

# Asperger's syndrome

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## Abstract

### Keywords

### Disease name and synonyms

**Asperger syndrome Asperger disorder**

### Definition

### Prevalence

## Abstract

*Asperger's syndrome (AS) was first described by Dr Hans Asperger, a pediatrician in Austria in 1944. It has been more recently classified as a Pervasive Developmental Disorder. It is a neuro-biological disorder generally considered as belonging to the spectrum of autism. Patients with AS have intellectual capacity within the normal range with however a distinct profile of abilities apparent since early childhood. They can exhibit behaviors and marked deficiencies in social and communication skills. AS is an uncommon disorder and information on prevalence is limited but it appears to be more common in males. There is no specific treatment or cure for AS. All the interventions are mainly symptomatic and/or rehabilitational.*

## Keywords

Pervasive developmental disorder, autism, deficiencies in social and communication

## Disease name and synonyms

Asperger syndrome

Asperger disorder

## Definition

Asperger's syndrome (AS) was first described by Dr Hans Asperger, a pediatrician in Austria in 1944. It has been more recently classified as a Pervasive Developmental Disorder. It is a neuro-biological disorder generally considered as belonging to the spectrum of autism. Patients with AS have intellectual capacity within the normal range with however a distinct profile of abilities apparent since early childhood.

## Prevalence

AS is an uncommon disorder and the exact prevalence rates have yet to be determined, but it appears to be more common in males.

## Clinical description

The profile of abilities includes the following characteristics.

## ***Qualitative impairment in social interaction, for example:***

- Failure to strike up friendships that are appropriate to the child's developmental level;
- Impaired use of non-verbal behavior such as eye gaze, facial expression and body language to regulate a social interaction;
- Impaired ability to identify social cues and conventions.

## ***Qualitative impairment in subtle communication skills***

Fluent speech but difficulties with conversation skills and a tendency to be pedantic, to have an unusual prosody and to make a literal interpretation.

## ***Distinct profile of cognitive skills***

- Development of special interests that are unusual in intensity and topic;
- Tendency to over focus on details and errors;
- Impaired organisational and time management skills;
- Preference for routine and consistency.

AS can also include motor clumsiness and oversensitiveness to auditory and tactile experiences.

### Etiology

AS is probably due to factors that affect brain development and is not due to emotional deprivation or other psychogenic causes.

### Treatment

There is no specific treatment or cure for AS. All the interventions are mainly symptomatic and/or rehabilitational. Management relies on long-term remedial educational and therapy programs to improve specific aspects of their profile of abilities.

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### Books

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