

GP appointment script: asking for an ADHD referral

From ADHD Helper, adhdhelper.co.uk/guides/gp-appointment-script/

Version: 27 July 2026. Information only, not medical advice. Only a qualified clinician can diagnose ADHD; your GP decides whether a specialist referral is clinically appropriate.

A GP appointment is short. This one-pager is designed so the important things get said and asked even if the appointment goes fast.

Before the appointment

- ☐ If offered a choice, book a routine (not emergency) appointment and mention it is about a possible ADHD referral
- ☐ Do a validated screener and bring the result (the ASRS adult screener: adhdhelper.co.uk/tools/asrs-adult-adhd-screener/). It is a conversation starter, not a diagnosis
- ☐ Write down your 3 strongest real-life examples (see below) so you do not blank in the room

What to say (opening)

"I have long-standing difficulties with attention, organisation and restlessness that are affecting my [work / studies / home life]. I have looked into it, including a screening questionnaire, and I would like to be referred for an adult ADHD assessment."

Symptom evidence to bring (your 3 examples)

Pick real, specific, costly examples across more than one setting:

1. Work or study:
(missed deadlines, jobs lost, hours lost to restarting tasks, performance warnings)
2. Home and money:
(unpaid bills despite money being there, missed appointments, chaotic admin)
3. Long pattern:
(what school reports or family say about you as a child; how long this has been true)

Also mention, honestly: your mood, anxiety and sleep, other conditions and medications, and anything that runs in the family. Screening for other explanations is a normal part of the process, not a brush-off.

What to ask for

- ☐ A referral for an adult ADHD assessment
- ☐ In England: ask about the referral route and, if you have chosen a provider, an NHS Right to Choose referral to that named provider (letter template: adhdhelper.co.uk/right-to-choose/gp-letter-template/)
- ☐ Outside England: ask for the standard NHS referral route where you live, and the expected wait
- ☐ Ask the practice to record the request and the referral in your notes, and to confirm when the referral has been sent

If the GP is hesitant

- Ask what their concern is: clinical (they want to explore other explanations first) or process (they are unsure of the route)
- Ask for your request and their reason to be recorded in your notes
- Ask what would change their view, and whether another GP at the practice handles ADHD referrals
- You can rebook: bring more evidence, or a written note, next time

Afterwards

- Note the date, what was agreed, and chase the referral if you hear nothing in 2 to 3 weeks
- Prepare for the assessment itself: adhdhelper.co.uk/guides/adhd-assessment-prep-worksheet/

Information only, not medical advice. If you are struggling with your mental health now, contact your GP, NHS 111, or Samaritans on 116 123.