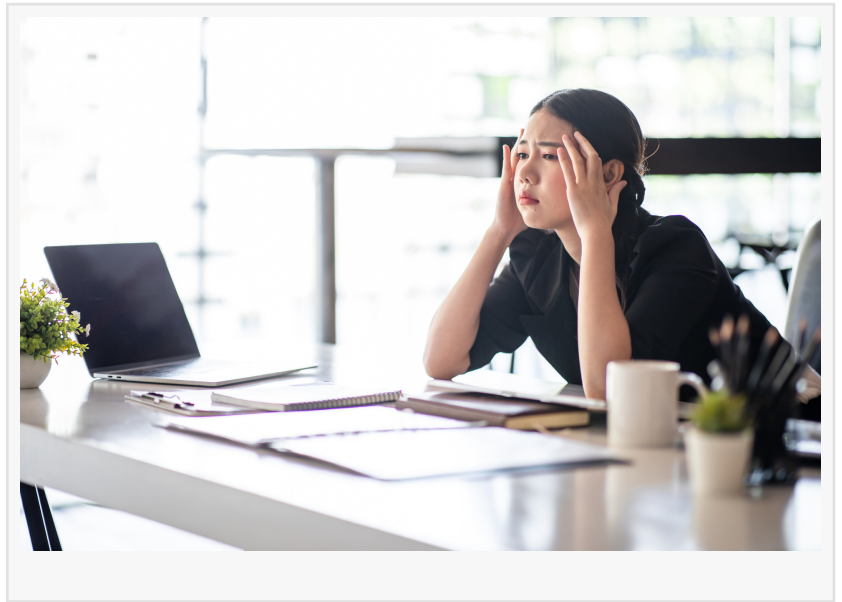


ADD in Females: How It Differs and Why It's Often Misdiagnosed

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) presents unique challenges for individuals, and recent research shows that it often manifests differently in females compared to males. Despite increasing awareness of the condition, ADD in females remains frequently overlooked or misdiagnosed. Girls and women may experience symptoms that are less obvious, and because of this, their struggles with attention and focus are sometimes mistaken for other conditions such as anxiety or depression.



[Dr. Stanford Owen](#), owner of [ADD Clinics](#) in Gulfport, Mississippi, has emphasized the importance of recognizing the distinct ways ADD can present in females and the consequences of delayed diagnosis. He highlights the need for improved understanding and awareness of how this disorder impacts girls and women differently from men.

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Many females with ADD feel as though they are constantly falling short, despite putting in considerable effort”

Dr. Stanford Owen

ADD Presentation in Females vs. Males: Recent data 14% of adult males and 12% adult females with ADD
In many cases, ADD in males is more easily recognized due

to the outward symptoms that often accompany the condition, such as hyperactivity and impulsivity. Boys/Men with ADD may exhibit behaviors like fidgeting, restlessness, and difficulty sitting still, which can quickly attract attention in school or social settings. These more obvious behaviors make the condition easier to diagnose early.

In females, however, ADD often presents with more subtle signs. Girls and women with ADD are more likely to experience inattentiveness without the hyperactivity typically seen in males. They

may daydream, seem forgetful, or struggle with organization, but because these symptoms are less disruptive, they often go unnoticed by teachers, parents, and even healthcare professionals. When women do have hyperactivity it is often described as anxiety, worry, or insomnia.



Dr. Owen explains that females with ADD tend to internalize their struggles, which can make the condition more difficult to detect. Instead of acting out, girls may develop coping mechanisms that allow them to blend into their environment, masking the underlying issue. This can lead to a delay in diagnosis, and as a result, these individuals may go years without receiving the support and treatment they need.

Why ADD Is Often Misdiagnosed in Females

One of the primary reasons ADD is frequently misdiagnosed in females is the difference in how symptoms are expressed. Because girls with ADD are less likely to exhibit hyperactive behavior, their inattentiveness or forgetfulness may be mistaken for laziness, lack of motivation, or even a personality trait. Many girls/women with ADD are high-functioning in some areas of their life, which can further obscure the symptoms.

