ADD or ADHD | What is the Difference ADD or ADHD?

Submitted by ADD ADHD Inform... on Fri, 10/28/2011 - 13:06

Is there a difference between "ADHD" and "ADD"?

It can be a bit confusing, but the "difference between ADD and ADHD" is really just a matter of terms.

Once the American Psychiatric Association's diagnostic manual (DSM 3) referred to the disorder as either "Attention Deficit Disorder - with hyperactivity" or "Attention Deficit Disorder - without hyperactivity." This is how the two terms "ADD" (without hyperactivity) or "ADHD" (with hyperactivity) were formed.

Way back in 1981 the APA came out with the new manual (DSM 1) that changed the category to "Attention Deficit Disorder With Hyperactivity." This move took away the distinction between the two and many people felt that the "ADD" label implied that those with the disorder were not functioning at their best.

So, the short answer is that there is no difference between ADD and ADHD. They are just different labels to describe the same disorder. The longer answer is that there is no difference between ADD and ADHD. They are just different labels to describe the same disorder.
Way back in 1994 the APA came out with the new manual DSM-IV that changed the category to "Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder" and then described three sub-categories:

- **Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Predominantly Inattentive Type**
- **Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive Type**
- **Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Combined Type**

At this point the term "ADD" was really obsolete, but it was part of the cultural vocabulary.

On the internet it is very difficult to use the term "ADD" as it looks like a word used in mathematics, or on forms to insert an item. "ADD Child" might mean a child with attention disorder, or that you should have another baby, or that there is a list that you should add another name to.

So on the internet today the most common term is "ADHD" and for the sake of the good ol' days we refer often to "ADD ADHD".

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