WHO IS ABLE TO DIAGNOSE AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER?

There are a number of professionals who can diagnose Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Each type of professional has different training. It is important to choose a professional who has extensive experience in diagnosing individuals with ASD and other conditions which may appear similar to ASD at first glance. Being able to distinguish between ASD and another condition is called making a differential diagnosis.

A Developmental Pediatrician is a pediatrician who has advanced training in developmental-behavioral medicine. Developmental Pediatricians evaluate, counsel, and provide treatment for children, adolescents, and their families with a wide range of developmental and behavioral difficulties, including ASD.

A Pediatric Neurologist is a pediatrician who has advanced training in pediatric neurology. Child neurologists treat children from birth into young adulthood and often diagnose, treat, and manage neurological conditions, including ASD.

A Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist is a physician who specializes in the diagnosis and the treatment of disorders of thinking, feeling, and/or behavior, which affect children, adolescents, and their families. Many do have specializations that include diagnosing ASD.

A Psychologist holds a PhD (doctorate) degree. Psychologists may have many different specialties. Those who specialize in diagnosing and treating individuals on the autism spectrum may have experience using psychometric evaluative measures, including the ADOS-2 (a play or conversation-based assessment tool) and the ADI-R (a caregiver interview). The ADOS-2 and ADI-R, when used together, are the “gold standard” evaluative measures used to diagnose ASD. Kinds of psychologists include:

- Counseling psychologists advise people on how to deal with problems of
everyday living to help improve their quality of life. For example, they may assist with problems in the home, place of work, or community. Counseling psychologists often treat individuals on the autism spectrum.

- **School psychologists** work with students in schools. They collaborate with teachers, parents, and school personnel. School psychologists address students’ learning and behavioral problems, including considering classroom management and parenting techniques. They also evaluate students to help determine the best way to educate them. This includes diagnosing children with ASD.
- **Clinical psychologists** are concerned with the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental disorders and may have experience assessing individuals for ASD.
- **Neuropsychologists** study the relation between the brain and behavior. Clinical neuropsychologists may further specialize in these fields by focusing their work in a number of niche areas including various medical conditions, including ASD.

Related Articles:

- [Who Are All These Professionals?](#)
- [What is the Difference Between a General Pediatrician and a Developmental Pediatrician?](#)
- [Getting an Evaluation for Autism Spectrum Disorder](#)
- [How to Choose a Clinician to Evaluate for ASD](#)

Recommended Link:

- [CAR Resource Directory (search for diagnosticians)](#)

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