

Alternative Medicines Views on “Hyperactivity and Attention Deficit Disorder: Do We Have Options?”

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Attention-deficit disorder affects a startling 17 million people and seems to be gaining ground every year.

As a parent of child suffering with this disorder.. what are you to do?? Attention-deficit disorder is the most frequently diagnosed childhood psychiatric condition in America. In the past most medical journals described this disorder as minimal brain damage, hyperactive child syndrome & minimal cerebral dysfunction.

The common symptoms include brief attention span, poor concentration, difficulty keeping track of things, making careless mistakes, impatience, difficulty waiting or taking turns, blurting out answers when not asked, impulsiveness, hyperactivity, failure to finish things off, lack of perseverance & poor organizing. These characteristics are frequently associated with difficulties in school, in both learning and behavior. Task that require concentration are nearly impossible causing frustration, irritability, agitation and often recklessness.

There are three types of ADHD: Inattentive, predominately hyperactivity and combined type. Girls are more prevalent to exhibit the symptom of inattentiveness, whereby boys tend to be more hyperactive. As a child with undiagnosed ADHD becomes a teenager, he/she may become involved in drugs and crime and will commonly drop out of school. In adulthood the predominant features are failure to complete tasks, disorganization, difficulty paying attention and difficulty beginning tasks.

Conventional Medical Treatment

The conventional medical treatment for ADHD is almost always pharmaceutical drugs such as methylphenidate (Ritalin) or or the amphetamine Adderall. A review in the Journal of Clinical Psychiatry notes that two antidepressants -- bupropion and venlafaxine -- are now being used as an alternative. "Talk therapy" is often recommended in conjunction with prescription medication for ADHD.

Alternative Medical Treatment:

The causes of ADHD are many and it would serve your child well for the parents to investigate the possible underlying factors that could very-well be causing the condition.

The Functional Medicine Approach looks at the triggers of ADHD. People with ADHD often have impaired digestion, environmental and food sensitivities, nutritional insufficiencies, heavy metal toxicities, fatty acid and amino acid imbalances, sensitivity to food additives and sucrose (sugar). Some studies indicate a possible genetic

predisposition. Children with ADHD usually have histories of more ear infections (otitis media) than other children with learning problems.

It is unfortunate that many people who have children suffering with ADHD are not informed of all the options. I must agree that prescription medications such as Ritalin and Adderall can make a significant impact on the symptoms of ADHD. A child who once was inattentive is now focused and doing well in school. Who can ask for anything better?!! But, are you being told everything? What are the long-term health risk for your child?

Studies done on children taking Ritalin using a PET scan revealed that although the children had a reduction in their symptoms the PET scan was highly abnormal.

Most physicians are trained to treat ADHD with amphetamine-like drugs. But nutritionally oriented physicians have known for a long time that food allergy is a primary cause. The first major scientific study to show the link between food allergy and hyperactivity appeared in a 1985 issue of Lancet, a prestigious international medical journal. Dr. J. Egger, head of a pediatric university hospital in Munich, and Dr. J Soothill, London, England, studied the effect of food on 76 hyperactive children. 79% had clear improvement in their mental activity, emotions and behavior and 28 became completely normal. To prove their findings, the researchers reintroduced the allergenic foods to the children and their hyperactive symptoms returned.

The following have been linked to ADD:

- Food sensitivities
- Heavy metal toxicity especially lead has been linked to attention deficit and learning problems. Dr. H.L. Needleman of the University of Pittsburgh Medical School has conducted scores of studies over the last 20 years clearly establishing the link between lead levels in children and specific hyperactive and attention deficit behavior traits. Follow-up studies indicate that these effects often persist into adulthood.
- Fatty acid deficiency
- Amino acid imbalances
- Methylation dysfunction
- Intestinal dysbiosis
- Carbohydrates (Sugars)
- Vaccinations

Dr. Badanek's Comment:

I would have to say that I have not met a parent who did not want the best for their child. The parent who is struggling with what to do to help their child, faces a major dilemma. Should you medicate your child or take the road less traveled and identify the underlying cause of your child's problem. Realize you have two sides of this sensitive issue. On one hand you have your family physician who insist that pharmaceutical drugs is the only way to go and offers no real alternative. And on the other hand, the

volumes of medical research is quite over-whelming in favor of looking for the root cause(s) of your child's condition.

Dr. Badanek has been and currently is 38 years into active/private practice in the Ocala/Marion County, Florida region. Dr. Badanek practices Natural/Holistic Medicine through the use of Functional/Integrative Models for diagnostic and treatment protocols for the health challenged. Find him online at Dr.Badanek.com and www.alternativewholistic.com, and see what the facility has to offer the sick and health challenged. To schedule an appointment call 352-622-1151