

Pathophysiology and Treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Children

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DESCRIPTION

Communication, social interaction, and behavior are all impacted by autism, which is also known as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It is estimated that 1 in 54 children in the United States has ASD, with boys being four times more likely to be diagnosed than girls. In this article, we will explore the symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment options for autism in children.

Symptoms of autism in children

The symptoms of autism can vary widely from one child to another, but they generally fall into three categories: social interaction, communication, and repetitive behaviors. Some children with autism may display all of these symptoms, while others may only show a few. In terms of social interaction, children with autism may struggle to make eye contact, respond to their name, or engage in social play with other children. They may also have difficulty understanding nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions or tone of voice.

Communication can also be challenging for children with autism. They may have delayed speech development, or they may not speak at all. They may also have difficulty with conversation skills, such as taking turns or staying on topic. Repetitive behaviors are another hallmark of autism. Children with autism may engage in repetitive movements, such as rocking back and forth, spinning in circles, or flapping their hands. They may also have specific routines or rituals that they must follow, and they may become upset if these routines are disrupted.

Diagnosis of autism in children

Diagnosing autism in children typically involves a combination of medical and developmental assessments. The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests that all children be evaluated for developmental delays at regular intervals during their first three years of life. If a child shows signs of developmental delay, they may be referred for a more comprehensive evaluation. This may involve a team of specialists, such as a pediatrician, neurologist,

and psychologist, who will observe the child's behavior, conduct cognitive and language tests, and gather information from parents and caregivers.

Treatment of autism in children

There is currently no cure for autism, but there are several treatments available that can help manage symptoms and improve the quality of life for children with ASD. The most effective treatments involve a combination of behavioral therapy and medication. Behavioral therapy can take many forms, depending on the child's specific needs. Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a popular type of therapy that uses positive reinforcement to teach new skills and reduce problem behaviors. Other types of therapy may focus on social skills development, communication, or sensory integration. Medication can also be helpful for managing specific symptoms of autism. For example, some children with ASD may benefit from medications that reduce anxiety or improve attention span.

In addition to therapy and medication, parents and caregivers can also take steps to create a supportive environment for children with autism. This may involve making adaptations to the child's home or school environment, such as using visual schedules or providing sensory-friendly spaces. It may also involve connecting with support groups and resources in the community to find additional support and information.

CONCLUSION

Autism is a complex developmental disorder that can have a significant impact on a child's life. While there is currently no cure for autism, there are many treatments available that can help manage symptoms and improve the quality of life for children with ASD. Early diagnosis and intervention are important to ensuring that children with autism have access to the support and resources they need to thrive. By understanding the symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment options for autism, parents and caregivers can help their children reach their full potential.

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