

# Adults with ADHD exhibit camouflaging behavior

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Adults with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) exhibit camouflaging behavior, but to a lesser extent than those with autism, according to a study published online Feb. 7 in *Autism Research*.

Noting that camouflaging is thought to be an important reason for late autism diagnoses and [mental health difficulties](#), Wikke J. van der Putten, from the Autism Outpatient Clinic in Amsterdam, and colleagues examined whether adults with ADHD could camouflage.

Adults (aged 30 to 90 years) completed the Dutch Camouflaging Autistic Traits Questionnaire, the ADHD Self-Report, and the Autism Spectrum Quotient; differences in camouflaging were examined for adults with ADHD, autism, and a comparison group (105 adults in each group). In addition, the question of whether autism and ADHD traits explained camouflaging levels was examined in 477 adults with an autism and/or ADHD diagnosis.

The researchers found that relative to the comparison group, adults with ADHD scored higher on total camouflaging and on the assimilation subscale. However, relative to adults with autism, adults with ADHD scored lower on total camouflaging and the compensation and assimilation subscales. Independent of diagnosis, autism traits were a significant predictor of camouflaging, but ADHD traits were not.

"More in-depth studies are necessary to fully grasp how people with ADHD camouflage, whether this differs from camouflaging in autistic adults, and to what extent camouflaging may be a source for mental health difficulties and late diagnoses in people with ADHD," the authors write.

**More information:** W. J. van der Putten et al, Is camouflaging unique for autism? A comparison of camouflaging between adults with autism and ADHD, *Autism Research* (2024). [DOI: 10.1002/aur.3099](https://doi.org/10.1002/aur.3099)

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