

ADHD — Common Questions

As they learn more about Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), many parents will have similar questions and concerns. Here are answers to a few of the more frequently asked questions. Also remember that your pediatrician is available to answer your questions and discuss your concerns.

Will My Child Outgrow ADHD?

ADHD continues into adulthood in most cases. However, by developing their strengths, structuring their environments, and using medication when needed, adults with ADHD can lead very productive lives. In some careers, having a high-energy behavior pattern can be an asset.

Why Do so Many Children Have ADHD?

The number of children who are being treated for ADHD has risen. It is not clear whether more children have ADHD or more children are being diagnosed with ADHD. ADHD is now one of the most common and most studied conditions of childhood. Because of more awareness and better ways of diagnosing and treating this disorder, more children are being helped.

Are Schools Putting Children on ADHD Medication?

Teachers are often the first to notice behavior signs of possible ADHD. However, only physicians can prescribe medications to treat ADHD. This follows a careful process of diagnosis.

Are Children Getting High on Stimulant Medications?

There is no evidence that children are getting high on stimulant drugs such as methylphenidate and amphetamine. These drugs also do not sedate or tranquilize children and have no addictive properties.

Stimulants are classified as Schedule II drugs by the US Drug Enforcement Administration. There are some reports of abuse of this class of medication. If your child is on medication, it is always best to supervise the use of the medication closely.

Are Stimulant Medications "Gateway" Drugs Leading to Illegal Drug or Alcohol Abuse?

People with ADHD are naturally impulsive and tend to take risks. But those patients with ADHD who are taking stimulants are actually at lower risk of using other drugs. Children and teenagers who have ADHD and also have coexisting conditions may be at high risk for drug and alcohol abuse, regardless of the medication used.

Excerpted from "*Understanding ADHD*" from the American Academy of Pediatrics.