

Hello,

You are receiving this information because you indicated a concern with your attention and focus during intake screening. We would like to provide you with an overview of the process for evaluating attention concerns.

Your initial appointment will be with a psychiatrist or advance practice provider who will begin a comprehensive psychiatric assessment. The goal of this assessment is to accurately determine the cause(s) of your symptoms.

There are a diverse group of conditions that may contribute to a disturbance of attention and focus. It is important to address these to the best of our ability. Your provider will ask you about many conditions to ensure we are arriving at the correct diagnosis.

Conditions that affect concentration and attention include:

- Depression – episodes of low moods, sleep disruption, appetite disruption, low motivation and energy, difficulty initiating and completing routine tasks
- Bipolar – episodes of increased energy, decreased need for sleep, racing thoughts, impulsive behaviors
- Anxiety – excessive level of worries and ruminations, physical symptoms of anxiety such as increased heart rate, shortness of breath, chest tightness, avoidance of situations associated with anxiety (social, environmental)
- Trauma-related – chronic pattern of anxiety and worries connected to past experiences, avoidance of situations that are similar to past experiences, intrusive memories and/or dreams, easily startled or hypervigilant
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder – chronic pattern of reduced attention to tasks, difficulty planning and completing tasks, and reduced ability to inhibit actions, starting in childhood
- Neurocognitive disorder – medical and/or structural changes to the brain that cause impairment in memory, concentration, and attention
- Substance use – alcohol, marijuana, and other substances directly cause impaired memory and concentration
- Personality disorder – long term patterns of behavior and inner experiences
- Medical conditions – sleep disorders such as sleep apnea, thyroid conditions, anemia, autoimmune disorders

Based on the outcome of the assessment, your provider may require additional collateral history, medical tests/studies, and/or neuropsychological testing to better clarify the diagnosis.

When your provider has determined the most likely cause or causes for symptoms, they will provide you with individualized treatment recommendations. These may include medication and/or psychotherapy interventions.