### Differential Diagnosis of ADHD in Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychiatric Disorders</th>
<th>Features Shared with ADHD</th>
<th>Differential Features</th>
<th>Useful Screening Tools &amp; Assessments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Major depressive disorder | • Poor concentration, attention and memory  
• Difficulty completing tasks | • Enduring dysphoric mood or anhedonia  
• Sleep and appetite disturbances | • Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) - screening and diagnosis |
| Bipolar disorder | • Hyperactivity  
• Difficulty maintaining attention and focus  
• Mood swings | • Enduring dysphoric and euphoric mood  
• Insomnia  
• Delusions | • Mood Disorder Questionnaire (MDQ) – screening  
• Adult Altman Self-Rating Mania Scale [ASRM] - diagnosis |
| Generalized anxiety disorder | • Fidgetiness  
• Difficulty concentrating | • Exaggerated apprehension and worrying  
• Somatic symptoms of anxiety (eg, syncope, insomnia) | • Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD-7) – screening  
• Adult Severity Measure for Generalized Anxiety Disorder – diagnosis |
| Personality disorders, especially antisocial and borderline personality disorders | • Impulsivity  
• Affective liability  
• Interpersonal difficulties | • History of arrests (antisocial personality)  
• Repeated self-injuries or suicidal behavior (borderline personality)  
• Failure to recognize the effects of their behavior of self and others | • MacLean Screening Instrument for borderline personality disorder – screening  
• Interview for diagnosis and severity |
| Substance use disorders or dependence | • Difficulties with attention, concentration and memory  
• Mood swings | • Pathologic patterns of substances use with social consequences  
• Physiologic and psychologic symptoms of tolerance, dependence and withdrawal | • NIDA Modified ASSIST Drug Use Screening Tool – screening  
• Interview for diagnosis and severity |
| Mild Autism Spectrum Disorder (Asperger syndrome) | • Inattentiveness  
• Interrupting  
• Talkativeness | • Hyper focus on unique activity to the exclusion of normal daily life  
• Lack of interest in people  
• Inability to “read” social cues  
• Often illogical | • Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) - diagnosis |