

Case review AuDHD

NP Clinic GLMS

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Case study

42 year old NZE male, dx by online ADHD clinic for adult ADHD, # SA sent to GP for start medication. Tried on Ritalin IR and LA, cannot tolerate severe anxiety, agitation and insomnia. Refer to GLMS for medication management.

Presentation:

“Paranoia”

Historical severe anxiety since young

Communication difficulties at school ‘odd’

Brother ‘autism’,

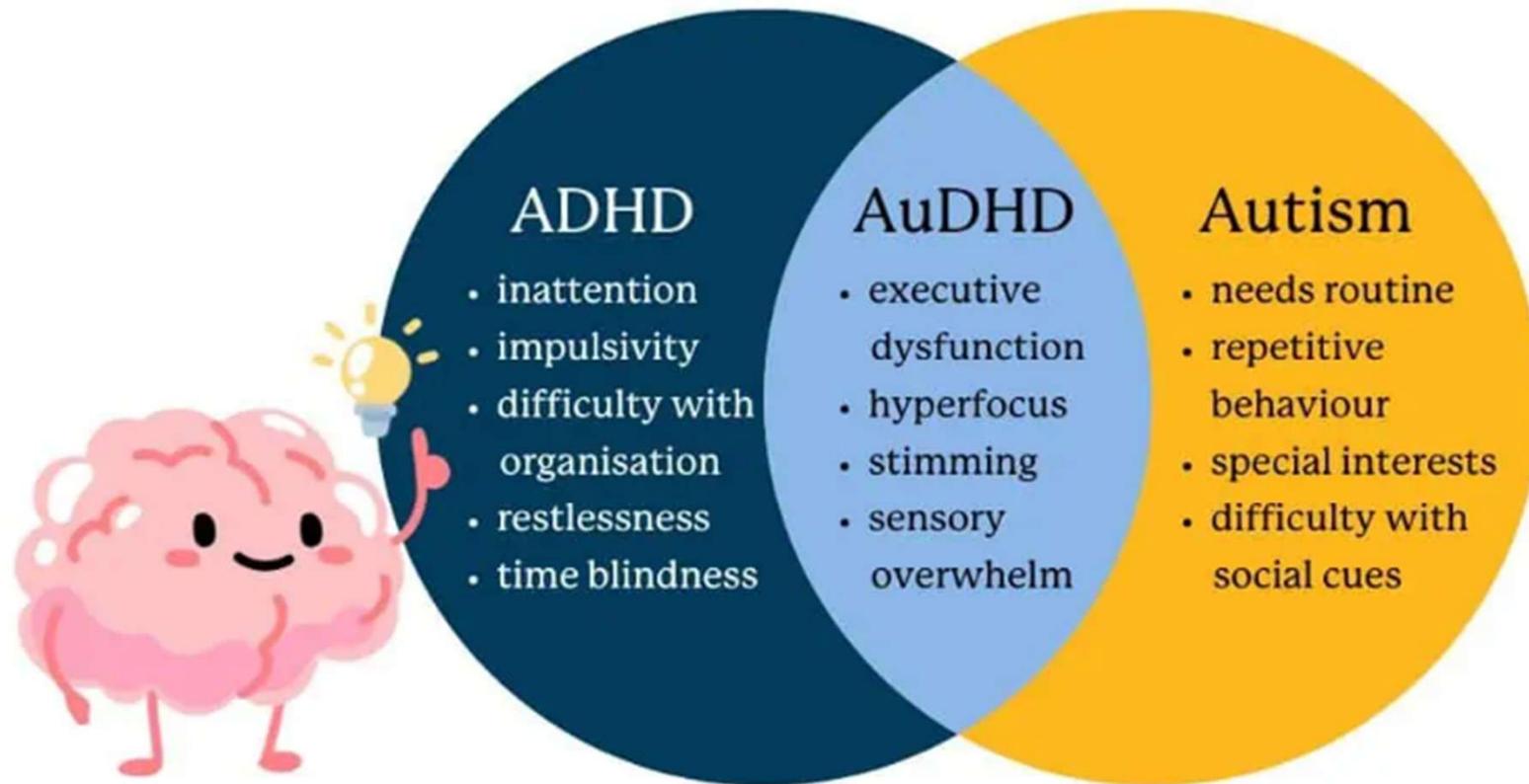
Eldest daughter ADHD, second son ADHD+ASD

Mum describe ‘though he was odd, but not causing trouble’



