

Features of Autism



1. **Impairment in social interaction** that can include challenges with:
 - nonverbal behaviors (such as poor eye contact)
 - developing normal peer relationships (such as trouble making and keeping friends)
 - the ability to reciprocate socially or emotionally with others (such as an inability to share in the excitement or happiness of others)

2. **Difficulties in communication** that can include:
 - a delay in language or a lack of communication skills (such as not speaking in sentences until 4 years old or using *no* words until age 2 ½)
 - trouble keeping a conversation (not being able to make small talk or sustain any type of a conversation with peers)
 - repetitive or unusual language (mixing-up pronouns, referring to him or herself in the third person)
 - play skills that are non-existent or not appropriate for their age (trouble with imaginative play)

3. **Hyper- or hyposensitivity to sensory input**, like sounds, tastes, pain, or scents

4. **Unusual patterns of behavior** that can include an:
 - atypical preoccupation with certain objects or a restricted interest in certain objects (such as things that spin)
 - a need for usual rules or routines (a need to line up all of their toys in a particular order)
 - repeated motor movements (hand or arm flapping or finger flicking)
 - an overwhelming preoccupation with parts of objects (interest in how the door of a toy car opens, rather than using the toy car as a whole play object)

