



Early signs of Autism

Created by: Dr Swati Juneja - 01/07/2021

Table of contents

1. [Hand flapping](#)
2. [Frequently walking on tip toes](#)
3. [Repeated Head Banging](#)
4. [Consistent fussiness or screaming in public places](#)
5. [Pouring drinks back and forth](#)
6. [Excessive biting and Aggressiveness](#)
7. [Lack of response to voice/Verbal commands](#)
8. [Avoiding Eye Contact](#)
9. [Lack of speech & communication](#)
10. [Problems with food/textures/clothing etc](#)
11. [Regression](#)

Most important thing to remember is just because some of these signs appear in a child does not mean that it is an automatic diagnosis for autism. However, the more these types of behaviors occur in the child, the more concerned one should be. The key here is the **consistency** and **frequency** of this behavior.

Hand flapping

Some children do hand flapping during early development phase but the key is how long these behavior lasts. If the child grows out of these behaviors, generally around 3 years of age, then it is not much worrisome. But if a child hand flaps everyday then there is cause for concern. This is an example of self-stimulation.

Frequently walking on tip toes

Pay attention to how often the child does this behavior.

Repeated Head Banging

This behavior pattern is bit alarming, however if the child bangs his head on something soft like pillow or padded chair, generally they will be fine. As a form of self stimulation, it helps to calm the child by rocking motion.

Consistent fussiness or screaming in public places

Although this feature is very common in toddlers as every kid have been bit fussy in public at some point of time. It may be difficult to distinguish sensory fussiness from common childhood temperaments. An easy way to distinguish is when you give the child what they want then do they stop the bad behavior, if so, then probably they are just throwing a typical tantrum. But if they continue to fuss and scream as if in pain even after you give what they want, then probably it is sensory related tantrum. Usually common tantrums lasts for few minutes however sensory tantrums can last for hours.

Pouring drinks back and forth

Every child loves to play with water or blow bubbles in the milk, the key here is again that how long does this behavior lasts! Also you will notice that your child is doing this behavior alone or withdrawn from others .This behavior can last for more than 10 minute to hours depending upon the severity of autism. Look for extreme obsession and repetition with the objects.

Excessive biting and Aggressiveness

All kids bite at point of time, but if your child repeats this behavior immediately after being punished, as if they are enjoying it, then it may seem odd as it is a form of stimulation as they get strong response from others when they are aggressive. When you notice a child being much more aggressive than a typical child for no obvious good reason like wanting something that the other child has such as toy, then it could be a sign of Autism.

Lack of response to voice/Verbal commands

Every child has ignored their parents at some point of time. You will notice an autistic child being aloof as if being there in their own little world. For example they don't give any response even when their name is called (this happens every time). Sometimes parents think that their child has some hearing problem at first but this has more to do with withdrawing than not hearing.

Avoiding Eye Contact

This is probably the most well known sign. Most children with autism avoid eye contact.

Lack of speech & communication

Generally if your child is using only a few words at the age of 3 then it is a cause for concern. If the child is 4 – 5 years of age and still is not using basic senses then it is a great cause for concern. Also echoing same words i.e. constantly repeating same phrase, not in a learning way but like a broken record way, again and again, so be aware of that too.

Problems with food/textures/clothing etc

Many people with autism are picky eaters. Many children with autism will not eat a specific food even if they are terribly hungry such as some hate the feeling of yoghurt .Although it may seem like a typical child behavior but it is at a much higher level. If you offer that food to your child even if they are clearly hungry they won't eat it even to save their lives. Most children with autism like to wear their clothes inside out to avoid contact with clothing tags. Some autistic children like to wear caps because of feeling of security it gives.

Regression

Regression is the loss of the learned skills after a period of typical (normal) development. For example the child may speak short sentences at the age of 24 months But may talk only single words at 36 months.

If you seriously think someone you love has Autism signs then please reach out to a Paediatrician for better guidance.

Source : Content contributed by Dr Swati Juneja

source:

<https://data.vikaspedia.in/short/lc?k=H6rpQJL0DwNaPF-tafWnGA>

