



# TIPS

## for Living With ADHD

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a condition characterized by inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity. ADHD usually is diagnosed in childhood and often lasts into adulthood. With medical or behavioral treatment, most people with ADHD can be successful in school and at work and can lead productive lives. The following tips can help if you have ADHD.

**Make tasks more manageable.** Write down the steps needed to complete a task and follow each step in order until it is finished. If necessary, take small, timed breaks before returning to finish the task at hand.

**Do it now.** You can avoid procrastination, forgetfulness, and clutter by doing things right away, rather than postponing them. If something can be done in two minutes or less, do it instead of putting it off until a later time.

**Tidy up your living space.** Ask yourself what items you need on a daily basis. Donate or throw away items that you do not need. Use storage bins or closets for things that are not required for everyday use. Designate specific areas for bills, keys, and other items that you can easily misplace.

**Actively listen.** If you find your mind wandering when a person is talking, mentally repeat his or her words so you can follow the conversation. Try not to interrupt when someone is speaking, pay attention to body language, ask questions to clarify what is being said, and ask the person to repeat what he or she said if needed.

**Move around when necessary.** If you have the urge to move around, feel free to do so. If you need to fidget or stand up for a period of time to help you pay attention, it is all right to do so. Take care not to disrupt others, though. Squeezing a stress ball also may help.

**Practice relaxation exercises.** Relaxation exercises such as yoga, tai chi, or meditation can be a positive and efficient way to reduce hyperactivity and inattention from ADHD. In addition to relieving stress, relaxation exercises may teach you to better control your attention and impulses.

**Give yourself ample time.** Allow yourself more time than you think is required to arrive at your destination or to complete a task. For every 30 minutes of time you think it will take you, give yourself a cushion by adding 10 minutes.

**Choose to say “No.”** Avoid making too many social plans or taking on too many projects at work. Check your schedule before agreeing to new obligations. Overextending yourself can make you feel overwhelmed and overtired. It also can affect the quality of your work and lead to missed commitments.

*This page is part of an ongoing series of practical tips for patients with neurologic disorders. If you have compiled clinically relevant tips that you wish to share, please contact the editor at [info@neurologyreviews.com](mailto:info@neurologyreviews.com).*

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