



# *An Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorder for Healthcare Interpreters*

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# Review

1. What is Autism Spectrum Disorder?
2. What are the main criteria for a diagnosis of ASD?
3. To the best of our knowledge, what causes autism?

What most sticks in your mind  
from what you learned last week?

# What will we be doing today?

- Treatments
- Guidance for working with people with ASD
- Challenges for interpreters
- Exercises with English vocabulary
- Exercises in converting to another language
- Practice sight translation exercises
- Post-test
- Course evaluation



# Treatment: Speech & Language Therapy

Can focus on:

- Receptive and expressive language development.
- Speech and articulation.



As well as on...

- Social communication and social skills.
- Nonverbal communication.

# Treatment: Occupational Therapy (OT)

## Fine Motor Development

- Pencil grasp/ handwriting.
- Using utensils/tools, scissors.
- Tying shoes.
- Using both hands together.
- Coordination of movements.



## Sensory Problems/ Needs

- Hypo/Hyper sensitive to smell, touch, sound
- Augmentative and alternative communication devices

# Augmentative and alternative communication devices

High tech device



Low tech device



Here's Matthew!

# Treatment: Social Skills Groups

- Small groups/dyads
- Learn and practice social skills
- Great opportunity to practice skills taught during individual sessions.



# Treatment: ABA Therapy (Applied Behavior Analysis)

Antecedent



Behavior



Consequence



# Treatment:

## Psychotherapy / Counseling

### Cognitive Behavior Therapy for children over 7

- Child learns how thoughts, feelings and behaviors are connected.
- Child learns coping skills for anxiety, anger, teasing, etc.
- Used to treat anxiety & depression.



# Treatment: Psychotherapy / Counseling

Parents can learn why child has certain behaviors and learns strategies to improve the child's behaviors.



# Treatment: Medication Management

- Core symptoms of autism

# Treatment: Medication Management

- ~~• Core symptoms of autism~~
- Anxiety/ Mood disorders
- Inattention
- Hyperactivity / Impulsivity
- Disruptive / aggressive behavior
- Irritability

# Complementary and Alternative Treatments

CAMS are anything beyond standard therapies, medicine and school programs for children with ASD.

- Melatonin to treat sleep problems
- Diets such as gluten/casein free
- Vitamins and supplements; camel's milk
- Animal assisted therapy
- Music therapy

# Guidance for working with people with ASD

- Greet the child, but do not expect a response.
- Refer to “a child with autism,” not “an autistic child.”
- Ignore child behaviors; don’t get distracted.
- If a child acts out, don’t touch them; ask the parent or provider to intervene.
- Be familiar with augmentative communication devices.

**Suspend judgment and be patient.**

# Challenges for interpreters

## 1. Not knowing what to expect



# Challenges for interpreters

## 2. Long appointments





# Challenges for interpreters

## 3. Speech therapy

Say “tooth.”

Diente.

No, no, I want her to practice the “th” sound!

# Challenges for interpreters

4. Capturing idiosyncratic language use,  
both words and patterns

# Challenges for interpreters

## 5. Terminology

### Technical terms

(e.g. *de-escalation*)

**Acronyms** (e.g. *IEP*)

Terms that mean something different  
in this field (e.g. *extinction, elopement*)

Phrases that give the wrong idea if  
translated directly (e.g. *restricted interests*)

# Challenges for interpreters

## 5. Distractions and interruptions

“Don’t expect a child sitting quietly in a chair.”

Children may be:

- screaming
- kicking mother or siblings
- getting into everything
- unaware of danger



# Challenges for interpreters

## 6. Discomfort with atypical behavior.



OR



**See the person.**

# Additional resources

- Autism Spectrum Disorder. Medical Home Portal, University of Utah. <https://www.medicalhomeportal.org/diagnoses-and-conditions/autism-spectrum-disorder>. Accessed online 01-22-2020.
- Woodbury-Smith, Marc and Stephen W. Scherer. Progress in the Genetics of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology. Mac Keith Press. DOI: 10.1111/dmcn.13717. 2018
- Spectrum News. Comprehensive news and analysis of advances in autism research. <https://www.spectrumnews.org/topic/genes/>. Accessed online 01-22-2020.
- Autism Speaks. <https://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism>. Accessed online 01-22-2020.
- Genetic Alliance. Understanding Genetics: A Guide for Patients and Health Professionals. <http://www.geneticalliance.org/publications/understandinggenetics>. Accessed online 01-22-2020.

# And more additional resources

## Videos about ASD

- Amy Shumer talks about her husband being on the spectrum, <https://youtu.be/URd-tOiwblg>
- Hannah Gadsby talks about having ASD (“The Grammar Lesson and the Box”)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5lXbpgU9OWk>

## ASD on TV:

- Love on the Spectrum (Netflix)
- The Good Doctor (Hulu)
- Atypical (Netflix)
- Extraordinary Attorney Woo (Netflix)

## ASD in literature

- House Rules, by Jodi Picoult