



Frequently Asked Questions about Autism

How common is autism?

As many as 1 in 150 children are diagnosed or will be diagnosed with autism. Of the 4 million babies born every year, 24,000 of them will eventually be identified as having autism.

What does it mean to be “on the spectrum?”

Autism can appear in many different forms. It is the most common condition in a group of developmental disorders known as the autism spectrum disorders. Autism spectrum disorders also include Asperger syndrome, Rett syndrome, childhood disintegrative disorder, and pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified. Classic autism can range from mild to severe, and though people with autism show similar traits, two people with the same diagnosis may act completely different and display varying capabilities.

Are vaccines to blame?

MMR vaccine protects children against dangerous, even deadly, diseases. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, many carefully performed scientific studies have found no relationship between the MMR vaccine and autism. Also, the American Academy of Pediatrics agrees that the MMR vaccine is not responsible for the recent increase in the number of children with autism.

Is there a cure for autism?

Unfortunately, there is no cure for autism. There are treatments available and early intervention is key to helping kids lead active lives. There is hope as many scientists are working to find resolution to this growing problem.

For more information on evidence-based interventions please go to: (www.ndcpd.org/autism)

How do I get my child the help he/she needs?

First, surround your child with a reputable healthcare team. This could include doctors, therapists, psychologists, and teachers who have experience with autism. Talk to a developmental pediatrician who can give you information about the next step.

References:

Frequently asked Questions <http://www.autismspeaks.org/whatisit/faq.php> (Retrieved January 17, 2008)

MMR vaccine and Autism Fact Sheet. Retrieved January 28, 2008 from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site: http://www.cdc.gov/od/scienv/iso/concerns/mmr_autism_factsheet.htm