

The full diagnostic criteria for the pervasive developmental disorders are outlined below. As mentioned above, the diagnostic criteria for the autistic (PDD) disorders are defined by the DSM IV criteria.

I. Childhood autism

- A. A total of six (or more) items from (1), (2), and (3), with at least two from (1), and one each from (2) and (3):
 - 1. Qualitative impairment in social interaction, as manifested by at least two of the following:
 - a. marked impairment in the use of multiple nonverbal behaviors such as eye-to-eye gaze, facial expression, body postures, and gestures to regulate social interaction.
 - b. failure to develop peer relationships appropriate to developmental level
 - c. a lack of spontaneous seeking to share enjoyment, interests, or achievements with other people (e.g., by a lack of showing, bringing, or pointing out objects of interest)
 - d. lack of social or emotional reciprocity
 - 2. Qualitative impairments in communication as manifested by at least one of the following:
 - a. delay in, or total lack of, the development of spoken language (not accompanied by an attempt to compensate through alternative modes of communication such as gesture or mime)
 - b. in individuals with adequate speech, marked impairment in the ability to initiate or sustain a conversation with others
 - c. stereotyped and repetitive use of language or idiosyncratic language
 - d. lack of varied spontaneous make-believe play or social imitative play appropriate to developmental level
 - 3. Restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities, as manifested by at least of one of the following:

- a. encompassing preoccupation with one or more stereotyped and restricted patterns of interest that is abnormal either in intensity or focus
 - b. apparently inflexible adherence to specific, nonfunctional routines or rituals
 - c. stereotyped and repetitive motor mannerisms (e.g. hand or finger flapping or twisting, or complex whole body movements)
 - d. persistent preoccupation with parts of objects
- B. Delays or abnormal functioning in at least one of the following areas, with onset prior to age 3 years: (1) social interaction, (2) language as used in social communication, or (3) symbolic or imaginative play.
- C. The disturbance is not better accounted for by Rett's disorder or childhood disintegrative disorder.

II. **Asperger's syndrome**

- A. Qualitative impairment in social interaction, as manifested by at least two of the following:
- 1. marked impairment in the use of multiple nonverbal behaviors such as eye-to-eye gaze, facial expression, body postures, and gestures to regulate social interaction
 - 2. failure to develop peer relationships appropriate to developmental level
 - 3. a lack of spontaneous seeking to share enjoyment, interests, or achievements with other people (e.g., by a lack of showing, bringing, or pointing out objects of interest)
 - 4. lack of social or emotional reciprocity
- B. Restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities, as manifested by at least of one of the following:
- 1. encompassing preoccupation with one or more stereotyped and restricted patterns of interest that is abnormal either in intensity or focus
 - 2. apparently inflexible adherence to specific, nonfunctional routines or rituals

3. stereotyped and repetitive motor mannerisms (e.g. hand or finger flapping or twisting, or complex whole body movements)
 4. persistent preoccupation with parts of objects
- C. The disturbance causes clinically significant impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.
 - D. There is no clinically significant delay in language (e.g., single words used by age 2 years, communicative phrases used by age 3 years).
 - E. There is no clinically significant delay in cognitive development or in the development of age-appropriate self-help skills, adaptive behavior (other than in social interaction), and curiosity about the environment in childhood.
 - F. Criteria are not met for another specific pervasive developmental disorder or schizophrenia.

III. **Rett's disorder**

- A. All of the following:
 1. apparently normal prenatal and perinatal development
 2. apparently normal psychomotor development through the first five months after birth
 3. normal head circumference at birth
- B. Onset of all of the following after the period of normal development:
 1. deceleration of head growth between ages 5 and 48 months
 2. loss of previously acquired purposeful hand skills between ages 5 and 30 months with the subsequent development of stereotyped hand movements (e.g., handwringing or handwashing)
 3. loss of social engagement early in the course (although often social interaction develops later)
 4. appearance of poorly coordinated gait or trunk movements
 5. severely impaired expressive and receptive language development with severe psychomotor retardation

