Dyspraxia Fact Sheet

What is Dyspraxia?

Definition: Dyspraxia, or Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD), is a neurological disorder impacting motor skill development and coordination. It is characterized by difficulties in planning and executing fine and gross motor tasks.

Key Characteristics:

- **Fine Motor Skills Affected**: Challenges with activities such as writing and using utensils.
- **Gross Motor Skills Affected**: Difficulties with activities like running and jumping.
- **Cognitive Impact**: Influences memory, organization, and time management skills, which can affect learning and daily activities.
- **Additional Symptoms**: May include problems with speech, balance, and manual dexterity.

Diagnosis Criteria:

- Motor performance significantly below expected levels for age and intellectual ability.
- Motor skills difficulties must significantly interfere with academic achievement, daily living activities, or vocational life.
- Recognized internationally by organizations including the World Health Organization.

Key Facts and Statistics:

- **Prevalence**: Affects 3-5% of children, making it relatively common.
- **Co-occurrence with ADHD**: 30% to 50% of children with Dyspraxia may also have ADHD.
- **Dyspraxia in Adulthood**: Continues into adulthood, with many adults remaining undiagnosed.

Dyspraxia vs. ADHD:

- **Dyspraxia**: Primarily impacts motor coordination and planning. Main challenges are related to physical tasks.
- **ADHD**: Primarily impacts attention, impulsivity, and sometimes hyperactivity. Affects control of impulses and attention span.

Recognizing Dyspraxia in Adults:

Checklist for Identification:

- [ ] **Motor Skills**: Challenges with coordination and dexterity.
- [ ] **Organization**: Difficulties with planning and organizing tasks.
- [ ] **Social Interaction**: Social awkwardness or difficulty in social settings.
- [ ] **Emotional Well-being**: Feelings of anxiety or frustration with coordination tasks.

Steps to Diagnosis:

- **Self-Recognition and Research**: Identifying persistent coordination difficulties.
- **Professional Consultation**: Consult with general practitioners and specialists like neurologists or psychologists.
- **Assessment and Evaluation**: Involves observational tests, motor skill tests, and interviews.

Management and Support:

Therapies:

- **Occupational Therapy**: Exercises to improve motor skills and daily functioning.
- **Psychological Support**: Helps with the emotional aspects of living with Dyspraxia.
- **Educational Adjustments**: Tailored learning strategies, use of technology aids, and individualized education programs (IEPs).

Support Networks:

- Organizations such as the Dyspraxia Foundation and Movement Matters provide resources and advocacy.

Sources for Further Reading and Verification:

- **Movement Matters**: An umbrella organization in the UK that specifically addresses developmental coordination disorders. Movement Matters
- **PubMed**: For peer-reviewed articles and studies on Dyspraxia, ADHD, and autism, searching PubMed can provide numerous scholarly articles. PubMed
- **National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI)**: This is a good source for comprehensive articles on neurodevelopmental disorders and their co-occurrence. NCBI

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