



This leaflet has been checked by the Learning Disability Checkers Group

Learning Disability Service

Autism



Easy read information



Some people will need someone to support them to go through this information so that they understand it.

This person may be a member of staff, a family member or a friend.

What is Autism?



Autism makes your brain work in a different way from other people.



Autism describes differences in:

- Getting on with people.



- Talking and listening to people.



- Needing things to stay the same.



- Understanding things that aren't happening right now.



People sometimes use other names to mean Autism, for example 'Asperger Syndrome' and 'Autism Spectrum Disorder'.

Each person with Autism has things they like and things they don't like.

Each person with Autism will have things they are good at and things that they find difficult.



Differences in getting on with people can include:

- Finding it difficult to understand other people's feelings and thoughts.
- Finding it difficult to understand and talk about your own feelings and thoughts.



- Finding it hard to understand and use facial expressions like smiling, frowning, looking worried.
- Finding it hard to understand and use gestures (using your hands to explain something like pointing).



- Not knowing the right thing to do or say.



- Problems making and keeping friends.



Differences in talking and listening to people can include:

- Difficulty chatting to people.



- People only wanting to talk about their own interests and needs when they want to, whatever is happening.



- Difficulty understanding jokes.



- Repeating the same words again and again.
- Repeating what other people say again and again.



Needing things to stay the same can include:

Talking about the same thing again and again.



Needing things to happen in the same way each time.



Difficulty with things changing.



Differences in understanding things that aren't happening right now can include:

Getting worried about what will happen next.



People with Autism may also:

Love or hate certain

- sounds



- smells



- tastes



- textures like rough, smooth, bumpy



- touch



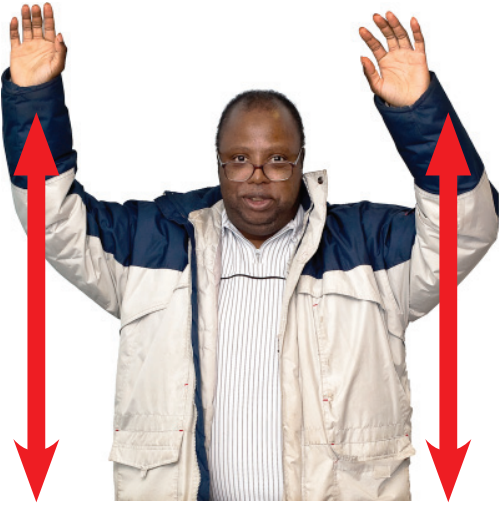
- lights.

These are sometimes called sensory issues.

People with Autism may also:

Repeat actions like

- flapping hands
- spinning round and round



- collect things they like

- tear up or throw away things they don't like



Be worried and/or sad. They may find it hard to understand these feelings and tell people about them.



Sometimes this is when angry behaviour happens.



What causes Autism?



People are born with Autism.

Autism lasts for a person's life.



Autism is in the brain.

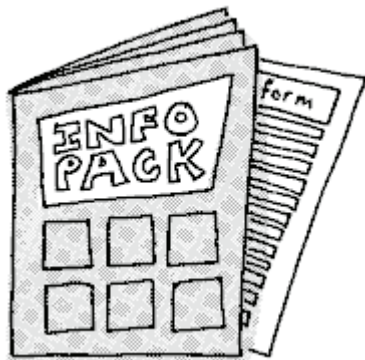


People do not know for certain what causes Autism.



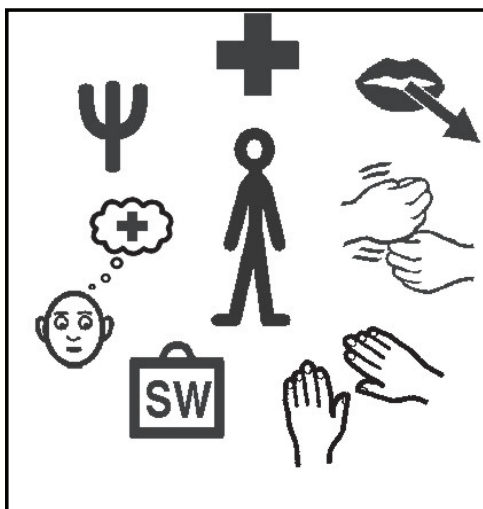
Some people with a Learning Disability also have Autism.

What is the treatment for Autism?



There isn't a way to make Autism go away, but there are things that we can do to help.

You and your family or carers knowing about Autism helps.



Different people in the Learning Disability Team can help when a person has Autism:

- Occupational therapists can help with teaching life skills like road safety, cooking; planning day activities; and working with sensory issues.
- Social workers can help to find a good place to live and find day activities or work.
- Speech and language therapists can help in improving communication and getting along with other people.
- Community nurses can help in
 - managing difficult behaviours and worries
 - having good relationships with other people
- Doctors can help with mental health and behaviour problems.

