

»» AUTISM AND SENSORY DIFFERENCES

We all experience sensory information slightly differently and have different likes and dislikes.

Autistic people may process sensory information, in all senses, in ways that are significantly different to a non-autistic person



1. Tactile (Touch)
2. Gustatory (Taste)
3. Auditory (Hearing)
4. Olfactory (Smell)
5. Visual (Sight)
6. Vestibular (Balance)
7. Proprioception (external body awareness)
8. Interoception (internal body awareness (temperature, pain, emotions))

‘A difference in the way a person perceives and understands the world, their environment, themselves and others’.

Part of the Neurodivergent Group of Conditions.

Hypersensitivity (over-responsiveness)

someone whose baseline sensory awareness is usually heightened .

Hyposensitivity (under responsiveness)

someone whose baseline sensory awareness is usually dampened.

Someone can fluctuate between being Hyper and Hypo sensitive depending on mood, health and sensory input.

Autistic people can have sensory prioritisation differences where more energy is required to focus on their preferred sensory input.

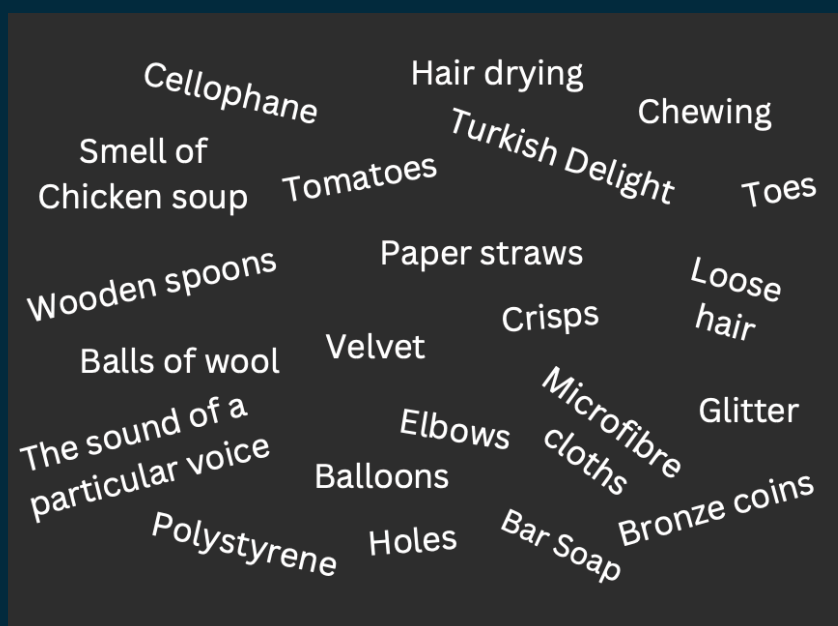
Sensory differences

Proprioception: the body's ability to sense movement, action, and location. It's present in every muscle movement you have. It allows you to walk without consciously thinking about where to place your foot next. It lets you touch your elbow with your eyes closed.

Interoception: Internal awareness (temperature, pain, hunger, thirst,)

Alexithymia: Difficulty in identifying and describing feelings and emotions

EXTREME SENSORY SENSITIVITIES



We all have sensory likes and dislikes and sometimes these can be extreme sensory reactions. These are not phobias or allergies but 'unusually strong responses.

Usually we manage our lives by avoiding these triggers but imagine not being able to avoid them, or not being able to explain what the problem is.

What happens when your senses are overloaded?

Emotional

Anxiety (flight, fight or freeze)

Avoid sensory input

Retreat into a single sensory focus

Use stimming as a distraction



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