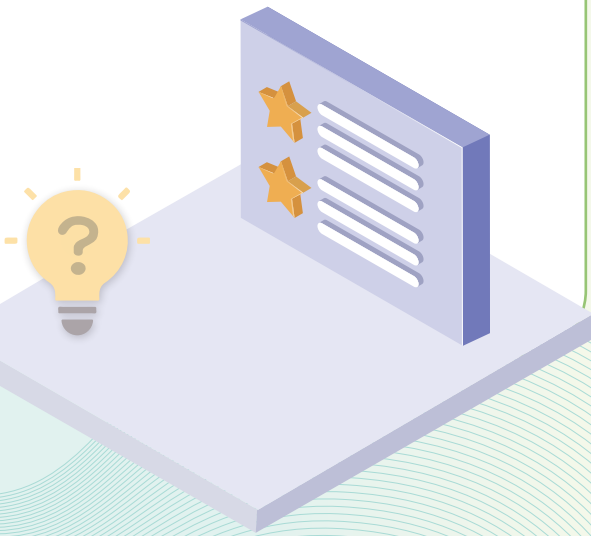


INTRODUCTION

Neurodiversity refers to the different ways a person's brain processes information and interacts with the world. Children with neurodiversity experience the world differently and have unique strengths but they may also encounter challenges in their daily lives.

Although there are no definitive treatments for most of these conditions, they can be managed effectively with appropriate assessments and holistic management strategies.

By providing an inclusive and supportive environment, children with neurodiversity can reach their full potential and lead a fulfilling life.



WHAT ARE THE COMMON TYPES OF NEURODIVERSITY?

Common types of neurodiversity include developmental delay or intellectual disability, autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), specific learning disorders, dyslexia, dyspraxia and tic disorders. These are 'spectrum' conditions with a wide range of traits and characteristics sharing common features of how a person processes information. It is estimated that 15-20% of the population is neurodivergent.



Developmental delay/ Intellectual disability

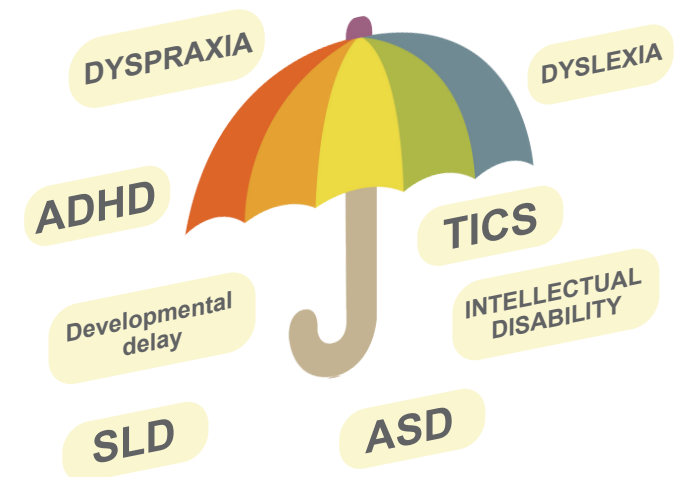
This means that a child has not attained the level of skills expected for his/her age and there are different degrees of developmental delay which can be identified by formal developmental assessments. The long-term outcome of the delay is often only determined by closely monitoring a child's development over time and some children may catch up. However, a persistent developmental delay may be indicative of an underlying intellectual disability.

Autistic spectrum disorder (ASD)

It is a condition that affects how a person interact or communicate with others, learn, and behave. Although ASD can be diagnosed at any age, symptoms generally appear in the first two years of life. It is a "spectrum" disorder because there is a wide variation in the type and severity of symptoms that people experience.

Attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

It is a condition associated with an ongoing pattern of inattention, hyperactivity, and/or impulsivity. Symptoms of ADHD may interfere with daily activities and interpersonal relationships. ADHD begins in childhood and may continue into the teen years and adulthood.



IS NEURODIVERSITY GENETIC?

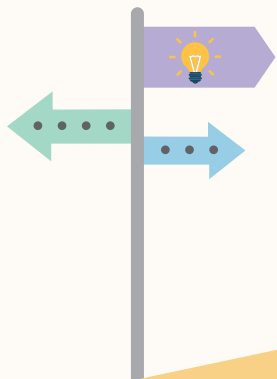
While genetics has an important role in differently types of neurodiversity, environmental factors also have a contribution to the above conditions. The interplay between genetics and environmental factors shapes the spectrum of different traits and characteristics observed in neurodiversity.



SEEKING PROFESSIONAL EVALUATION

Children with neurodiversity may take longer time and often need support to learn and develop new skills. Working together with healthcare professionals (including paediatricians, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists and geneticists) as well as early recognition and intervention may help to maximise a child's potential.

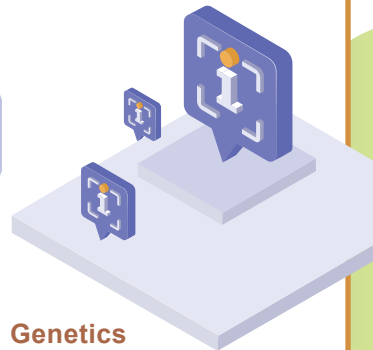
In our Neurodiversity Genetics Clinic, genetic assessments and genetic counselling are provided by a team of specialized health professionals, who work together to provide a person or family with current information and support on conditions that may have a genetic basis. Genetic counselling can help you learn about the genetic conditions, and how they may affect your child and other family members.



PREPARATION FOR THE APPOINTMENT

1. If the appointment is related to your child who is under 18, both you and your partner (or legal guardian if applicable) should accompany your child and attend the appointment together
2. Gather your personal and family medical history related to neurodiversity
3. Bring along any medical records related to your concerns (e.g. child assessment summary from Child Assessment Centre or private clinics)
4. Bring a list of questions and concerns
5. Bring personal identification document of the patient (e.g. HKID card, HK birth certificate or passport). If the patient is under 18, personal identification documents of the parents / guardians (e.g. HKID card or passport) are required

For further enquires, you may contact us.



Department of Clinical Genetics

Address: Specialist Outpatient Clinic, 1/F,
Tower B, Hong Kong Children's Hospital,
1 Shing Cheong Road, Kowloon Bay,
Kowloon, Hong Kong

Office Tel: 5741 3186

DCG – GNDC
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香港兒童醫院
Hong Kong Children's Hospital

DEPARTMENT OF CLINICAL GENETICS

NEURODIVERSITY GENETICS CLINIC



Hong Kong Children's Hospital
Genetics and Genomics Clinic