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An algorithm to follow in case of a positive score in the ADS screening test

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Background: Statistics show that, worldwide, one in 68 people has autism. Based on the data from recent years, experts estimate that, currently, autism is a more common disorder than cancer, diabetes and Down syndrome. The consequences of this disorder on the family life are important. For parents it is hard to keep a balance between their existences centered on the autistic child, the other children of the family, their personal life and the society. Therefore, it is important that the family doctors identify autism from its earliest stages and possess a systematical strategy of monitoring it, in order to guide the family towards therapy. Therapeutic intervention must be early, daily, in a sustained regime and its outlines must be known and applied by the family.

Methods: retrospective analysis based on the experience gained in 2015 following the introduction of a screening test for ADS, adapted for Romania.

Results: an algorithm to follow in case of a positive score in the ADS, algorithm that would be useful for the GP in his daily practice.

Conclusions: General Practitioners and other health professionals in primary care have a significant role in the early recognition of the Autism Spectrum Disorder, because very often they are the first people meeting parents worried about the unusual behavior or development of their child.

Properly applied screening is an effective method of early detection, which can give these children a chance for a life as close to normal as possible.

The interdisciplinary team is very important for autistic child care and includes the family, the GP, the pediatrician, the psychologist, the psychiatrist, the teacher, the civil society and the decision-makers in healthcare.