Does level of attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder symptoms predicts poor transition into adulthood?


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Abstract

OBJECTIVES:
Transition into adulthood is a risky period for young people with attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), but empirical studies on this topic are scarce. This study investigated the association between the level of ADHD symptoms and transition into adulthood.

METHODS:
Data were collected in the Cohort Study of Substance Use and Risk Factors among a representative sample of young Swiss men (n = 4681) over three waves. Measures included the level of ADHD symptoms and emerging adulthood assessed with the Inventory of the Dimensions of Emerging Adulthood and indicators of successful transition into adulthood.

RESULTS:
The level of ADHD symptoms was associated with a lower success in the transition into adulthood. Young people with high level of ADHD symptoms had a reduced increase in indicators of successful transition over time. Inattention symptoms were more strongly associated with emerging adulthood measures in comparison with hyperactive symptoms.

CONCLUSIONS:
The level of ADHD symptoms may delay the transition into adulthood, especially inattentive symptoms. Providing tailored interventions to emerging adults with ADHD symptoms may decrease the substantial impairments adults with ADHD experience in life.