

August News

The Truth About Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Common Myths about ADHD:

- Parenting styles cause ADHD
- ADHD is over-diagnosed
- ADHD is not a medical condition
- Changing diet and limiting sugar intake will cure ADHD

**These statements are all false!
Keep reading to learn the truth
about ADHD!**

What is ADHD?

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is a neurobiological disorder, not a problem with behavior. This means it is an illness of the nervous system. Those diagnosed with ADHD are deficient in a chemical called dopamine in their brains. Norepinephrine, another brain chemical, may also be affected. New research has shown that some areas of the brain are smaller and have decreased blood flow in those with ADHD.

How common is ADHD?

Studies show that 5-12% of school aged children have ADHD. Additionally, boys are three times more likely to have ADHD compared to girls.

What causes ADHD?

ADHD is a genetic disorder. This means it is hereditary and is passed down through families. ADHD is NOT caused by poor parenting or bad teachers.

Can adults have ADHD?

Yes. 60% of people with ADHD have symptoms that persist into adulthood. This also means that adults can be diagnosed with ADHD later in life, if they were previously undiagnosed as children. With in-

creasing awareness about ADHD is being diagnosed in adults more frequently.



What are the symptoms of ADHD?

Symptoms of ADHD typically fall into the following 3 categories: inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity. Here are a few symptoms in each category.

Inattention:

- Distracted easily/daydreaming
- Over-focused on one problem (inappropriate attention)

Hyperactivity:

- Fidgeting and squirming
- Talking excessively and at inappropriate times

Impulsivity:

- Blurting out answers in class
- Problems waiting for a turn

New research has shown that symptoms of ADHD can change with age. For example, younger children tend to have more problems with attention, while adolescents and adults have more problems with executive functioning. Executive functioning is becoming more recognized as a problem in those with ADHD. Executive functioning (EF) is the skill that allows us to plan ahead, finish a task and manage our time.

How is ADHD diagnosed?

Diagnosis ADHD is currently done using behavioral screening tools. There are currently no blood tests or other

physical measures that are used to diagnose ADHD. These tools assess the number of symptoms present. Additionally, in order for a diagnosis to be made symptoms must be present in all life settings (e.g. both at school and at home).

What are the treatments for ADHD?

Treatment of ADHD can be comprised of any one or a combination of the following:

- 1) Behavioral Therapy: This is a combination of educating family members, counseling and other behavioral interventions both in the school and at home.
- 2) Stimulant Medications: These medications work in the brain to improve the norepinephrine and/or dopamine signaling. There are a few different options available, most taken once daily.

Why treat ADHD?

When ADHD is left untreated the following serious consequences may occur:

- Poor social relationships
- Symptoms of depression or anxiety
- Poor academic work and performance
- Increased risk of accidental injury (those with ADHD are 4x more likely to have a car accident than those without)
- Early school drop out (30% of students with ADHD compared to 10% without)
- Alcoholism and substance abuse (those with untreated ADHD start using alcohol 2 years earlier than those without)
- More likely to be in trouble with the law or put in jail

For more information on ADHD ask your doctor or pharmacist today!!

Rx Center— What happens in that funny little room? Custom Compounding

What is compounding?

Compounding is a way for physicians and veterinarians to order individualized medications for their patients. Compounding is the art of mixing drugs and other ingredients to create customized medications.

What dosage forms can be compounded?

At a Stafford Pharmacy we can create a wide variety of products including:

- Oral Liquids (suspensions/solutions)
- Capsules
- Topical creams and gels
- Suppositories (rectal/vaginal)
- Eye drops
- Intravenous antibiotics and other sterile products

Why might you require a compounded medication?

There are many instances that a medi-

cation may need to be compounded. For animals, the appropriate dosage may not be commercially available. If it is available, it may not be in a form the animal will take. At our pharmacy we can flavor medications for animals so that it will make giving them their medications easier! For humans, there are many reasons as well. There may be no commercially available product, or the product may not be available in the desired strength or form. For example, some people have difficulties swallowing. With compounding a medication that is normally available in a tablet can be made into a liquid. There are many reasons other reasons you may require a compounded prescription as well!

Do I need a prescription for a compounded medication?

Yes. A medication cannot be com-

pounded for you or your animal without a prescription from your physician or veterinarian. The prescription must specify the strength/dose and instructions for use.

How long does it take to prepare a compounded prescription?

Typically we require 24-48 hours to prepare a compounded prescription. However, in emergency situations this timeline is modified.

Are compounds covered by my insurance plan?

Depending on your insurance plan, the majority of compounded medications should be covered. The only plans we are able to bill online to are Alberta Blue Cross and Social Services. For all other plans, you must submit your receipt in order to receive reimbursement for your compounded products.

OTC Spotlight— Medical Alert

What is a medical alert?

A medic alert is an identification tag which is worn on the neck or wrist that tells emergency personnel vital health information. Some people are even having medical alert information tattooed onto their wrists!

What types of information should be on a medical alert?

Medical alerts should have the following information listed on the back:

- Allergies to medications as well as foods and insects
- Chronic Medical Conditions
- Medications (which may be potentially harmful when combined with emergency treatments)

How can a medical alert help to protect you?

In the case of an emergency, the information on these tags saves lives.

Emergency responders are trained to look for medical alerts. When they are present, the responder immediately has access to potentially life saving information. These alerts save the responder time and in many instances time can save lives. A medical alert can prevent you from receiving a medication that could harm or kill you. They help responders recognize what is wrong with you faster as well, this results in more timely treatment and can prevent a hospital visit.

Who should wear a medical alert?

- Those with a chronic conditions (i.e. breathing conditions, heart failure, arrhythmias, diabetes, hypertension, kidney failure, Alzheimer's disease, epilepsy)
- Those undergoing cancer treatment
- Children with special needs (autism)
- Those with hearing or visual impairments

- Those with allergies to medications, foods (peanuts) and insects (bee stings)
 - Those taking medications such as anti-coagulants (warfarin) or insulin
 - Those taking multiple medications
 - Those with blood disorders
- And many many more!!

Where can you get a medical alert?

Common medical alerts can be purchased at most pharmacies. Additionally, customized medical alerts can be ordered online. The Canadian charity Medic Alert offers customized alerts online at www.medicalert.ca.



Ask your pharmacist today if a medical alert is right for you!

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