IV. **Childhood disintegrative disorder**

- A. Apparently normal development for at least the first two years after birth as manifested by the presence of age-appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication, social relationships, play, and adaptive behavior
- B. Clinically significant loss of previously acquired skills (before age 10 years) in at least two of the following areas:
 - 1. expressive or receptive language
 - 2. social skills or adaptive behavior
 - 3. bowel or bladder control
 - 4. play
 - 5. motor skills
- C. Abnormalities of functioning in at least two of the following areas:
 - 1. qualitative impairment in social interaction (e.g., impairment in nonverbal behaviors, failure to develop peer relationships, lack of social or emotional reciprocity)
 - 2. qualitative impairments in communication (e.g., delay or lack of spoken language, inability to initiate or sustain a conversation, stereotyped and repetitive use of language, lack of varied make-believe play)
 - 3. restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities, including motor stereotypies and mannerisms)
- D. The disturbance is not better accounted for by another specific pervasive developmental disorder or by schizophrenia.

V. **PDD NOS**

This category should be used when there is a severe and pervasive impairment in the development of reciprocal social interaction or verbal and nonverbal communication skills or when stereotyped behavior, interests, and activities are present but the criteria are not met for a specific pervasive developmental disorder, schizophrenia, schizotypal personality disorder, or avoidant personality disorder. For example, this category includes "atypical autism" – presentations that do not meet the criteria for autistic disorder because of late age at onset, atypical symptomatology, or subthreshold symptomatology, or all of these.

Rett's Disorder

Rett's Disorder is a pervasive developmental disorder that follows a very specific progression. Children with this disorder seem to develop normally for the first six to eight months of life. Parents may notice excess levels of hand patting, waving, and involuntary movements of the fingers, wrists and arms. However, these signs are subtle and may go unnoticed. There is a slowing of normal development and a failure to reach developmental milestones on time. Particular problems occur with the acquisition of skills requiring balance such as walking. Head deceleration occurs (the head fails to grow larger at the proper rate.) Children undergo a rapid deterioration in behavior including loss of acquired speech, and purposeful use of hands. A lack of interest in social relationships occurs, and stereotyped behaviors may develop. The most prominent symptom in Rett's syndrome may be "hand washing" movements which develop after the ability to move hands purposefully is lost. These children are generally mentally retarded. Episodes of screaming or tantrums may occur. Sleep abnormalities and seizure disorder are present in over half of the children with this disorder. The lack of interest in social relationships, loss of expressive language and the development of stereotypes can cause this disorder to be confused with autism.

While the DSM-IV does not list male sex in the exclusionary criteria, the existing literature on Rett's syndrome documents the condition primarily in girls. The DSM-IV field trial sample included only girls and a recent, very well executed epidemiological investigation documented a prevalence of 3.8 per 10,000 girls; boys were not included. Since the discovery of the MECP2 gene, responsible for Rett's, variants of the syndrome have been reported in males who have mutations of MECP2, with some overlap in the symptomatology observed in girls (Amir, Van de Veyver, Wan, Tran, Franke, & Zoghbi, 1999; Schwartzman, Zatz, Vasquez, Gomes, Koiffman, Fridman & Otto, 1999; Schanen, Kurczynski, Brunelle, Woodcock, Dure, & Percy 1998).

Childhood Disintegrative Disorder (CDD)

Heller's syndrome, also known as **Childhood Disintegrative Disorder (CDD)** is another pervasive developmental disorder. CDD occurs more frequently in boys, although both boys and girls can be affected. In CDD, children develop normally in language, social and other skills until between the ages of two and three. A marked period of regression occurs which may be insidious (over a period of months) or more rapid (over a period of weeks.) Previously developed skills are lost, such as bowel and bladder training, language skills

Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD)

Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) is a category designated by the American Psychiatric Association to indicate children with delay or deviance in

their social /language/motor and/or cognitive development. A child may have delays in social development and delays in one or more of the other categories. The profiles of children with a PDD can vary tremendously. PDD is not one disorder but a category that encompasses a wide range of delays of different magnitude in different domains. Autism is the most severe of the pervasive developmental disorders. Autism indicates a primary disturbance in the individual's ability to relate to others. Language delay and cognitive delays are also common.

PDD-NOS represents Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified. This is a diagnosis given to a child who exhibits impairment in the development of reciprocal social interaction, verbal and non-verbal communication, or when stereotyped behavior or activities are present. However, the child does not meet the criteria for any specific pervasive developmental disorder.