

DSM-IV diagnostic criteria: autistic disorder

- I. A total of six (or more) items from heading (A), (B), and (C), with at least two from (A), and one each from (B) and (C):
- (A) Qualitative impairment in social interaction, as manifested by at least two of the following:
- Marked impairments in the use of multiple nonverbal behaviours such as eye-to-eye gaze, facial expression, body posture, and gestures to regulate social interaction.
 - Failure to develop peer relationships appropriate to developmental level.
 - 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 to other people).
 - A lack of social or emotional reciprocity.
- (B) Qualitative impairments in communication as manifested by at least one of the following:
- 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).
 - In individuals with adequate speech, marked impairment in the ability to initiate or sustain a conversation with others.
 - Stereotyped and repetitive use of language or idiosyncratic language.
 - Lack of varied, spontaneous make-believe play or social imitative play appropriate to developmental level.
- (C) Restricted repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behaviour, interests and activities, as manifested by at least two of the following:
- Encompassing preoccupation with one or more stereotyped and restricted patterns of interest that is abnormal either in intensity or focus.
 - Persistent preoccupation with parts of objects.
 - Apparently inflexible adherence to specific, non-functional routines or rituals.
 - Stereotyped and repetitive motor mannerisms (e.g. Hand or finger flapping or twisting, or complex whole-body movements).
 - Persistent preoccupation with parts of objects.
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- II. Delays or abnormal functioning in at least one of the following areas, with onset prior to age 3 years:
- (A) Social interaction
- (B) Language as used in social communication
- (C) Symbolic or imaginative play
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- III. The disturbance is not better accounted for by Rett's Disorder or Childhood Disintegrative Disorder.

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Asperger's disorder

The diagnostic criteria for Asperger's disorder are very similar to those of Autistic disorder, except that children diagnosed with Asperger's have, by definition, at least an average IQ and superficially normal early language development (defined as single words by the age of two years and communicative phrases by three).

Pervasive Developmental Disorder – Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS)

This diagnosis is usually given when a child presents with impairments in social interaction, communication and behaviour but their symptoms are not severe enough or of sufficient number to qualify for a diagnosis of Autistic disorder.