

AUTISM

noun

au·tism | AW-tiz-um

Definition of *autism*:

- 1: Also known as an Autism spectrum disorder. It affects the development or growth of the brain.
- 2: A spectrum is a line that includes different traits and behaviours. Your family member may be at another point in this line than someone else.
- 3: Autism may cause difficulty or problems with talking, interacting with people and problem-solving.
- 4: It may affect how your family member functions or behaves in school, work or other places.

Why did my family member get Autism?

- Autism is something your family member was born with.
- It is still not known why it is caused or how it happens.
- Anyone could be born with Autism.

What is Known about Autism:

- Your family member may not be able to understand non-verbal behaviours such as smiling and frowning.
- Sight, taste, sound, touch and smells may be different than what you sense.
- They may only want to talk about one thing that is of interest.
- Keep talks focused and simple.

Your Family Member May:

- Avoid eye contact.
- Have a hard time understanding or listening to others feelings.
- Not like to be touched or hugged.
- Not be able to tell you or others what they need.
- Repeat actions or movements over and over again.
- Have trouble with changes such as new foods, new toys or moving items from their normal spot.
- And more. Everyone is different, your family member may have similar or different behaviours than is listed.

What can you do with Your Family Member?

- Find an activity that your loved one enjoys and has fun with together!
- Be patient! Sometimes people with Autism take longer to respond or understand what has been done or said.
- Stay positive! Compliment your family member and tell them how good they are doing!
- Learn from them! Your family member will show you how they like certain things and what they do not like.
- Autistic adults or children may talk about one thing of interest a lot, so join in and learn together!

References:

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