

Who Can Assess & Treat ADHD

Many healthcare providers may be able to diagnose and/or treat ADHD with medication or behavioral therapy. This guide illustrates the healthcare professionals who may be involved in ADHD care.

Note: Services offered by an individual provider may vary based on training, experience, and state laws.



Primary Care Physician (PCP)

Most individuals will start their ADHD journey with their PCP—an internist or family medicine physician, physician assistant (PA), or nurse practitioner (NP)—or your child's pediatrician.

PCPs **can** diagnose ADHD and prescribe and manage medication; they **do not** provide behavioral therapy.



Clinical Psychologist

- **Can** provide comprehensive evaluations for ADHD and diagnose other potential co-occurring conditions, such as anxiety, depression, and learning disorders.
- **Can** provide behavioral therapy for ADHD.
- **Do not** prescribe medication for ADHD in most states.

Other Mental Health Professional

- Social workers, licensed professional counselors, and other licensed mental health professionals (e.g., marriage and family therapists) **can** diagnose ADHD
- **May not** be able to comprehensively evaluate for other developmental or psychological disorders.
- **Can** provide behavioral therapy for ADHD, but they **do not** prescribe medication.



Psychiatrist

- Specialized medical doctors who **can** diagnose ADHD as well as other psychological conditions.
- Experts in prescribing and managing psychiatric medication; **can** prescribe medicine for ADHD.
- **Sometimes** provide behavioral therapy for ADHD.

Advanced Practice Psychiatric Provider (APP)

- APPs, such as physician assistants (PA) or nurse practitioners (NP), can receive specialized training in psychiatric care.
- **Can** diagnose ADHD; **can** provide ADHD medication.
- **Do not** provide behavioral therapy.



Developmental Pediatrician

- Specialize in diagnosis and treatment of developmental and behavioral concerns.
- May be involved if questions about developmental delays, Autism Spectrum Disorder, or learning disabilities.
- **Can** diagnose ADHD; **can** prescribe medication.
- **Do not** provide behavioral therapy.

Clinical Neuropsychologist

- Specialize in diagnosing brain-based conditions, such as learning disorders, and assessing specific aspects of brain functioning, such as memory and reasoning skills.
- **Can** diagnose ADHD; however, neuropsychological testing is not required for a diagnosis of ADHD.
- **Do not typically** provide behavioral therapy and **do not** prescribe medication in most states.



Neurologist

- Medical doctors who specialize in diagnosing and treating disorders of the brain and nervous systems.
- **Can** diagnose ADHD and **can** prescribe medication; but more often involved in diagnosing other brain-based conditions such as seizure disorders, Alzheimer's disease, and strokes.
- **Do not** provide behavioral therapy.

Obstetrician/Gynecologist (OB/GYN)

- Physicians who specialize in pregnancy, childbirth, post-partum, and female reproductive health.
- **Can** prescribe and manage ADHD medication, particularly during perinatal period.
- **Often do not** diagnose ADHD and **do not** provide behavioral therapy.

