

What other diagnoses are seen with ADHD?

By: Professor Andreas Reif

ADHD goes along with other diagnoses over the life span. In childhood, oppositional defiant disorder or conduct disorder are e.g. frequently occurring with ADHD. In adulthood, mood and anxiety disorders, but also substance use disorders are found most often.”

ADHD usually starts early in life, typically between ages 6 and 12. Besides the cores symptoms of hyperactivity, impulsivity, inattention and also emotional instability, many affected people suffer from other mental disorders that are found more frequently than expected by chance – so called comorbid disorders. The **pattern of comorbid disorders however changes considerably over the life span**. In childhood, **oppositional defiant disorder (ODD)** or **conduct disorder (CD)** are the most frequent comorbid disorders. However, ADHD can also occur together with **autism spectrum disorders and learning disorders**.

When people get older, ADHD may persist into adulthood and around **two thirds of people continue to experience impairing symptoms**. ODD and CD may develop further into **antisocial personality disorder, and substance use disorders** (for both legal substances like alcohol and illicit drugs such as cannabis or cocaine) may become a problematic comorbidity with respective overall health consequences. Most frequently however, adults with ADHD suffer from **anxiety or mood disorders**; up to 50% of people suffering from adult ADHD also experience at least once in their life an episode of major depression. Furthermore, overall mortality rate is increased due to **higher risks of suicide and unintentional injuries**.

About the Author



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Further Reading about what other diagnoses are seen with ADHD?

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