

## Pediatrics autism supplement looks at co-occurring conditions

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Pediatricians can find the latest research on caring for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in a [special supplement](#) released today in *Pediatrics*.

“Health Care for Children and Youth With Autism and Other Neurodevelopmental Disorders” is the second *Pediatrics* supplement from the Autism Intervention Research Network on Physical Health (AIR-P) and the Autism Speaks Autism Treatment Network (ATN).

James M. Perrin, M.D., FAAP, AAP past president (2014) and editor of the supplement, said co-occurring medical conditions in children with autism typically fall into the categories of gastrointestinal concerns, sleep disorders, epilepsy and mental health conditions.

“They’re not unusual conditions, but they’re things where we made a lot of progress both in identifying them and learning how to treat them more effectively,” said Dr. Perrin, who has led the ATN Clinical Coordinating Center and the AIR-P.

The project received funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dr. Perrin said support from the federal government and collaboration among autism groups were key to completing the research.

Highlights from some of the articles in the supplement include:

- findings that 71% of children with ASD reported sleep problems, while only 30% had been diagnosed;
- clinical recommendations for treating anxiety in youths with ASD;
- findings that 7% of children ages 6-17 with ASD also were diagnosed with depression (more than 20% for adolescents alone), and those youths also had higher rates of seizure disorders and gastrointestinal complaints; and
- ways to improve access to care, including use of telemedicine.

### Resources

- [AP Council on Children with Disabilities autism page](#)
- [Information for parents on autism](#)
- [Bright Futures health initiative](#)
- [AAP clinical report on identifying autism](#)
- [AAP toolkit on caring for children with ASD](#)