In addition, the symptoms of ADD in females are often misunderstood or misattributed to other mental health conditions. Dr. Owen notes that many girls and women with ADD are diagnosed with anxiety or depression instead. This is because the internal struggles they face—such as difficulty concentrating, forgetfulness, and feelings of being overwhelmed—can closely resemble the symptoms of these conditions.

Anxiety and depression are commonly associated with a lack of focus, fatigue, and difficulty completing tasks, which are also hallmark signs of ADD. In females, these overlapping symptoms can make it challenging for clinicians to differentiate between these conditions, particularly if the patient has not been previously diagnosed with ADD. As a result, treatment may focus on managing anxiety or depression rather than addressing the root cause of the symptoms.

The Impact of Delayed Diagnosis

The delayed diagnosis of ADD in females can have significant long-term consequences. Without proper identification and treatment, girls and women with ADD may struggle in academic, social, and professional settings. The constant effort to keep up with tasks, manage responsibilities, and meet expectations can lead to feelings of frustration, low self-esteem, and chronic stress.

Dr. Owen emphasizes, "Many females with ADD feel as though they are constantly falling short,

despite putting in considerable effort. The inability to keep up with organizational demands, remember important details, or focus on tasks can contribute to a cycle of self-criticism and anxiety. Over time, this can lead to more serious mental health issues, such as depression, which further complicates the individual's experience."

In school, girls with undiagnosed ADD may struggle academically due to difficulties with time management, completing assignments, or staying focused during lectures. These challenges are often attributed to a lack of effort or carelessness, which can exacerbate feelings of inadequacy and increase pressure to perform. Without support, many girls internalize these struggles and may disengage from school altogether.

As they enter adulthood, women with undiagnosed ADD face similar challenges in the workplace and in managing daily life responsibilities. The constant battle to stay organized, complete tasks on time, and manage multiple responsibilities can take a toll on their mental and emotional well-being. Additionally, women with ADD may find it difficult to maintain stable relationships due to forgetfulness, inattentiveness, or difficulty communicating effectively.

The Need for Greater Awareness

Improving the diagnosis and treatment of ADD in females requires greater awareness among healthcare providers, educators, and parents. Dr. Owen suggests that a more nuanced understanding of how ADD presents in girls is essential to ensuring early intervention. By recognizing the less obvious signs of ADD, professionals can help bridge the gap in diagnosis and ensure that girls receive the support they need to succeed in school, work, and personal life.

Healthcare providers should consider screening for ADD in females who present with symptoms of anxiety, depression, or learning difficulties. A comprehensive evaluation can help differentiate between these conditions and provide a clearer picture of the individual's needs. Early diagnosis is key to preventing the long-term consequences of untreated ADD and improving the quality of life for those affected.

Dr. Owen also highlights the importance of educating parents and teachers about the unique presentation of ADD in girls. By understanding the early signs of inattentiveness, forgetfulness, and disorganization, adults can better support girls in academic and social settings, reducing the likelihood of delayed diagnosis.

Moving Forward

ADD in females is often misunderstood and misdiagnosed, leading to unnecessary struggles and delays in treatment. With greater awareness of how ADD manifests in girls and women, there is an opportunity to provide earlier intervention and better support for those affected. Recognizing the distinct symptoms of ADD in females and addressing them with appropriate treatment can significantly improve their academic performance, social interactions, and overall quality of life.

The unique challenges that girls and women with ADD face underscore the importance of

tailored diagnosis and treatment approaches. As awareness of ADD in females grows, it is crucial to continue educating healthcare providers, educators, and families to ensure that this often-overlooked condition receives the attention it deserves.

Morgan Thomas

Rhino Digital, LLC

+1 504-875-5036

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