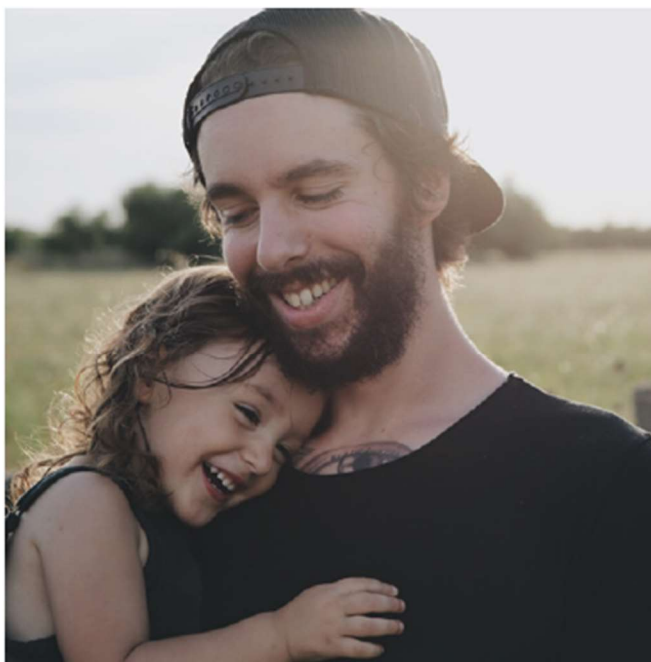


## What is ADHD?

ADHD stands for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. The cause of ADHD is often genetic but there can be other causes. It affects 2-5 per cent of people in New Zealand.

In the ADHD brain, a specific part of the frontal lobe of the brain (the pre-frontal cortex) develops at a slower rate over childhood and adolescence. The pre-frontal cortex is responsible for filtering and controlling attention, behaviour, emotion, energy or motor control and judgement. It's also responsible for executive functioning - which includes your ability to plan and organise and affects the responsiveness of the reward system.

This means a child, adolescent and adult with ADHD has to work much harder to control and filter attention, behaviours, emotions than others unaffected by ADHD. This is the nature of the "disordered" part. It's also the reason why a lot of those with ADHD experience significant fatigue and an even more profound loss of control by the end of the day.



### Find out more



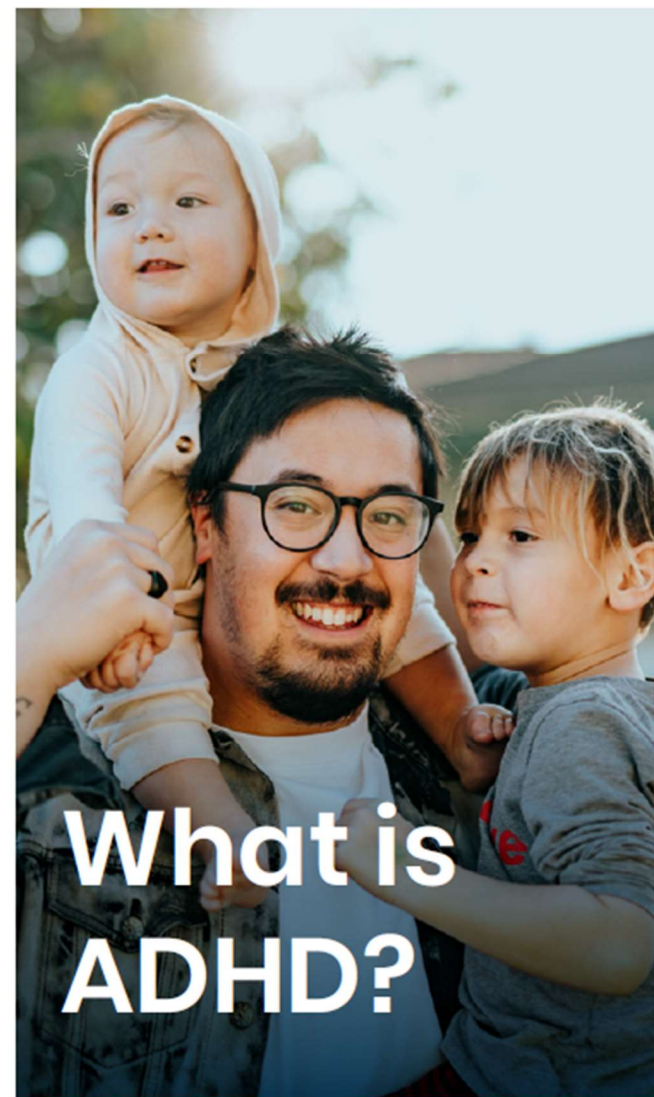
[adhd.org.nz](https://adhd.org.nz)

There are many benefits to having ADHD.

Head to [adhd.org.nz](https://adhd.org.nz) to find out more about this and:

- how to get a diagnosis and from who, and
- what to expect when getting a diagnosis.

© ADHD New Zealand 2022



## What is ADHD?



**ADHD**  
New Zealand

---

## One size doesn't fit all

There are commonalities across all ADHD types, however, each person is likely to vary in the type, number, frequency and severity of their ADHD behaviour.

### There are three ADHD subtypes:

- ADHD predominantly Inattentive type
- ADHD predominantly Hyperactive and Impulsive type, or
- ADHD predominantly Combined type.

## Predominantly inattentive ADHD

This subtype tends to be more prevalent in females and those who have encountered a head injury to the frontal lobe.

### Inattentive behaviours may include:

- trouble switching between tasks
- keeping track of instructions, or
- difficulty maintaining focus.

## Predominantly Hyperactive and Impulsive ADHD

This is the most well-known subtype of ADHD because it's the most obvious to others.

### During childhood, this is more obvious, with inappropriately high activity levels such as:

- running, climbing and moving around
- difficulty sitting still, or
- talking excessively.

### Other impulsive behaviours can include:

- rushing into things without thinking first
- blurting out answers or secrets, or
- interrupting people.

## Predominantly Combined type

This is a combination of the two above.

While inattentiveness and executive dysfunction are often present, generally to a lesser extent, in the two above, these may present in fairly equal measures in a Combined type.

### Executive dysfunction can include:

- trouble organising thoughts onto paper
- poor sense of time/often late, or
- often losing things.

---

## Maturing with ADHD

As the brain matures, in adolescence and adults, so does the control level. Activity turns from major movement to more minor restlessness and fidgeting.

### In adulthood behaviours can look a bit different, and can include:

- challenges making realistic goals
- chronic procrastinator, or
- easily bored and creates stimulation.

---

## Think you've got ADHD?

In previous generations, ADHD was commonly considered "an excuse for naughty kids".

For a lot of you, that's the environment that you were brought up in. So, it's little surprise that an assessment hasn't been done.

By getting an assessment or diagnosis of ADHD, you can start to understand that there's a reason for the on-going challenges you've been facing. This can be an enormous relief.

---

## Find out more



[adhd.org.nz/how-to-get-a-diagnosis-for-adhd](https://adhd.org.nz/how-to-get-a-diagnosis-for-adhd)

Head to [adhd.org.nz](https://adhd.org.nz) to find out more about this and:

- how to get a diagnosis and from who, and
- what to expect when getting a diagnosis.

