

Mental health, other conditions up for teens with autism

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(HealthDay)—Adolescents with autism are more likely to have physical

difficulties and additional mental health or other conditions compared with general population controls, according to research published in the April 30 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Patrick S. Powell, Ph.D., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues analyzed preliminary data from a follow-up survey of parents and guardians of adolescents aged 12 to 16 years to examine use of health care services as these children transition to adolescence. Outcomes were compared between autism and control groups.

The researchers found that compared with the control group, those in the autism group were more likely to have physical difficulties (21.2 versus 1.6 percent; adjusted prevalence ratio [aPR], 11.6) and to have additional mental health or other conditions (one or more conditions: 63.0 versus 28.9 percent; aPR, 1.9). The likelihood of receiving [mental health services](#) was increased in the autism group (41.8 versus 22.1 percent; aPR, 1.8), as was the likelihood of having an unmet medical or mental health service need (11.0 versus 3.2 percent; aPR, 3.1). A small percentage of adolescents in each group (7.5 and 14.1 percent in the autism and control groups, respectively) received recommended health care transition guidance.

"The findings provided in this report indicate that adolescents with autism had greater physical difficulties, had poorer physical and [mental health](#), and experienced greater gaps in health care use and transition planning than did adolescents from the population [control group](#)," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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