

ADVERTISEMENT

It's not just children! Forgetting where you've parked your car could mean you have ADHD

- **Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is often found among youngsters**
- **The behavioural condition sees inattentiveness, hyperactivity and impulsiveness**
- **But, increasingly, a number of adults are being diagnosed with the brain disorder**

By LUCY BENYON FOR THE DAILY MAIL

PUBLISHED: 00:07, 12 September 2017 | **UPDATED:** 00:09, 12 September 2017

48
shares

14
[View comments](#)

Most of us make silly mistakes from time to time and are able to laugh them off. That's what I used to do when I accidentally left the bath overflowing or mislaid my purse for the umpteenth time.

But when I left my debit card and £50 in the cashpoint machine some years back, I didn't see the funny side. Nor was I laughing when I forgot to turn on the cooker and served a stone-cold casserole.

When I 'misplaced' my car, not for a few minutes or hours but for several days, completely forgetting I'd left it on the forecourt of the petrol station up the road, I realised enough was enough.

With a career and two children now aged eight and ten, to care for, I had to get help.

And that is how, two years ago, aged 43, I found out I have a form of attention disorder known as ADHD Predominately Inattentive Type, or ADD.



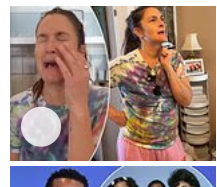
Symptoms: Increasingly, a number of adults are being diagnosed with the brain disorder

Enter your search [Search](#)

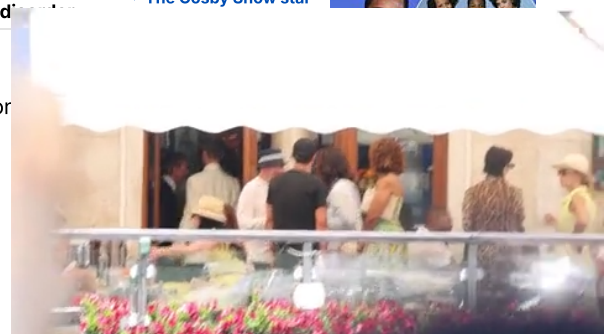
ADVERTISEMENT

TOP STORIES

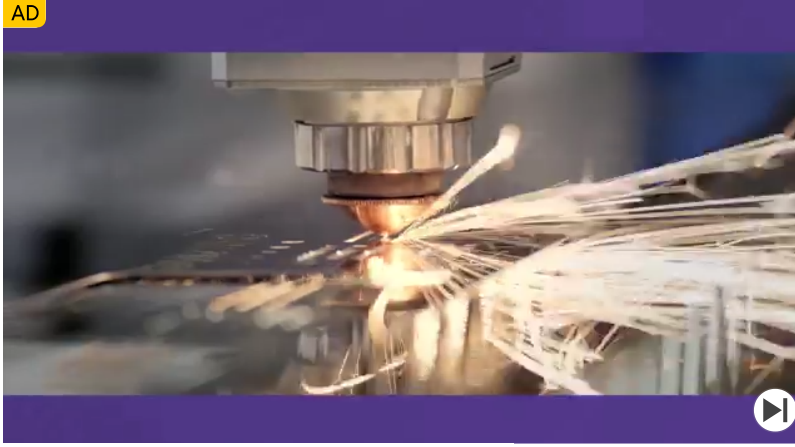
► [Inside Drew Barrymore's 'plain Jane' clutter-filled apartment that shocks fans](#)



► [The Cosby Show star](#)



AD



► Ukrainian model, 20, found horrifically injured in Dubai describes 'beating' and abuse at party after missing flight and meeting Russian man 'who offered use of...



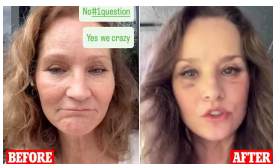
ADVERTISEMENT

Rather than experiencing the hyperactivity often associated with ADHD, for me, the chief issue is distractibility. I confess the news was not a shock.

Having read about attention disorders, I'd found many of the symptoms familiar and mentioned this to my GP. He referred me to an NHS psychiatrist who, after taking down my personal history and reading answers to questionnaires from my mother and husband, Vince, confirmed my hunch.

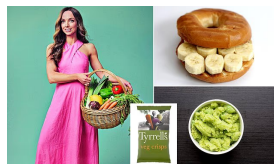
The reaction from friends was mixed. Some gave an 'ah, that makes sense' response; others were dismissive. 'Don't be ridiculous,' one said. 'Only naughty little boys have that.'

