

Preparing for Your Assessment

A practical guide before an ADHD or autism assessment consultation



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San Diego, California

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1 Begin with what you notice

You do not need to arrive with a perfectly organized history or a ready-made explanation. This guide is simply a place to gather the experiences, questions, and context that feel most relevant to you. If your attention, sensory experience, communication style, routines, or daily functioning are part of what brought you here, a few brief notes can make the initial conversation easier to begin.

A useful starting point: Write down two or three examples of what feels difficult, when you first noticed it, and how it affects your work, relationships, home life, or energy.

1.1 Consider the patterns you want to discuss

There is no checklist you need to complete. Instead, notice the patterns that stand out in your day-to-day life. You may find it helpful to bring examples rather than general labels.

Attention and organization

Starting tasks, shifting focus, time awareness, planning, follow-through, or managing competing demands.

Sensory and routine needs

Sensory comfort, need for predictability, recovery after social demands, or distress when plans change.

Communication and connection

Social energy, reading unspoken expectations, communication preferences, masking, or relationships.

Life history and strengths

Important school, work, family, health, or relationship experiences, as well as the strategies that have helped you cope.

2 Gather only what is relevant and available

If you have previous records that you believe may be useful, you are welcome to make a note of them. Examples can include prior psychological or educational evaluations, school support plans, relevant medical or mental-health records, and a current medication list. You do not need to track everything down before reaching out. During the consultation, you can discuss whether any of these materials would be useful and how to provide them safely.

Keep it simple: A short list of the records you have, even if you do not bring them immediately, is enough to start the conversation.

3 Make room for your questions

An assessment is also an opportunity to decide whether the process feels like a good fit. Consider keeping a short question list on your phone or on paper. The following prompts may help you begin.

About the process

What areas will the assessment explore?

About next steps

How will we discuss the findings?

What information is helpful to share?	What options may be available after the assessment?
Is an in-person visit recommended for my situation?	When would it make sense to schedule a consultation?

4 Prepare for the consultation

Before your consultation, choose a setting where you can speak comfortably and privately. Have any notes, questions, or records you would like to mention nearby. If you are not sure what applies to you, that is completely okay—the conversation can begin with what you have noticed and what you hope to understand.

For an in-person conversation, Pathway Clinical Group is located at 8880 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 800, San Diego, CA 92108. If you are considering care from elsewhere in California, use the consultation to discuss the appropriate assessment options for your circumstances.

5 A reassuring final note

You do not need to prove that an assessment is warranted, and you do not need to have every answer in advance. The purpose of the first conversation is to understand what you are experiencing, discuss whether an assessment is an appropriate next step, and make the process feel clear enough to move forward at a pace that works for you.

This guide is for preparation and conversation. It does not provide a diagnosis or replace individualized clinical guidance.

Ready to talk through your next step?

[Schedule a free consultation](#)

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