text.]

[On-screen text and narrator: Key Takeaways

- There is no one test that determines if a person has ADHD.
- To get a diagnosis, a person needs to be interviewed by a health professional who knows a lot about ADHD.
- The interviewer asks about school and home to help determine how a child is functioning compared to kids the same age.]

[Description: The screen transitions to show four different content thumbnails with related links from Understood.]

[On-screen text: More to explore on Understood. [7 myths about ADHD](#); [ADHD by the numbers](#); [Could your child have ADHD?](#); [Video: I have ADHD and I am...](#)]

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