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Screening and Identification of Developmental Coordination Disorder in Children with and without ADHD

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Title: Screening and Identification of Developmental Coordination Disorder in Children with and without ADHD

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Objective: Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD) is characterized by a delay in the acquisition of appropriate motor skills. Motor difficulties associated with DCD relate to problems with handwriting, attention, reading, and social cognition. Individuals with ADHD often have motor skills deficits, and comorbidity with DCD is high (30-50%). Despite this, motor problems and DCD remain under-recognized and undertreated. This study examined whether children with ADHD have more parent reported DCD symptoms than children without ADHD, as well as the prevalence of undiagnosed DCD. It was predicted that children with ADHD would have more DCD symptoms than children without ADHD. As DCD is under-recognized, it was predicted that some children without a DCD diagnosis would screen positive for DCD.

Participants and Methods: Parents ($N=32$) of children ($M_{age}=11.6$ years; 59% male; 50% ADHD) completed the Developmental Coordination Disorder Questionnaire 2007 (DCD-Q), which assesses Control During Movement (CDM), Fine Motor Skills (FMS), and General Coordination (GC) in children.

Results: Children with ADHD had more DCD symptoms overall, $F(1, 30) = 14.15, p = .001$, as well as on the CDM, $F(1, 30) = 7.72, p = .009$, FMS, $F(1, 30) = 15.57, p < .001$, and GC subscales, $F(1, 30) = 9.85, p = .004$, compared to children without ADHD. Despite no previous DCD diagnosis, 34% of children screened positive for the disorder.

Conclusions: Children with ADHD had more problems in all rated areas of motor functioning compared with children without ADHD. Many children screened positively for DCD despite not having a previous diagnosis. Findings indicate the value of using screening measures to identify children at risk of DCD. Since these deficits can cause added difficulty in the daily functioning of children with ADHD, diagnosis and treatment are especially important for this population.