



I think my child may have ADHD...

A quick guide to diagnosis

Schedule Appointment

1. Start with Your PCP (or Pediatrician)

Call the office of your child's primary care doctor to schedule an appointment specifically to discuss concerns about ADHD.

Tip Mention the Reason* - Inform the office staff that you would like to discuss your child's behavior and potential ADHD symptoms. This helps the doctor prepare for the visit.



2. Bring Data

A short log of when/where the behaviors appear and how they affect school, home, friends.

3. Rule-Out & Refer

At the visit the doctor will:

- review medical history / sleep / hearing / vision;
- decide if labs or an in-office screener are needed;
- issue a referral to a specialist (psychologist, psychiatrist, neurologist, or developmental-behavioral pediatrician) if criteria are met.



4. Specialist Evaluation

- Comprehensive testing may include cognitive, executive-function and rating-scale batteries plus interviews with you and the school. Results feed directly into 504/IEP planning.

5. Results & Plan

Meet again with the doctor to review the report, choose treatments (behavior therapy, parent-training, meds, classroom supports) and set up 3-month check-ins.

Inland Empire Providers:

- No insurance coverage?
 - [Apply for Medi-Cal](#)
- Inland Empire Health Plan (IEHP): Visit iehp.org or call 800-440-IEHP (4347)

- [IEHP members received Free Autism and ADHD Screenings for members below the age of 21](#)
- Riverside University Health System (RUHS): Visit ruhealth.org or call 800-720-9553
- Kaiser: Visit kp.org, download the Kaiser Permanente App, or call 833-KP4CARE (833-574-2273)
- [UC Riverside Health Pediatrics](#): Visit ucrhealth.org or call (844) 827-8000
- [Loma Linda University Children's Hospital](#) 877-558-6248
- [San Bernardino County Public Health Clinics](#) 800-722-4777

How to Find an In-Network Provider (Any Insurance)

1. Log in to your plan's portal (IEHP, Kaiser, Blue Shield, etc.).
2. Choose "Behavioral Health" → "Pediatrics" or search "ADHD Evaluation."
3. Filter by distance and "Accepting New Patients."
4. Write down the NPI number shown for each provider—your PCP's referral desk will need it.
5. Call the office and ask:
 - "Do you do initial ADHD evaluations for children?"
 - "What paperwork should I bring?"
 - "Do you need my PCP's electronic referral first?"
6. For HMOs/Medi-Cal be sure your PCP submits the referral in the plan's system (IEHP uses e-Consult; Kaiser auto-routes internally).
7. If the wait list is >10 weeks, ask the plan for a "timely-access" exception or an out-of-network authorization.

Adapted from IEHP, Kaiser Permanente, and Covered California insurance portal guides (2024-2025), including recommendations from the California Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) on accessing behavioral health services.

Prepare for Appointment

Gather Information:

Document specific examples of your child's behavior that concern you. Include observations from home, school, and other settings. Note the frequency, duration, and impact of these behaviors.

Behavior Checklists: Consider using standardized behavior checklists (like the Vanderbilt ADHD Diagnostic Rating Scales) if available, which can provide structured information about your child's symptoms.

[NICHQ Vanderbilt Assessment Scale—PARENT Informant](#)



Teacher Feedback: Collect feedback from your child’s teachers or caregivers. They can provide valuable insights into your child’s behavior in school and social settings.

During the Appointment

Express Your Concerns Clearly: Start the conversation by clearly stating that you are concerned about your child’s attention, hyperactivity, or impulsivity and would like to discuss the possibility of ADHD.

Provide Specific Examples: Share the examples you have documented, emphasizing how these behaviors are affecting your child’s daily life, academic performance, and social interactions.

Ask Questions: Inquire about the evaluation process for ADHD, including what steps will be taken and what assessments will be used.



First Appointment Script

“Hello, Dr. [Doctor’s Name]. I’m concerned about my child’s behavior, particularly in areas of attention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity. These behaviors are affecting their performance in school and daily activities. I’d like to discuss the possibility of ADHD and request a formal evaluation to better understand what might be going on and how we can help them.”

Evaluation Process

Initial Assessment: The primary care doctor may conduct an initial assessment, including a medical history review and a physical examination, to rule out other potential causes of the symptoms.

Referral to Specialists: The doctor may refer you to a specialist, such as a pediatric neurologist, psychiatrist, psychologist, or developmental-behavioral pediatrician, for a more comprehensive evaluation.

Behavioral and Psychological Tests: Your child may undergo various behavioral and psychological tests to assess attention, impulse control, and executive functioning.

Teacher and Parent Questionnaires: You and your child’s teachers may be asked to complete standardized questionnaires to provide a broader view of the child’s behavior across different settings.



Follow-Up

Review Results: Once the evaluation is complete, schedule a follow-up appointment to review the results and discuss the diagnosis (if applicable).

Treatment Plan: If your child is diagnosed with ADHD, work with the doctor to develop a treatment plan. This may include behavioral therapy, medications, educational interventions, and support strategies.

[Learn more about ADHD treatment options](#)



Ongoing Monitoring

Regular Check-Ins: Schedule regular follow-up appointments to monitor your child's progress and adjust the treatment plan as needed.

Collaboration with School: Ensure that the school is aware of the diagnosis and involved in creating an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan to support your child's educational needs.

[Learn more about getting your child support at school](#)



I Embrace ADHD (ieADHD.org) aims to promote awareness and support for ADHD, with resources specifically for inland empire Riverside County and nearby communities in California.

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The information provided on this website is intended for informational purposes only and should not be construed as a substitute for professional medical or psychological advice. Always seek the advice of your qualified mental health provider with any questions you may have regarding a mental health condition. If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, please contact emergency services or your healthcare provider immediately.

If you need immediate emotional support, call or text 988 (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline), or dial 911 in an emergency.