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## Exercise - Identifying Sensory Need

### Rationale

Individuals with Autism Spectrums Conditions commonly suffer from sensory processing differences. These differences make it difficult for them to process information and stimuli from the environment, resulting in irregular levels of arousal. These irregularities are often manifest as Hyper-sensitivity (fears stimuli) or Hypo-sensitivity (seeks stimuli). When supporting individuals with ASC it is important that we identify these sensitivities and adjust the environment and our approach where possible.

These sensitivities can occur in the following areas...

Auditory	=	Hearing
Visual	=	Seeing
Tactile	=	Touch
Olfactory	=	Smell
Gustatory	=	Taste
Vestibular	=	Sense of Balance
Proprioception	=	Sense of Body Movement / Spatial awareness

### Instructions








Use the indicators in the table below to score the various sensitivities of the individual. See how many of the indicators are present and score from 1 to 3 on either the hyper-sensitive or hypo-sensitive side. The greater the number of indicators present then the higher the score (few indicators present = 1, nearly all present = 3)

As this exercise is objective, it is worth getting other people to complete it independently (spouse / sibling / teaching assistant). It is also worth repeating the exercise on a regular basis as sensory processing issues can change








This exercise is not aimed at being an accurate analytical tool, but is an indicator of where problems may be occurring and which areas need the most attention. If sensory issues are causing serious problems a more in depth sensory profile and sensory diet may be needed.

Please contact us for more information on sensory processing issues or any aspect of autism

## Exercise - Identifying Sensory Need

Hyper-sensitive			Sense	Hypo-sensitive		
Covers ears Afraid of animals Dislikes haircut Tolerates own noise Dislikes crowds, thunder, or the sea				BANGS doors or shouts Likes machinery Displays sonar 'bouncing' Loves crowds		
Light sleeper May appear deaf Avoids specific noises Generates own noises				Attracted to noises Seeks vibration Crumples / tears paper Likes bathroom / kitchen Makes loud rhythmic noise		
3	2	1	<b>Auditory</b>	1	2	3
Covers eyes Dislikes the dark May look down Likes spinning objects Looks through saliva / hair				Seeks out light Stims with fingers Edge fascination Object manipulation		
Looks at dust, particles Dislikes bright lights / flashes Controlled movements Excellent visual memory				Stares at objects Dislikes speed / height Loves shiny objects Poor spatial skills May throw objects		
3	2	1	<b>Visual</b>	1	2	3
Resists touch Problems with bathing Can dislike certain foods Avoids temp change Likes soft / furry objects				Unaware of pain May hug tightly Obsessed with injuries Enjoys rough and tumble May crawl under heavy items		
Over reaction to minor pain Dislikes clothes / shoes Can be very ticklish Prefers gentle tactition				Tendency to self-injure Likes pressure May contort body		
3	2	1	<b>Tactile</b>	1	2	3
Wears same clothes Moves from people Struggle with breast feeding May gag or vomit Avoids strong foods				Smells objects May smear faeces Will eat anything Licks hands or body Smells own body areas		
Runs from smells Toileting problems				Smells people May play with urine		
3	2	1	<b>Olfactory</b>	1	2	3
Poor eater Obsessed with certain food Avoids fizzy drinks May use tip of tongue to taste				Will eat anything May regurgitate Mouths objects / tastes Eats mixed tastes		
May gag easily				PICA manifestation		
3	2	1	<b>Gustatory</b>	1	2	3
Poor reaction to movement Dislikes head upside down Problems on uneven surfaces Likes feet on the floor				May rock back and forth Likes swings, playgrounds May spin Can run round and round May bounce and climb		
May not travel well						
3	2	1	<b>Vestibular</b>	1	2	3
Puts body in strange positions Poor manual dexterity Turns whole body to look Likes familiar room positions				Weak grasp Tendency to fall Low muscle tone Appears floppy / leans		
Appears clumsy May rock back and forth						
3	2	1	<b>Propriorec</b>	1	2	3

## Exercise - Identifying Sensory Need (Example)

Hyper-sensitive			Sense	Hypo-sensitive		
Covers ears Afraid of animals Dislikes haircut Tolerates own noise Dislikes crowds, thunder, or the sea				Bangs doors or shouts Likes machinery Displays sonar 'bouncing' Loves crowds		
Light sleeper May appear deaf Avoids specific noises Generates own noises				Attracted to noises Seeks vibration Crumples / tears paper Likes bathroom / kitchen Makes loud rhythmic noise		
3	2	1	Auditory	1	2	3
Covers eyes Dislikes the dark May look down Looks through saliva / hair				Seeks out light Stims with fingers Edge fascination Object manipulation		
Looks at dust, particles Dislikes bright lights / flashes Controlled movements Excellent visual memory				Stares at objects Dislikes speed / height Loves shiny objects Poor spatial skills May throw objects		
3	2	1	Visual	1	2	3
Resists touch Problems with bathing Can dislike certain foods Avoids temp change Likes soft / furry objects				Unaware of pain May hug tightly Obsessed with injuries Enjoys rough and tumble May crawl under heavy items		
Over reaction to minor pain Dislikes clothes / shoes Can be very ticklish Prefers gentle tactition				Tendency to self-injure Likes pressure May contort body		
3	2	1	Tactile	1	2	3
Wears same clothes Moves from people Struggle with breast feeding May gag or vomit Avoids strong foods				Smells objects May smear faeces Will eat anything Licks hands or body Smells own body areas		
Runs from smells Toileting problems				Smells people May play with urine		
3	2	1	Olfactory	1	2	3
Poor eater Obsessed with certain food Avoids fizzy drinks May use tip of tongue to taste				Will eat anything May regurgitate Mouths objects / tastes Eats mixed tastes		
May gag easily				PICA manifestation		
3	2	1	Gustatory	1	2	3
Poor reaction to movement Dislikes head upside down Problems on uneven surfaces Likes feet on the floor				May rock back and forth Likes swings, playgrounds May spin Can run round and round May bounce and climb		
May not travel well						
3	2	1	Vestibular	1	2	3
Puts body in strange positions Poor manual dexterity Turns whole body to look Likes familiar room positions				Weak grasp Tendency to fall Low muscle tone Appears floppy / leans		
				Appears clumsy May rock back and forth		
3	2	1	Propriorec	1	2	3