

OUTLINE OF STIMMING IN AUTISM CHILD



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WHAT IS STIMMING?

The term “stimming” attributes to repetitive physical movements, sounds, words that are self-stimulated. It is also called as “Stereotypy”. Although not very evident, all human beings tend to stim.

Stimming is not necessarily always related to **Autism**. But, since these repetitive physical movements can edge off and stem other problems, diagnostic of stimming in Autistic individuals is vital.

Stimming is not dictated as a bad thing. It imparts as a problem when the stimming gets out of control. Stimming in individuals with developmental disabilities and autism sometimes tend to be disturbing and even hamper the quality of life.

As you read further, you will find more about stimming, how the condition is managed and where to get help

STIMMING IN AUTISTIC INDIVIDUALS



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Stimming is a tendency observed in almost everyone. Some of the trivial forms of stimming are biting of nails, twirling your hair around the fingers, knuckle cracking when bored, nervous or anxious.

Stimming is self-stimulated and the individual may not be aware of their actions. It may turn into a harmless habit. It stays as a harmless behavior as long as it does not interfere with other's life or one's own life.

For instance, if you keep drumming your fingers on to the desk for straight 30 minutes, from social cues one can grasp the disturbance it is causing to others.

Stimming is more evident in Autistic individuals. The strong signals include the vigorous flapping of hands, rocking the full-body back and forth, swirling. These behaviors are repetitive and prolonged.

Most often, these individuals are unaware of the disruption that their behavior is inflicting.

In autistic individuals, stimming is not always the reason for concern. But in scenarios where these actions get out of hand, they can even be dangerous and lead to social exclusion.

WHY DO AUTISTIC INDIVIDUALS STIM?

The cause for stimming in these individuals is not easily determined. Stimming is found to serve as a coping mechanism among these individuals for an array of purposes. An autistic individual could be trying to cope with :

- Stimulating and regulating the sensory overload
- Familiarizing with a new environment
- Calming themselves
- Controlling anxiety attacks
- Demonstrate frustration when they struggle to communicate effectively
- Steer away from activities

CAUSE FOR STIMMING



If the purpose of stimming is to attract attention, then this behavior may prolong for the same purpose.

The root motivation for stimming may be determined and better understood with the help of a Behavioral specialist or Therapist.

In certain instances, stimming is an act of seeking relief from pain and physical uneasiness. However, it is crucial to differentiate and determine the cause of stimming as it could be stemming from a medical condition like seizures.

In case of any involuntary stimming due to medical condition, it should be immediately brought to the doctor's attention.

IT IS POSSIBLE TO CONTROL STIMMING?



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Stimming may not necessarily be a problem unless it is obstructing the individual's quality of life.

Attention and managing the behavior is required under the following circumstances:

- Stimming caused by social isolation
- Disruptive stimming at school
- Affecting the ability to learn
- Stimming interfering other's life
- Stimming leading to destruction or danger

In the case where the stimming turns self – destructive and harmful, immediate **doctor's consultation** is required. A thorough physical examination should be conducted to determine the injuries.

The strategy to treat stimming should be to achieve self-control in these individuals and not entirely control them. Ideally, stimming is rather managed than controlled.

TIPS TO MANAGE STIMMING



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Once the reason behind stimming is determined, it is easier to manage it. Difficulty in communication is common among **autistic children**. Hence their behavior serves as a strong communication tool. It is vital to understand what the individual is trying to communicate through the stimming.

Factors such as the triggers or situations that initiate stimming should be evaluated.

Some of the things to keep in mind :

- Induce stress- free and calming atmosphere
- Eliminate factors that trigger stimming
- Plan and stick to routine tasks to carry out on a daily basis
- The approach of punishing is for stimming is not approved. This could only exaggerate the condition and lead to another stimming behavior.

- In order to manage an inappropriate stimming behavior, help replace it with another alternate behavior such as the use of stress ball whenever triggered.

Professional guidance from Behaviour therapist or Autism specialist is always recommended.

They are able to assess the causes that trigger stimming.

After having evaluated the causes, they are able to infer the scientific management strategy for the same.

Some of the recommendations that come handy are :

- Identify and intervene in cases of harmful or self-destructive behavior
- Understanding when not to react
- Involving other family members in supporting the individuals
- Encouraging alternate acceptable behavior
Inducing a calm environment
- Helping them inculcate self-control tools
- Take scientific and medical help in case of need
- Involving behavioural therapists and educators in the management process.

OUTLOOK

The occurrence pattern of stimming is not easily determined. The stimming behavior seen in a child may disappear once the child grows. However, some triggers can initiate stimming.

With proper understanding, management approach and patience, one can easily learn to manage stimming. The holistic self-control that is achieved will be positively reflected in school, work and social scenarios.



CAPAAR

GET UP! GET HERE! GET WELL!

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CONCLUSION



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