

Autistic burnout: Mismatched expectations and abilities contribute to lower quality of life

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What is "autistic burnout," a term frequently used by autistic adults? Its characteristics, and what may cause or alleviate it, are discussed in

Autism and Adulthood.

Autistic adults use the term to describe a chronic state of exhaustion, loss of skills, and reduced tolerance to stimulus. These [characteristics](#) are long-lasting and permeate people's lives.

According to [the study](#), [autistic adults](#) say chronic life stress and a mismatch of expectations and abilities without adequate supports is very difficult. Autistic burnout had a [negative impact](#) on autistic adults' health, capacity to live independently, and quality of life, including suicidal behavior.

"Autistic burnout has been a matter of extreme and under-examined urgency for far too long. I hope our work opens a new avenue of research into understanding, relieving, and preventing it in our community," says coauthor Dora Raymaker, Ph.D., Portland State University.

"While the autistic community frequently talks about autistic [burnout](#), the concept has been almost completely absent in the scientific and clinical literature. It's time we start listening to autistic adults and pay attention to what may be an important mediator of poor outcomes," says senior author, Christina Nicolaidis, MD, MPH, Portland State University and Oregon Health & Science University, Portland, Oregon, and Editor-in-Chief of *Autism in Adulthood*.

More information: Dora M. Raymaker et al. "Having All of Your Internal Resources Exhausted Beyond Measure and Being Left with No Clean-Up Crew": Defining Autistic Burnout, *Autism in Adulthood* (2020). [DOI: 10.1089/aut.2019.0079](https://doi.org/10.1089/aut.2019.0079)

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