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LATE ONSET ADULT ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

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Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a common, genetically transmitted neurological disorder, with onset in childhood, probably mediated in part by decreased brain dopaminergic functioning. Prevalence and natural history data suggest that of the 3-10% of children diagnosed with ADHD, one-to two-thirds continue to manifest appreciable ADHD symptoms as adults, interfering in academic, professional, affective and social life.

Recently, several studies have challenged DSM-IV's requirement of ADHD onset before age 7 with the questioning of the validity of the age-at onset criterion.

Based on the description of a late onset ADHD clinical case (onset after the age of 7), this presentation shows a review on the recent literature about ADHD, addressing how ADHD in adults can be readily diagnosed and treated using the Wender Utah diagnostic criteria to identify adult characteristics of the disorder. This work also addresses core hypotheses of etiology and treatment. The study was based on a revision of articles from Medline/PubMed, PsycINFO and from books published in the last years.