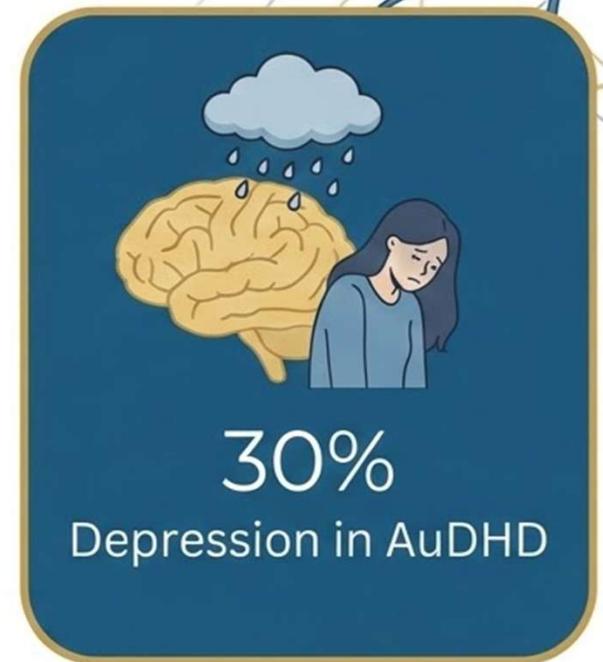
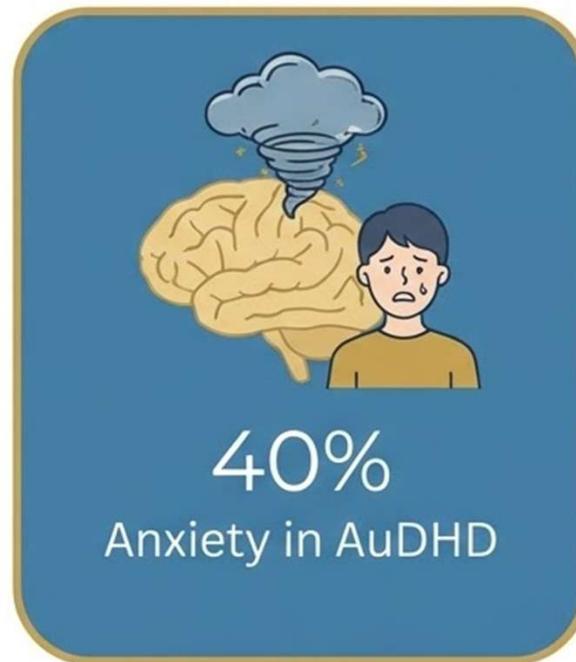
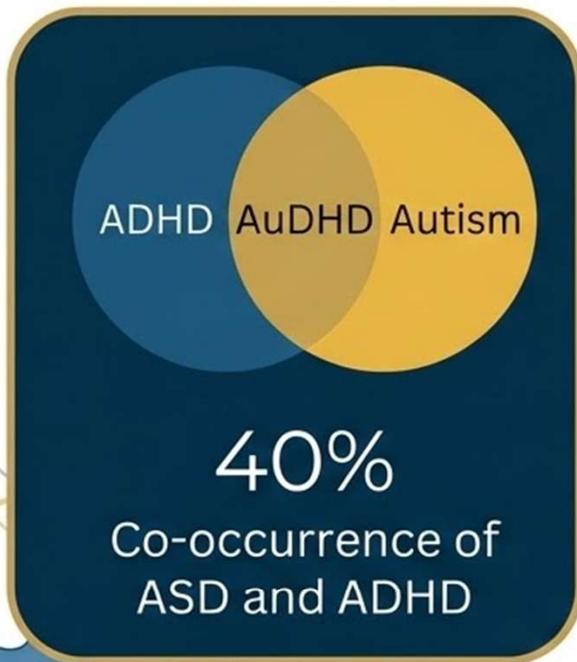
Definition AuDHD

Autism + AuDHD Traits



*This diagram is a simplified overview and may not reflect everyone's experience.

Prevalence



Yerys, B. E., et al. (2025)

Adult; The Challenge of Masking and Compensation



In adult populations, hyperactivity= internal restlessness or an inability to relax, rather than the overt physical movement seen in children.



High-masking individuals, particularly women, may present with high levels of social competence that camouflage their underlying executive function deficits.

Reality of adult neurodivergence = "diagnostic overshadowing".

Diagnostic Category	Key Overlap with ADHD/ASD	Differentiating Factors in Adulthood
Bipolar Disorder	Mood lability, impulsivity, high energy.	Bipolar symptoms are episodic; ADHD/ASD symptoms are pervasive and developmental
Borderline Personality Disorder	Emotional dysregulation, interpersonal sensitivity.	BPD centers on fear of abandonment; ADHD/ASD focuses on executive dysfunction and sensory triggers
Anxiety Disorders	Restlessness, avoidance, social difficulties.	ASD social difficulties are often rooted in social communication deficits; ADHD restlessness is often internal.
Substance Use Disorders	Impulsivity, self-medication for focus.	High correlation with untreated ADHD; ADHD treatment often reduces SUD risk.

