

DEVELOPMENTAL AND BEHAVIOURAL PEDIATRICS
INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY IN CHILDREN

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Abstract: *Intellectual disability is a neurodevelopmental disorder presenting with impairment / deficits in cognitive and adaptive functioning and has its onset in childhood and has a high prevalence. IQ tests were once used to determine the severity of the condition, whereas adaptive functioning is now the primary criterion. A comprehensive history, meticulous general and systemic physical examination and a focused neurological examination can help identify the etiology in 17-34% of cases. A genetic etiology is identified in half of the children with intellectual disability. Early diagnosis, targeted investigations and assessments should be followed by fixing developmentally appropriate goals and individualized plans to enhance their developmental gains. Developmental support, early intervention, regular surveillance screening and advocacy are essential to improve cognitive functioning and reduce the deficit burden.*

Keywords: *Intellectual disability, Global developmental delay, Cognition, Adaptive functioning.*

Points to Remember

- *Intellectual disability or Intellectual Developmental Disorder is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by impairment or deficits in cognitive and adaptive functioning. It has an onset in childhood and is prevalent in 1-3% of the population.*
- *Children with severe ID are diagnosed early; however, those with mild ID present later when academic or social expectations exceed as age advances.*
- *A meticulous history and examination can point to an etiology in one-third of children, and a genetic etiology has been identified in around 47% of children with ID.*
- *A stepwise targeted evaluation process is necessary to determine an etiology in the remaining 53%.*
- *Assessments should include IQ and adaptive functioning and screening for co-morbidities is mandatory.*
- *Regular surveillance, screening, developmental support, early intervention and advocacy are essential to improve cognitive and adaptive functioning and improve quality of life.*

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