Untangling Autism I

Objectives

When you complete this course, you should be able to do the following:

- Separate fact from fiction about autism.
- Identify three types of autism spectrum disorders.
- List early indicators of autism.
- Describe delays in development associated with autism.
- List other disorders that may accompany autism.
- Describe the differences between autism disorder and Asperger syndrome.
- Describe the process of diagnosing autism.

Types of ASDs

- Types of ASDs
  - Autistic Disorder
  - Asperger Syndrome
  - Pervasive Developmental Disorder—Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS)

What We Know about ASDs

- An estimated 1 in 110 children in the U.S. have an ASD
- ASDs occur in all racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups
- ASDs are 4 to 5 times more likely to occur in boys than in girls

What We Don’t Know about ASDs

- The cause of autism spectrum disorders
- Why the rate of occurrence is so high
Problem Areas
- Social relationships and interactions
- Language and communication
- Routines and repetitive behaviors

Early Indicators
- Persistent and repeated behaviors
- Unusual quality of gaze and avoidance of eye contact
- Appearing deaf to certain sounds and overly sensitive to others
- Delays in development

Accompanying Disorders
- AD/HD (attention-deficit / hyperactivity disorder)
- Mental retardation
- Learning disabilities
- OCD (obsessive-compulsive disorder)

Asperger Syndrome
Diagnosing Autism

- Rule out other disorders
- Schedule an evaluation by specialists
- Accumulate clear evidence

References:

Centers for Disease Control. “Asperger Syndrome Fact Sheet.”


Centers for Disease Control. “Autism Spectrum Disorders Fact Sheet.”

Centers for Disease Control. “Facts about ASDs.”

Centers for Disease Control. “Patterns of Development”


National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. “NINDS Pervasive Developmental Disorder Information Page.”

National Institutes of Health. “Asperger Syndrome.”
http://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/asperger Syndrome.cfm, last updated 7/6/11.

National Institutes of Health. “Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs).”
