



Receiving an Autism Diagnosis

Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs) & Occupational Therapists (OTs) are primary providers for Autistic children & adults. We are sometimes the first providers to work with the child & may notice signs that are consistent with a diagnosis of Autism. We have compiled a list of these signs, next steps when Autism is suspected, and how receiving a diagnosis of Autism can benefit your child & family.

Your child's SLP or OT noticed signs consistent with Autism... What are some of those signs?

Social Communication and Interaction Skills...

- Avoids or doesn't maintain eye contact
- Does not respond to name by 9 months
- Does not play simple interactive games (e.g. pat-a-cake) by 12 months
- Uses few or no gestures by 12 months (e.g. does not wave bye)
- Does not point or look at what you point to by 18 months
- Shows little interest in peers
- Has trouble understanding other people's feelings or talking about own feelings at 36 months or older

Restricted or Repetitive Behaviors or Interests...

- Repeats words or phrases over and over (i.e. echolalia)
- Plays with toys the same way every time
- Is focused on parts of objects (e.g. wheels)
- Gets upset by minor changes
- Must follow certain routines
- Flaps hands, rocks body, spins self in circles, etc. (i.e. stimming)

Other Characteristics...

- Delayed receptive/expressive language skills
- Delayed gross & fine motor skills
- Not typical eating and sleeping habits
- Anxiety, stress, or excessive worry
- Lack of fear or more fear than expected

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/signs.html>

Your child's SLP or OT recommended an evaluation for Autism... Where & how do you schedule this?

1. **Schedule the evaluation as soon as possible.** Many evaluation centers (especially insurance approved centers) have long waitlists. We recommend getting on the waitlist as soon as you can. You can always cancel the evaluation if you change your mind.
2. **Check with your insurance provider.** It is important to receive an evaluation through a center that is approved by your insurance provider. If you receive an evaluation elsewhere, you may not receive the autism benefit on your insurance plan. Here are some Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (BCBSM) and Blue Care Network (BCN) approved Autism evaluation centers...

- Henry Ford Health System Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities
9100 Brombach Street, Hamtramck, MI 48212
313.972.9009
henryford.com/services/autism/diagnosis
- Michigan Medicine Autism Collaborative at C.S. Mott Children's Hospital
(Up to 10 years old) - 734.232.7513
(11 years or older) - 734.764.0231
1540 E Hospital Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48109
mottchildren.org/conditions-treatments/autism-spectrum-disorders
- University Center for the Child and the Family (UCCF)
500 E. Washington Street, Suite 100, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734.764.9466
<https://mari.umich.edu/ucf/autism-spectrum-disorders>

*For additional insurance-approved centers, please visit bcbsm.com

Your child is now diagnosed with Autism, how will this diagnosis benefit them & your family?

1. **Therapy Coverage** - most insurance companies regulated by the state of Michigan are required to provide an Autism benefit on every plan. This benefit typically includes: unlimited speech, OT, and PT visits each year, access & coverage of behavioral therapies (e.g. ABA), and coverage for pharmacy & psychological care.
2. **Understanding** - receiving the diagnosis will help you better understand your child. It may help you find new ways to communicate with them, understand how different sensory situations can affect them, understand different behaviors, etc.
3. **Sense of Identify** - as your child gets older, they may notice they are different from neurotypical peers. Knowing they are Autistic will help them understand the differences & will open up a community for them to be apart of.
4. **Support** - receiving this diagnosis will allow you to access different support groups. Here is a map of support groups throughout Michigan: <https://www.bridges4kids.org/SupportMap.pdf>

Further questions or concerns? Contact A2 Therapy Works at: info@a2therapyworks.com or 734.369.6002