The Paradox of the “Structured Nomad”




**Predictability
(ASD)**

The Core Conflict
A simultaneous neurological
requirement for Predictability (ASD)
and Novelty (ADHD).


**Novelty
(ADHD)**

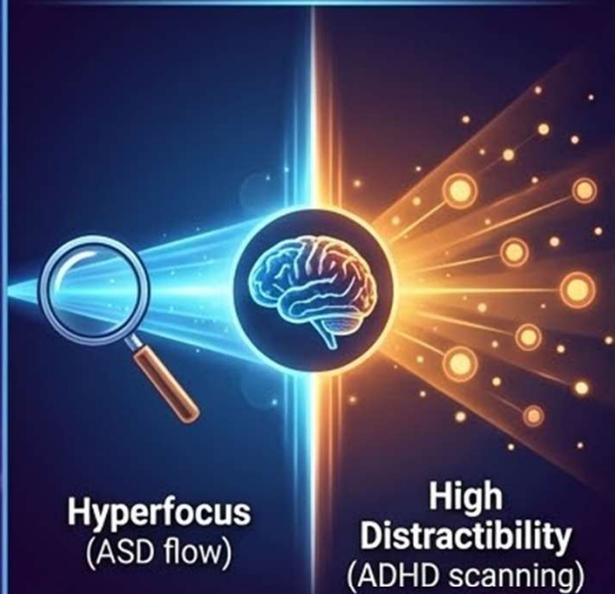


The Result:
High internal friction. Patients
often design systems they are
biologically unable to follow,
leading to a "shame-spiral."

Townes, P., et al. (2023)

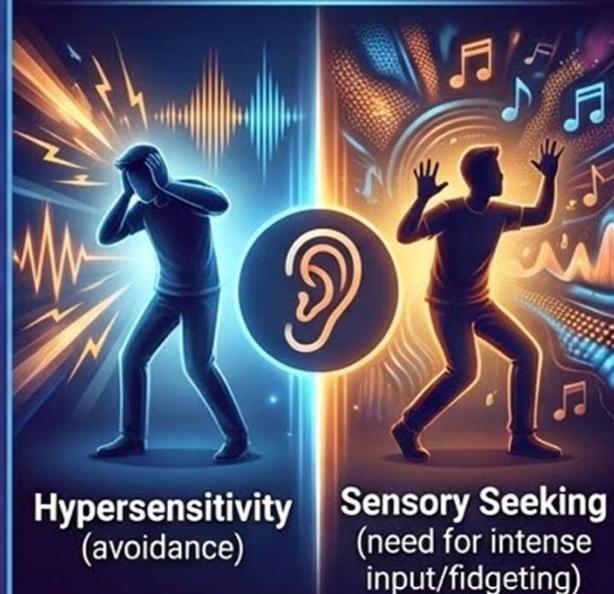
Cognitive & Sensory Duality

Attention



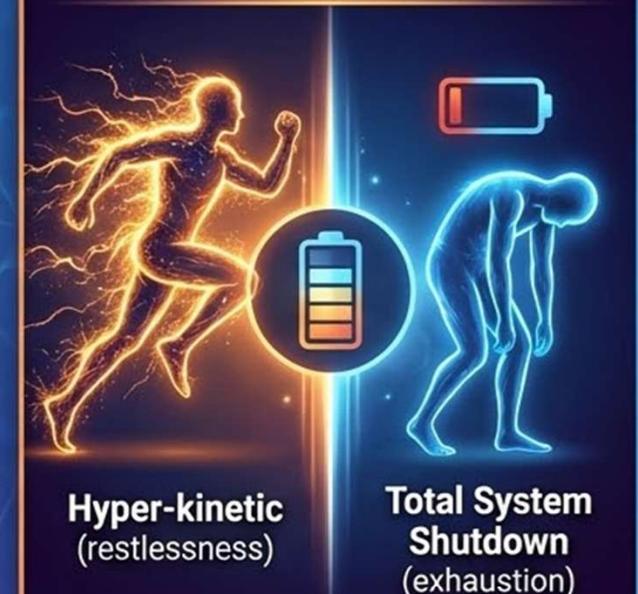
Fluctuates between Hyperfocus and High Distractibility.

Sensory Profile



A mix of Hypersensitivity and Sensory Seeking.

Energy



Shifts from "Hyper-kinetic" restlessness to "Total System Shutdown".