A List of Asperger's Symptoms

There is a certain set of symptoms common to Aspergers. However, each case of Aspergers is unique and not everyone experiences the same combination of symptoms. Here is a basic checklist to help you identify Asperger symptoms:

Social Interaction Difficulties

A person with Aspergers may have difficulty with the following aspects of social interaction:

- **General social skills**: She wants to socialize with others but does not understand how to interact.

- **Relating to others**: She does not understand other's emotions or social responses accurately in a group situation. She may not understand if an activity or conversation is boring or upsetting to another person.

- **Difficulty playing with others**: She may not understand how to initiate play with her peers or how to play by common social rules. For example, she may take a ball from a group of children playing a game without asking to join the game first. She will not return the ball if they ask for the ball back.

- **Problems with two-way conversation**: She has trouble with initiating and maintaining a two-way conversation. She may appear to *talk at* someone than with him. Conversation topics may focus on an obsessive interest. She speaks inappropriately such as talking too loudly or softly.

- **Inability to understand common social cues**: She may not comprehend common *social cues* such as facial expressions, body language or gestures.

- **Rigid range of interests for social interaction**: She will only engage in a narrow range of activities or talk about certain subjects.

- **Inappropriate responses**: She may behave or respond to social situations in an unusual or inappropriate manner. For example, an affected person may laugh at something sad.

Communication Problems

An affected person experiences a number of communication difficulties. Communication problems can include the following symptoms:

- **Eye contact**: He may not make eye contact.

- **Unusual gestures**: He might make unusual or inappropriate gestures during conversation.

- **Facial expression**: Facial expressions are either absent or inappropriate to the conversation or situation. He may have facial tics.

- **Personal space issues**: He might stand too close to a person during conversation.

- **Monotone speech**: He may speak in a monotone voice, without expression or emotion.

- **Easily distracted**: He has trouble concentrating his attention on people and objects that are not connected with his favorite subjects.
Language Skill Challenges

A person with Aspergers generally has a large vocabulary but experiences problems with language processing. Problems with social communication may include:

- **Trouble with language use**: She has trouble using language appropriately in social situations. She may also misunderstand common word meanings.

- **Unusual use of words**: She may use words in an unusual way or create her own words.

- **Language rituals**: She might have certain word scripts that she repeats ritualistically in conversation with others.

- **Difficulty processing language**: She does not always understand the verbal speech or misunderstands the meaning of a conversation. She may have trouble making a decision or answering a question.

- **Literal interpretation of words**: She interprets most language on a literal level and misses abstract meanings.

Cognitive and Motor Skill Impairments

Cognitive and motor skill problems are also common in Aspergers. Typical cognitive and motor skill issues include:

- **Mindblindness**: He has Mindblindness, meaning he cannot determine what others are thinking and feeling in social situations or in relationships.

- **Problem-solving issues**: He has trouble figuring out how to solve problems outside of his routine.

- **Organizational skills difficulties**: He experiences difficulty with planning, implementing and completing tasks.

- **Difficulty with imaginative play**: He does not engage in imaginative play as a child.

- **Learns best visually**: He has trouble learning without visual aids.

- **Problems with coordination**: He may have problems with both fine and gross motor skills. Common examples of motor skill difficulty include bike riding, handwriting and playing ball games.

Limited Interests and Unusual Behavior

An affected person often has a limited range of interest and may exhibit bizarre behavior. Interests and behavior may include:

- **Strict schedule**: She prefers a rigid schedule and experiences anxiety when the schedule is interrupted.

- **Narrow range of interests and obsessions**: She is intensely interested in a small number of activities and subjects and refuses to engage in other activities.

- **Self-stimulatory behavior**: She may engage in "stimming" behavior such as hand flapping, rocking back and forth or twirling.
Sensory Input Issues

Many people with Aspergers have sensory difficulties and may have unusual reactions to certain sights, smells, sounds or tastes. Sensory problems include:

- **Odors**: He may react strongly to certain smells.
- **Sounds**: He might be hypersensitive to different sounds.
- **Touch**: He may not want to be touched.
- **Limited food choices**: He may choose and reject foods based upon smell or texture.