

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder: Not Otherwise Specified



Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Not Otherwise Specified (NOS) is the fourth subtype of ADHD. This rarely-used category was developed for youngsters whose behaviors conform to the general guidelines for Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder but whose symptoms do not quite meet the criteria for ADHD. This category is also used when there is an atypical or mixed presentation of symptoms, when attention problems are present but behavioral criteria are not sufficiently met.

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, NOS appears to be used as a diagnosis for situations in which children may be experiencing moderate attention problems in school that might be better characterized as learning or executive-functioning difficulties.

Since a great deal of overlap occurs between Learning Disabilities, Executive Functioning Disorder, and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, this use of an ADHD NOS diagnosis may be common. Also, rather than being categorized as ADHD NOS, many youngsters are instead described as having borderline or sub-clinical levels of ADHD.

Rather than providing specific recommendations for youngsters with ADHD NOS, we redirect you to our sections on the three main subtypes of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (Hyperactive/Impulsive Type, Inattentive Type, and Combined Type). You may also be interested in reading more about Executive Functioning Disorder and Learning Disabilities if your child has been diagnosed with ADHD NOS.