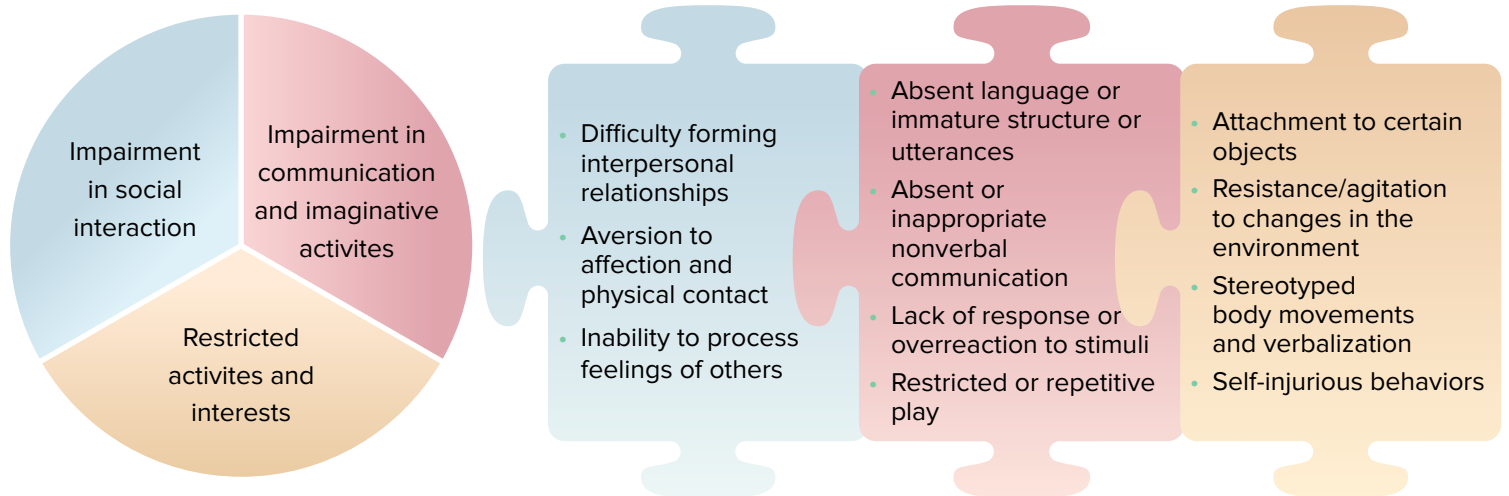


AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER



Definition	Etiology	Epidemiology
Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a group of neurodevelopmental syndromes characterized by a range of restricted, repetitive behaviors and communication impairments.	ASD is thought to have both genetic and environmental contributing factors, but the exact etiology is unknown.	1 in 44 children in the US are affected. (CDC 2021)
		ASD is 4x more common in boys than girls.
		ASD affects all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups.

Clinical features



Diagnosis	Presentation
Generally appears early in childhood (12–18 months)	ASD occurs on a spectrum
ASD can usually be diagnosed by 2–3 years of age by an experienced professional.	Mild ————— Severe
Diagnosis is based on the presence of developmental delays and behavioral symptoms.	Symptoms vary from person to person and can change over time.

Education

An ASD diagnosis can affect the entire family. Nurses can help link families to local support and resources.

While there is no cure for ASD, there are multiple treatment modalities that can help improve the lives of clients with ASD and their families.

Clients with ASD can be at higher risk for injuries. It is important to teach family members how to keep clients safe.

Nurses may help connect clients with resources for:

- Behavioral therapy
- Speech and language therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- School-based therapy
- Social skill training
- Pharmacologic treatment

Early intervention leads to positive long-term effects and skill development.

NOTES

