

CLDDV 173: Autism: Overview and Treatment

Understanding Autism:

What Is It?



What Is Autism Spectrum Disorders?



- Range in abilities
- Can be reliably detected by the age of 3 years, as early as 18 months

DSM-V: Social (Pragmatic) Communication Disorder

- **Diagnostic Criteria**

1. Persistent difficulties in the social use of verbal and nonverbal communication:
 - Deficits in social communication:
 - greeting and sharing information
 - Impaired ability to change communication to match context or the listener
 - classroom versus playground, child versus adult

DSM-V: Social (Pragmatic) Communication Disorder (cont)

- Difficulty following rules for conversation and storytelling
 - taking turns
 - rephrasing when misunderstood
 - knowing how to use verbal and nonverbal signals to regulate interaction
- Difficulty understanding what is not explicitly stated
 - making inferences
 - idioms, humor, metaphors, multiple meanings that depend on the context for interpretation

DSM-V: Social (Pragmatic) Communication Disorder (cont)

2. Deficits result in functional limitations in effective communication, social participation, social relationships, academic achievement, or occupational performance, individually or in combination.
3. Onset of symptoms is the early developmental period (but deficits may not become fully manifest until social demands exceed limited capacities).

DSM-V: Social (Pragmatic) Communication Disorder (cont)

4. Symptoms are not attributable to another medical or neurological condition or low abilities in the domains of word structure and grammar
5. Not better explained by autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disability (intellectual developmental disorder), global developmental delay, or another mental disorder

DSM-V: Autism Spectrum Disorder

1. Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction in multiple contexts
2. Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities
3. Symptoms appear in early developmental period
4. Symptoms cause significant impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas; AND

DSM-V: Autism Spectrum Disorder

5. Disturbances are not better explained by intellectual disability (intellectual developmental disorder) or global developmental delay

- Intellectual disability and autism spectrum disorder frequently co-occur

DSM-V: Autism Spectrum Disorder (cont)

- Must specify current level of severity
 - Based on social communication impairments and restricted repetitive patterns of behavior
- Three levels of severity

DSM-V: ASD

- With or without accompanying intellectual impairment
- With or without accompanying language impairment
- Associated with a known medical or genetic condition or environmental factor
- With catatonia

DSM-V: ASD: Levels of Severity



- Level One: Requiring Support
- Level Two: Requiring Substantial Support
- Level Three: Requiring Very Substantial Support

DSM-V: ASD: Deficits in Social Communication

- Deficits in social and emotional reciprocity
 - Doesn't share interests
- Deficits in nonverbal communication
 - Eye contact
 - Body language
 - Understanding gestures
 - Lack of facial expressions
- Deficits in developing, maintaining, and understanding relationships

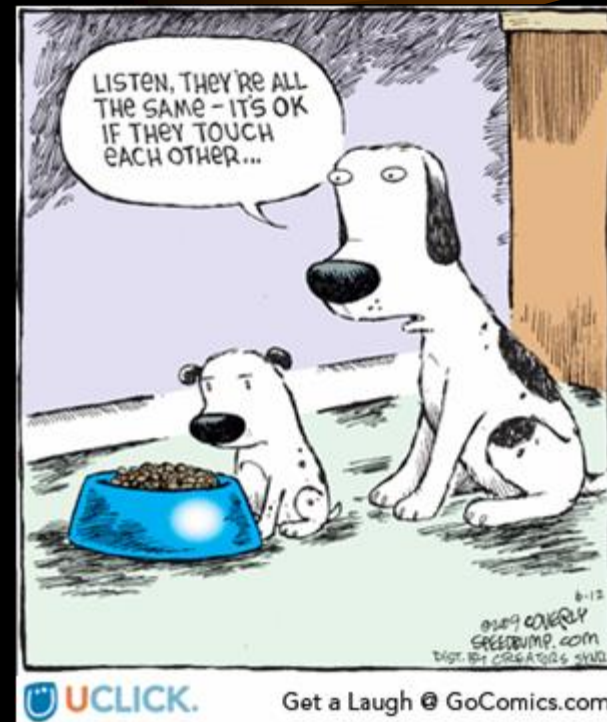
DSM-V: ASD: Restricted, Repetitive Patterns of Behavior, Interests, or Activities

- Stereotyped or repetitive motor movements
 - Objects, speech, lining up objects, flipping objects, echolalia, idiosyncratic phrases



DSM-V: ASD: Restricted, Repetitive Patterns of Behavior, Interests, or Activities (cont)

- Insistence on sameness, inflexible adherence to routines, rituals, rigid thinking, greeting rituals, needs to take the same route, needs to eat the same food



DSM-V: ASD: Restricted, Repetitive Patterns of Behavior, Interests, or Activities (cont)

- Highly restricted, fixated interests
- Hyper reactive to sensory input
- Hypo reactive to sensory input
 - Indifference to pain/temperature
 - Adverse response to certain sounds, textures, smells
 - Excessive smelling or touching of objects
 - Visual fascination with lights or movement



Autism Facts

1. Autism's prevalence has skyrocketed.
2. Direct screening suggests the prevalence may be higher.
3. Autism may be reliably diagnosed by age 2.
4. High-quality early intervention does more than just develop skills.
5. Behavioral therapy for autism can change lives.

Autism Facts (cont)

6. One third of children and adults with autism are nonverbal.
7. Assistive communication devices encourage speech in some nonverbal children with autism.
8. Autism-related GI disorders are real.
9. Autism-related sleep disturbance is common and treatable.

Autism Facts (cont)

10. As many as 1/3 of individuals with autism have epilepsy.
11. Autism can affect the whole body.
12. Whole genome sequencing can guide personalized treatment.
13. Environmental factors can play a significant role.

Autism Facts (cont)

14. We've begun to identify autism's environmental risk factors.
15. Nearly half of individuals with autism wander or bolt.
16. Nearly 2/3 of children with autism have been bullied.
17. Most adults with autism (84%) live with their parents.

Autism Facts (cont)

18. Nearly half of 25-year-olds with autism have never held a paying job.
19. Each year 50,000 teens with autism age out of school-based autism services.
20. The cost of autism across a lifetime is \$1.4 million - \$2.4 million.