

Dyspraxia

Dyspraxia, also known as Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD), is a condition that affects physical movement and co-ordination. This can look like:

Being clumsy	Difficulty learning new skills	Avoiding novel tasks	Difficulty with organisation & sequencing	Easily distracted
Struggling with simple tasks	Transitions are difficult	Struggling to follow directions	Taking longer to complete tasks	Poor short term memory
Inefficient at completing tasks	Distracted mid-task	Difficulty navigating in crowds	Repeats favored activities	Takes longer to master any task

Signs and symptoms in Gross Motor abilities:

- Needs more help on the playground
- Bumps, trips and falls frequently
- Struggles with alternating feet on stairs
- Difficulties with balance
- Difficulty co-ordinating the 2 sides of the body
- Struggles with sports, including riding a bike, running, hopping, skipping, jumping, catching and dribbling a ball



Signs and symptoms in Play:

- Reluctant to join ongoing peer play
- Hesitant in playground
- Repeats their preferred activities over and over
- Limited play schema, such as banging, throwing things or lining up cars
- May prefer imaginative play to playground play



Signs and symptoms in Fine Motor Abilities:

- Drops and spills things
- Clumsy manipulating cards, beads and pegs
- Different pencil/pen/crayon grasp
- Illegible handwriting, due to sizing, spacing or ability to write on the line
- Messy colouring
- Difficulty using classroom tools, such as scissors, stapler or cellotape
- Difficulties with laterality



Signs and symptoms in School:

- Struggles with multi-step instructions
- Difficulty remembering rules and retaining routines
- Poor independent work skills
- Fidgety
- Takes longer to produce written work
- Difficulty packing and unpacking backpack
- Struggles to process verbal and written information
- Difficulty completing assignments in a timely manner
- Learns better one-on-one
- Avoids PE
- Experiences difficulty navigating crowded hallways



Signs and symptoms in Organisation:

- Struggles to break down tasks into smaller parts
- Difficulty initiating and following through on tasks
- Messy completion
- Difficulty with time management and time restraints, taking longer to complete a task
- Gets lost or distracted mid-task
- Resistant to changes in schedules and routines



Signs and symptoms in Self-Care:

- Messy eating
- Difficulty getting dressed
- Struggling with buttons, shoelaces and zips
- Struggles to wash hands thoroughly
- Can experience difficulties in managing clothing for toileting

Tips to help manage Dyspraxia:

School tools:

- Predictable schedule and routine
- Organised classroom and work area
- Allow more time for completing tasks
- Give one instruction at a time
- Seat child in classroom away from distractions
- Help with organisation of homework; break down academic tasks

For home:

- Organise work and play areas
- Use a visual schedule or check-list for daily routines
- Prepare for changes in routine
- Backward chaining to learn new things
- Give instructions one at a time in small manageable chunks
- Complete heavy/deep pressure proprioceptive activities to increase body awareness
- Encourage non-competitive physical activity, such as swimming, skating, martial arts

Self-care tips:

- Lay out clothes the night before
- Use easy to manage clothing (large neck hole, elastic waistband)
- Bathroom visual sequences
- Alternative eating utensils
- Practice shoelaces and fastenings when not pressed for time