

Parent's Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorder

There are estimated to be around 700,000 people with autism in the UK – that's more than 1 in 100 people.



WHAT IS AUTISM? - DISPELLING THE MYTHS

**AUTISM
SPECTRUM
DISORDER**

**MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS
SIMPLY "AUTISM" OR ASD,**

is not one single condition.
**IT IS A GROUP OF
DEVELOPMENTAL
BRAIN DISORDERS.**

AUTISM IS A SPECTRUM DISORDER

**THIS MEANS IT AFFECTS
EVERY PERSON DIFFERENTLY.**

*Some people
may be mildly
impaired*

**WHEREAS OTHERS ARE
SEVERELY DISABLED.**

THE SYMPTOMS OF AUTISM INCLUDE:



Difficulties reading body language and understanding facial expressions.



Problems with communication – some may be non-verbal.



Repetitive behaviours.

**AUTISM DOESN'T
JUST AFFECT
CHILDREN.**

*Children
with autism*

**GROW UP TO BE
ADULTS WITH AUTISM.**

*You cannot always tell
if someone is autistic.*



**ONLY 16% OF AUTISTIC
ADULTS IN THE UK HAVE
FULL-TIME PAID EMPLOYMENT.**

GETTING HELP

The role of the parent for children with autism is very important in helping them gain and improve social and communication skills. It can however be a challenging role to play.



The National Autistic Society provides useful information for parents and carers.



The Research Autism website discusses the impact of autism on a family.

Early Bird

There are parent support programmes such as Early Bird – a free course for parents to offer practical advice when looking after their child.



TREATMENT

Autism is not currently curable, but there are options for support for those living on the spectrum and their families.



COMMUNICATION SKILLS

For example, using pictures to communicate.



SOCIAL INTERACTION SKILLS

How they should respond to other people and help them to understand their emotions.



ACADEMIC SKILLS

So they can progress better in a school setting and make the most of their education.



IMAGINATIVE PLAY SKILLS

Children with autism will not often engage in pretend play on their own.

Autism affects everyone differently so it's important to understand which intervention is best for your child.

They will need an assessment team to determine what the best course of action would be. This team may include a paediatrician, mental health specialists, speech therapists, occupational therapists and more.



FUTURE TREATMENT

Autism is a well-researched condition and there are continually developments in how it can be treated. In addition to providing better treatment for patients, there are hopes that certain therapies may be able to medically improve the condition of life for some.



STEM CELL THERAPY IN AUTISM

There have recently been transplants of stem cell samples taken from cord blood and tissue at birth that have shown improvements in the condition of autism. The rationale is that stem cells can decrease inflammation that is a consistent finding in the brain and gut of people with autism, in turn helping to alleviate symptoms.



Sources

<http://bro.gs/rlmu>

<http://bro.gs/ovpu>

<http://bro.gs/mowpy>

<http://bro.gs/nitp>

www.smartcells.com