



SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER

What is Sensory Processing Disorder?

Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD) is a condition in which the brain interprets sensory information inaccurately. When sensory signals get disorganized, it can result in inappropriate responses or atypical behavioral reactions to one's environment. Although SPD may appear as a behavioral issue, it is actually a neurological condition.



The 8 Senses

Did you know we have more than 5 senses? In addition to the 5 senses of sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell, human beings also have these lesser-known senses:



- **Vestibular** – feedback to the brain about head position, movement, balance, and spatial orientation



- **Proprioception** – muscle and joint sensations, awareness of body parts in space



- **Interoception** – sensations related to internal organs and physiological function/ needs



Signs of Sensory Processing Disorder

- over-sensitive or under-sensitive to physical contact
- hesitant/slow to move or in constant motion
- sensitive to clothing tags and textures
- overwhelmed by lights, sounds, odors
- picky eating or food aversion
- poor listening and attention
- trouble controlling emotions
- frequent meltdowns
- perfectionism
- impulsivity
- clumsiness
- anxiety
- defiant behavior
- lack of coordination
- ADD, ADHD, and/or OCD
- disrupted or disturbed sleep
- learning disabilities and more



These symptoms can occur within a range of severity. In individuals with SPD, behaviors are often chronic and significantly disrupt the activities of daily living.

Treatment & Diagnosis of SPD - on back of card >

“ The OTs "did a tremendous job working with my child. Their genuine concern, patience, and tailored approach were very effective. I am thankful for the [therapists and staff] who contributed to a successful outcome for my child.”

- Dan Jackson, parent



Treatment for Sensory Processing Disorder

Children diagnosed with SPD can benefit from participation in occupational therapy (OT). Through therapeutic play, modeling of social skills, and an array of guided sensory experiences, children can learn to:

- detect, regulate, and interpret sensations
- choose more appropriate behavioral responses
- identify and recognize their thoughts and feelings
- respond to sensory input in a more functional manner
- progressively expand their tolerances and comfort zone
- perform daily activities more independently



In addition to supporting a child during treatment, the OT serves as a coach and educator for parents, sharing productive strategies to use at home, school, and in the community. In clinic or via telehealth, parents are coached to work through the natural ups and downs of life with their child so they can live together more cooperatively and experience more joys in daily life.

Diagnosis of SPD

Although SPD is accepted in the Diagnostic Classification of Mental Health and Developmental Disorders of Infancy and Early Childhood, it is not recognized as a mental disorder in medical manuals such as the ICD-10 or the DSM-5.

Diagnosis is primarily arrived at by the use of standardized tests and questionnaires, expert observational scales, and free play observation at an occupational therapy gym. A child may be referred for an OT evaluation based on a behavioral or neurological diagnosis such as ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder, or other diagnoses. Early diagnosis of SPD increases the chances of successful intervention and treatment and can prevent secondary issues from developing.



Resources: www.webmd.com/children/sensory-processing-disorder, www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sensory_processing_disorder, www.sensoryhealth.org.
Icons from Noun Project by: The Icon Z, Daniel Falk, Jens Tarning, Adrien Coquet, Komkrit Noenpoempisut, Maxim Kulikov, Andrejs Kirma.

“ I can't say enough about this team. In the time of Covid, they got us in for an evaluation, which we needed very badly. I was out of ideas to help my son deal with his anger. They were kind, clear with me, and connected with my little guy in a beautiful way.

Our main therapist...was beyond patient, clear with optional behaviors, and 'got through' to my son very quickly. Within 2 months we had seen such a marked improvement in behavior that I couldn't believe it. We officially have a boy who can control his emotions! I am so very grateful.”

- Gennifer Zentz, parent



Contact us to schedule your child's appointment today
425-481-1933 • www.bpandht.com