



ADHD in Adults

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Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a condition that is widely thought to be exhibited mainly by children. Although most diagnoses are in children from age 5-17, adults can struggle with the effects and never receive a proper diagnosis or treatment.

The diagnosis of ADHD is made depending on a series of symptoms that involve a combination of inattention or hyperactivity, such as:

Inattention: missing details or making careless mistakes, difficulty sustaining attention, not listening when being spoken to, not following instruction, difficulty organizing tasks, avoiding tasks that require prolonged attention, losing/misplacing important items, easily distracted by new stimuli, forgetful of appointments or activities

Hyperactivity: fidgeting, feeling restless, leaving when expected to stay somewhere, unable to participate in activities quietly, always on the go, talking excessively, blurting out thoughts that come to mind, difficulty waiting, intruding upon others



Standard Treatments

The treatment of ADHD often involves a combination of direct behavioral interventions and medication

The most commonly used medications are amphetamines or methylphenidate. Both are stimulants medications which assist in maintaining attention by enhancing neurotransmitter release in the brain.

These medications are helpful for many people, but may not fit everyone. Whether using medication or not, it is important to maximize control of symptoms by non-pharmacological means as well.

Many people see benefit from professional psychotherapy to identify the specific areas of their thought process that are causing the most stress and difficulty and find how to correct those patterns. This is often so helpful because therapy is specifically tailored to the exact needs of the individual.



What can you do on your own?

A lot! There are many activities that people dealing with ADHD may find to be helpful in alleviating some of their stress and symptoms

Examples:

- **Exercise!**
 - Exercise has been found to be one of the most helpful at improving focus, mood, attention, and reducing impulsivity while burning excess energy
- **Spend time in Nature**
 - Studies have shown that spending time in nature can reduce stress, and help find a deeper sense of calm in people with ADHD
- **Engage your mind elsewhere**
 - Find a hobby to claim your attention, listen to music, do puzzles, play games, meditate
- **Organize yourself**
 - Use a planner or to do list to keep you on track, provide a distraction free environment, break down tasks into bite-sized pieces that are manageable
- **Find support**
 - Find someone else to help keep you accountable, join a group of others who are having/overcoming the same problems you struggle with