



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Pay Attention to ADHD

Prevalence of Parent-Reported Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder Among Children — United States, 2003 and 2007

Recorded: November 9, 2010; posted: November 25, 2010

[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC — safer, healthier people.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Maintaining focus and staying on-task is sometimes difficult for all of us, but for people with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD, completing the simplest of chores can be a major ordeal.

Susanna Visser is an epidemiologist with CDC's National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities. She's joining us today to discuss the symptoms of and treatment for ADHD. Welcome to the show, Sue.

[Ms. Visser] Thank you for having me.

[Dr. Gaynes] Sue, how common is ADHD in the U.S.?

[Ms. Visser] ADHD is considered the most common neuro-behavioral disorder of childhood, and we estimate, based on a recent survey of parents, that nearly one in 10 children have been diagnosed with ADHD. This represents an increase of one million children since our previous survey.

[Dr. Gaynes] Is ADHD diagnosed more often in a particular sex or age group?

[Ms. Visser] Yes. Two and a half times more frequently in boys, actually. And we also know that the diagnosis is more likely as children enter school age, it increases in middle school age and then decreases into adolescence.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the typical signs and symptoms of ADHD?

[Ms. Visser] A child with ADHD tends to have symptoms that include forgetfulness, they tend not to be able to pay attention to common childhood tasks, they're more hyperactive than other children of the same age, and these symptoms together result in problems with friends, with their family members, attending to school tasks, and the like. So it can be a very impairing condition for children.

[Dr. Gaynes] Sue, are there any other problems associated with ADHD?

[Ms. Visser] Yes. Actually, we know that more than two-thirds of children with ADHD have a second mental health condition. And ADHD is also associated with unintentional injury, such as burns, scalds, bog bites, and things of that nature.

[Dr. Gaynes] Can ADHD be cured?

[Ms. Visser] No, ADHD cannot be cured, but it can be successfully managed with your health care provider, or doctor. There are medications that can relive symptoms of ADHD, and there are behavioral approaches, such as family counseling and skill building for school that can improve the child's ability to relate to his or her family and friends.

[Dr. Gaynes] Sue, where can listeners get more information about ADHD?

[Ms. Visser] Listeners can go to our website at www.cdc.gov/adhd.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Sue. I've been talking today with CDC's Susanna Visser about ADHD. Remember - ADHD can have a negative impact on academic performance, as well as the ability to socialize with family and friends. Although there is no known cure, the condition can be managed and treated. If your child is exhibiting signs of ADHD, talk to your health care provider.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.