Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) are group of developmental disabilities caused by problems in the brain and cause problems with social interaction, communication and behavior. The three types of ASD’s are Autism or Autistic disorder, Asperger Syndrome and Pervasive developmental disorder— not otherwise specified.

What causes Autism?
The exact cause of Autism is unknown. However, research studies suggest genetics, gender, and environment may play in the role of development and progression of Autism.

What are the manifestations of Autism?
There are three characteristics of autism:

- Deficits in Social Interaction
- Verbal and nonverbal communication deficits
- Fixated interests and/or repetitive behavior

What is the prevalence of Autism?
The CDC estimates 1 in 110 children have Autism.

What Environmental Hazards are Associated with Autism?
There is a number of environmental toxicants that are linked to developmental disabilities other than autism. This include chemicals as diverse as lead, methylmercury, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and organophosphate pesticides.

Some studies suggest exposure to Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs) may increase Autism risk. HAPs contain a variety of potentially harmful compounds such as benzene from gasoline and diesel emissions from cars.

MACCHE is supported by The Association of Occupational and Environmental Clinics with funds (in part) by the cooperative agreement award number U61TS000118-01 from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR).

Acknowledgement: The US EPA supports the PEHSU by providing funds to ATSDR under Inter-Agency Agreement number DW-75-92301301-0. Neither EPA nor ATSDR endorse the purchase of any commercial products or services mentioned in PEHSU publications.

Citations


