

Content Expert Worksheet #3

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**Case Study: Autism Spectrum Disorder**

Seth, age 3, is the third child (and only boy) of Tom and Sue. He has been referred to a psychiatrist by their family physician at the request of the parents. Sue reports that she had a very difficult delivery of Seth, and he had needed oxygen at birth. Tom and Sue report that, from the very beginning, Seth has been “different” from their other children who have always enjoyed social interaction. Seth has tended to be aloof with a lack of response to social contact. When left with a babysitter, he often screams much of the time. His speech is limited and often confusing. For example, he often echos words and phrases he hears or has heard in the past. He may state, “Do you want to eat?” to indicate that he is hungry. His words are monotonistic and carry little, if any, inflection. He is fascinated by two things: objects that turn and music. He loves to listen to music and often dances in circles when listening. He has a favorite spinning top that he likes to carry around with him at all times. He is an expert at putting together jigsaw puzzles. He also likes to distribute kitchen utensils (particularly those with spinning parts) to various places around the house, and retrieval by Mom for their original use may precipitate temper tantrums lasting an hour or more, with screaming, kicking, and biting himself or others. Restoration of the status quo, playing his favorite music, or a long car ride is often the only way to interrupt these tantrums. The psychiatrist admits Seth to the child psychiatric unit with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder.

\*\* pg. 420 in textbook

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NCLEX Questions:

1. A nurse is about to enter the room to assess a patient with Autism Spectrum Disorder. What characteristic would the nurse NOT expect?
  - a. Patient speaks in a monotone voice.
  - b. Patient expresses feelings through temper tantrums.
  - c. **Patient is comfortable with social interactions.**
  - d. Patient behavior calms with music.
2. What nursing interventions can be incorporated into the nursing plan of care when caring for a child with Autism Spectrum Disorder? (Select all that apply)
  - a. **Activities to promote learning and development**
  - b. **Reduce anxiety**
  - c. **Reduce agitation**
  - d. Give the child what they want so they don't throw a tantrum

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3. Which behavioral disorders are now considered under the continuum called the Autism Spectrum? (Select all that apply)
  - a. **Rett Disorder**
  - b. Tourette Disorder
  - c. **Asperger Disorder**
  - d. **Disintegrative Disorder**
4. How can you prevent Seth from causing harm to himself or others?
  - a. Put him in wrist restraints
  - b. Sedate him
  - c. **Use therapeutic communication to calm him down**
  - d. Isolate him