TRENDING



randmother who looks '20 years younger' has two big regrets

1.4k viewing now



Slash your risk of bowel and colon cancer with these surprising foods

15.9k viewing now



Mum reveals how she lost 100lbs in one year WITHOUT weight-loss jabs

328 viewing now

It is a common misconception. According to the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE) between 2-4 per cent of adults in the UK have ADHD in one form or another, although some experts think the true figure may be far higher.

The symptoms vary: some people are hyperactive and impulsive; others, like me, struggle with paying attention, are forgetful, easily distracted and regularly lose things.

Our brains find it hard to focus on one thing at a time and instead seek out new stimulation. The result is a trail of half-finished tasks, mislaid belongings and a sense of under-achievement. It's also common to have mood swings, difficulty sleeping, frustration and troubles with planning.

The problem is thought to arise from differences in brain structure that leads to imbalances in the levels of chemical messengers such as dopamine and noradrenaline that normally help regulate behaviour, says Dr Valentino Pironti, a neuroscientist and clinical psychologist at the private Cambridge Adult ADHD Clinic.

'There is a strong genetic association,' he adds. 'But being premature, having a difficult birth or being born to a mother who smoked or drank during pregnancy can be factors, too, as can intense stress or early deprivation.'

I suspect mine has a genetic link as other family members have similar sympt mine. Whatever the root cause, the effects can be profound says Dr Mark Sal NHS psychiatrist and spokesperson for the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

'The chaos adults with ADHD live with impacts on their relationships,' he says. 'The fact they find it hard to follow tasks through causes problems at work, and they are more likely to retreat socially.'

WHAT CAUSES IT?

The exact cause of ADHD is unk but the condition has been show run in families. Research has als

Incest horror of the Durrells. Shattering papers tell of sex abuse as the violent and dark secrets behind the happy family facade are exposed



► 'There are some rituals I won't budge on': TV's Kate Lawler and husband Boj on finding the middle ground with their household costs
AD FEATURE



► Katie Price, 47, displays her weight loss in a tiny green thong bikini during Dubai holiday before returning to the UK to have filler in her bum



For nine years my married lover promised she'd leave her husband and child for me... what happened next destroyed my life, says MAX WOOLDRIDGE



► ITV newsreader



Low self-esteem is another problem, says Dr Pironti. In my case, though the disorder has not held me back at work or socially, it has affected my confidence. Struggling with form-filling or operating a coffee machine often makes me feel stupid.

There is no simple 'cure', though medication that improves the flow of dopamine can help some sufferers and may be given together with cognitive behavioural therapy.

After my diagnosis in 2015, all I was offered was a low dose of Concerta, a drug similar to Ritalin, that stimulates the part of the brain responsible for attention and planning.

When I started taking it I felt as if the world had slowed down, as I could concentrate on one thing without getting bored or distracted. But the effects weren't life-changing, and it was (and still is) a problem remembering to take the medication.

But then I read about neurofeedback — a form of brain training where the mind subconsciously learns to regulate itself. It works, in effect, by holding up a mirror to the brain, showing it when it is working well and when it's not.

The technique is currently being reviewed to see whether it could be funded by the NHS as a treatment for ADHD.

With little to lose, I signed up for five taster sessions with BrainTrainUK, a nationwide clinic that treats, among other things, my condition.

It's not cheap — typically, patients need 20 sessions at £90 each, for long-term changes to take effect. But I am excited and nervous when I arrive at BrainTrainUK's Hertfordshire clinic for my first appointment in July. Zuzana Radacovska, a psychologist, attaches electrode sensors with a substance like Vaseline to my forehead. These sensors apparently send information back to her computer about how well that part of my brain is working.



Medication needed? A form of brain training where the mind subconsciously learns to itself could be an alternative to drugs

This is fed directly back to me through the screen. When my brain is performing should, the picture on the screen becomes louder, bigger and clearer. But when

identified a number of possible differences in the brains of people with ADHD compared to those who don't have the condition.

Other factors that have been suggested as potentially having a role in ADHD include:

It's thought that around 2% to 5% of school-aged children may have ADHD.

ADHD can occur in people of any intellectual ability, although it's more common in people with learning difficulties.

SOURCE: NHS Choices



ADVERTISEMENT

► **I want to stop renting and buy a place of my own. Where do I start?**
AD FEATURE



► **Horrifying moment woman is executed over her choice of husband before the groom is also shot dead in double honour killing that has shocked Pakistan**



EXCLUSIVE **Wife of Astronomer CEO is hiding out in \$2.4M mansion after Coldplay kiss cam... as family rush to her side**



► **Horrifying update in death of Dog the Bounty Hunter's grandson, 13, after teen was accidentally shot by his father**



Noel Gallagher and Meg Mathews' divorce was 'the nastiest in history'. Now as their sudden closeness and her gig perks are raising eyebrows, friends tell KATIE HIND exactly what's going on...

