

ADD/ADHD Drug Alternatives

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For the parents of a child diagnosed with ADD/ADHD, **all is not lost!** There are good and proven alternatives to medicating the child diagnosed with ADD/ADHD. However, the remedies are not always as easy as swallowing a pill. Taking the time to discover and correct the underlying factors to this disorder can be extremely rewarding and have a positive and lifelong impact even as the medications prescribed for this disorder can have a negative and even devastating lifetime effect.

To medicate or not to medicate is a question each parent of an ADD/ADHD child has to deal with. Alternatives to medications are not always readily apparent either. It is the right and responsibility of an informed parent to insist on exploring alternatives at any stage of diagnosis and treatment.

The fact is that up to 20% of American school-aged children are now on behavioral medications, according to child neurologist, Fred A. Baughman, Jr. MD¹. A recent article also cites an estimated 49% increase in the medicating of children under the age of five years, along with an increased spending of 369% on medications for children.²

The real questions that parents need to ask are these:

- Are medications an effective treatment for ADD/ADHD?
- Do the risks outweigh the benefits in the treatment plan?
- What are my alternatives to medicating my child?

Are pharmaceutical drugs an effective treatment for ADD/ADHD?

The pharmaceutical facts about drugs used for medical treatment of ADD/ADHD are as follows:

*According to the USA Today and the New York Times, ADD/ADHD medications initially raise math test scores of a child with ADD/ADHD by less than 3 points after 1 year³

*After three years on ADD/ADHD medications, the child is academically back to where they would have been if the child was never put on drugs in the first place⁴

*USA Today, April 2009; After three years on an ADD/ADHD medication the dosage has been raised an average of 41% because the body builds tolerance to and “tunes down” the effects^{4, 7, 8}

*ADD/ADHD medications frequently cause the very symptoms they are treating and actually work by means of malfunction rather than improved function^{5, 8}

ADD/ADHD, Autism and other disorders are medically classified as neuro developmental disorders and spectrum disorders according to Stanford University⁶. There are no medical tests to definitively identify these disorders and all diagnoses of these disorders are based upon subjective findings^{1, 5}. There are no surgeries or other medical procedures that will alleviate the symptoms of a neuro developmental disorder. The medications so often prescribed as purported treatments do nothing to address the *causes* of a neuro developmental disorder.

Simply put, a disorder by definition is a condition where the normal order of things is disrupted. It takes order to overcome disorder. In other words, you cannot expect organized function from a

disorganized brain. All the symptoms of ADD/ADHD, autism and other brain disorders have differing individual causes.

The causes of ADD/ADHD as a spectrum disorder lie in incomplete developmental levels, brain disorganization, under-developed sequential processing skills, brain maturation abnormalities, nutritional deficiencies, food sensitivities, allergenic responses, sub-clinical health issues or other bio-medical issues⁷.

So to answer the first question “Is medication an effective treatment for ADD/ADHD”, the answer is an emphatic **NO!** Medications only temporarily mask some of the symptoms by causing malfunction in the brain^{1, 5, 7} while having long-term physical effects that are, so far, vastly under-studied.^{4, 5, 8}

What are the Risk/benefits of ADD/ADHD medications?

Every parent of a child with a neuro developmental disorder and every professional prescribing medication for treatment of a neuro developmental disorder should carefully consider the impact of the long term risks versus the temporary gains.

- After three years on ADD/ADHD medications the child is on average 0.79 inches shorter and 6 lbs lighter than children with no medications⁴
- ADD/ADHD medications used long term physically alter the brain and cause brain atrophy and gross malfunctions in the brain of the child^{1, 5, 7, 9}
- A child that has been on ADD/ADHD medications is impacted permanently on career choices and is disqualified for opportunities as a commercial airline pilot, certain law enforcement positions and may be disqualified from military service and military officer eligibility^{5, 9}
- Children and teens taking ADHD stimulant medications are seven times more likely to die suddenly than their peers¹⁰

New evidence of the long-term effects of medications prescribed for ADD/ADHD is growing quickly as more studies are being performed and the details emerge^{4, 5}.

What are ADD/ADHD medication alternatives?

Because ADD/ADHD is classified as a neuro developmental **disorder** the answer lies in restoring **order** to the brain and development of the body.

Solutions lie in several areas:

- Identifying and completing developmental levels that have been skipped
For instance; crawling, creeping and walking with appropriate arm swing, detail vision, eye tracking, tactile sensation, auditory functions and many other developmental levels.
- Organizing the brain receptive avenues to assure proper storage of academic information and other facts
For instance; completing either an entirely right-hand, foot, ear and eye dominance in the individual or a left-hand, foot, ear and eye dominance according to the predisposed brain hemisphere dominance.
- Raising the processing skills in the brain

For instance; promoting activities that improve the ability of the brain to receive, process, store and retrieve information in specific order given either verbally or auditory. (The average American should be able to do 7 sequences verbal and auditory.)

- Promoting proper brain maturation

For instance; as the brain matures it establishes neural pathways with a process called “myelination” where a protective layer of fatty substance is formed around the neural pathways. This process relies on nutrients commonly found in fish oils.

- Maintaining a healthy diet

Good neurological function begins with the proper digestion of wholesome nutrients

- Address bio-medical causes

For instance; intestinal issues, gut dysbiosis, lead, mercury and other toxic metal accumulations, allergies and food sensitivities, sleep disorders, hypo/hyperglycemia, hypo/hyper thyroid, among other possible exacerbating factors

In conclusion; raising healthy children is ultimately the responsibility of the parents and not the professionals. Each and every child is as unique as a snowflake and the development of that child is shaped and formed by the environment that surrounds it. The parent of the child must become informed on issues that affect the child. Ultimately the parent must decide what is best for their child and choose the food, medications, academic input and even the surrounding environment that influences the development of that child.

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1 Dr Fred A Bauman Jr MD <http://www.adhdfrad.org/commentary/070104-1.htm>

2 <http://www.planetc1.com/search/adhd-drugs-outselling-antibiotics-in-kids.html>

3 http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2009-04-27-adhd-tests_N.htm

4 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/26/AR2009032604018.html>

5 Peter R Breggin MD <http://www.antipsychiatry.org/ritalin.htm>

6 <http://cogent.stanford.edu/neuro.html>

7 Holistic Mental Health, By Dave DiSano page 60 Holistic Mental Health, By Dave DiSano page 60

8 <http://www.micronutra.com/journal/adhd/ritalin-side-effects-and-children-should-we-be-giving-kids-chill-pills>

9 <http://www.tldm.org/news6/ritalin.htm>

¹⁰ <http://www.bio-medicine.org/medicine-news-1/ADHD--Drugs-Linked-to-Sudden-Death-in-Kids--48862-1/>