



What is Autism?

Snapshot information and myth buster

1. A life - long developmental condition
2. Can be genetic
3. Affects a person in 4 key areas –
 - . Communication, difficulty receiving and expressing verbal & body language
 - . Social interaction, difficulty understanding, anticipating and responding to social cues
 - . Imagination, rigidity, routines and strong interests, differences in imaginative play, abstract concepts and anticipating events e.g. danger
 - . Sensory, differences in interpretation/processing of sensory stimulation
4. Is not a mental health condition, but people with ASC often develop some mental health concerns, likely to be related to the challenges of coping with environmental or internal stimulations/irritants.
5. Doesn't always affect a person's intelligence, with 1 in 10 Autistic people having Savant Syndrome giving them a 'super human' ability to memorise and store information or have above average intelligence/genius
6. Diagnosed more in boys than girls possibly due to the difference in boys and girls behaviour patterns
7. Is a spectrum of very closely related disorders that share very similar symptoms
 - Aspergers syndrome/high functioning Autism, Classic Autism and Autistic spectrum disorder/condition
8. Is being better understood in the mainstream media and world
9. Will often affect at least one or more of our senses and can be over or under sensitive e.g. a person sensitive to touch may prefer not to hug



E=equivalent
Different and the same

5 Traditional senses –

Hearing, Taste, Touch, Sight, Smell

Additional senses –

vestibular: (sense of balance)

inner ear, related to movement, tells us when we are sitting, jumping, running etc

proprioceptive: (sense of body awareness)

muscles, joints and body parts e.g. put hands in the air, your body tells your brain where your arms are

interoceptive: (sense of internal organs)

regulates body temperature, thirst, hunger, heart rate, bowel, bladder and digestion (e.g. tells you when you are full)

10. Can mean that a person is more sensitive to sensory stimuli (hyper/over sensitive-sensory avoider who may withdraw from environments or activities)
11. Can also mean a person is less sensitive to sensory stimuli (hypo/under sensitive-sensory seeker who may engage in activities such as biting, jumping etc. to help send messages to the brain from their bodies or environments)
12. Can mean a person with ASC may struggle to put themselves in other's shoes
13. Can mean that people on the spectrum have challenging behaviour due to the difficulties/differences described above (key areas and senses)
14. Doesn't mean that a person can't go to university or achieve their personal goals
15. Will not stop a person with ASC forming relationships and friendships