



fact sheet

About Autism

Autism is a complex neurobiological disorder that typically lasts throughout a person's lifetime. It is part of a group of disorders known as Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Today, 1 in 150 individuals is diagnosed with autism, making it more common than pediatric cancer, diabetes, and AIDS combined. It occurs in all racial, ethnic, and social groups and is four times more likely to strike boys than girls. Autism impairs a person's ability to communicate and relate to others. It is also associated with rigid routines and repetitive behaviors, such as obsessively arranging objects or following very specific routines. Symptoms can range from very mild to quite severe.

Did you know?

- 1 in 150 children is diagnosed with autism
- 67 children are diagnosed per day
- A new case is diagnosed almost every 20 minutes
- More children will be diagnosed with autism this year than with Aids, diabetes & cancer combined
- Autism is the fastest –growing serious developmental disability in the U.S.
- Autism costs the nation over 90 billion per year, figure expected to double in the next decade
- Autism receives less than 5% of the research funding of many less prevalent childhood diseases
- There is no medical detection or cure for autism

Incidence vs. Private Funding

- Leukemia: affects 1 in 25,000 / Funding : \$310 million
- Muscular Dystrophy: Affects 1 in 20,000 / Funding \$175 million
- Pediatric Aids: Affects 1 in 8,000 / Funding: \$394 million
- Juvenile Diabetes: Affects 1 in 500 / Funding: 130 million
- Autism: Affects 1 in 150 / Funding : Approximately \$116 million

Autism Speaks is dedicated to increasing awareness of autism spectrum disorders, to funding research into the causes, prevention, treatments and cure for autism, and to advocating for the needs of affected families. Autism Speaks has merged with both the National Alliance for Autism Research (NAAR) and Cure Autism Now (CAN), bringing together the nation's three leading autism advocacy organizations.

Telephone **(212) 252-8584**
Web site **www.autismspeaks.org**
e-mail **contactus@autismspeaks.org**
Fact sheet updated **August 2007**

<http://www.cdc.gov/>
<http://www.nih.gov/about/visitor/index.htm>