



## ADHD Medicines

### What medicines are used to treat ADHD?

Some medicines used to treat attention-deficit and hyperactivity disorder are called stimulants. Although these medicines can have stimulating effects in some, they tend to calm those with ADHD.

Some examples of these drugs are:

**Methylphenidate** (brand names: **Concerta, Ritalin, Metadate, Focalin, Methylin, Daytrana**)  
**D- and L-Amphetamine Racemic mixture** (brand name: **Adderall, Vyvanse**).

Other types of medicine sometimes used to treat ADHD include:

**Atomoxetine** (brand name: **Strattera**)

**Clonidine** (brand name: **Catapres.**)

**Intuniv**

### Do the medicines for ADHD have side effects?

All medicines have side effects. Stimulants may cause decreased appetite, stomachache or headache. The loss of appetite can cause weight loss in some people. This side effect seems to be more common in children. Some people have trouble sleeping. Here are some ways to avoid side effects:

- Use the lowest possible dose
- Take the medicine with food if it bothers your stomach.
- Children who lose weight while taking medicine can have healthy snacks during the day.

Most stimulant medications are given in the morning. Lunch-time doses can be given at school for some children. If your child can't take this medicine at school, tell your doctor. Your doctor might suggest a long-acting form of the medicine instead. The long-acting form of this medicine should not be crushed, broken or chewed before swallowing.

It's also important to know that some of the medicines used to treat ADHD are called "controlled" drugs. The prescriptions for controlled drugs must be refilled at the drug store every month. Prescriptions can only be written for a month at a time.

### How long will this treatment last?

The length of time a person takes medicine for ADHD depends on each person. Everyone is different. Some people only need a short treatment for 1 to 2 years while some people need treatment for many more years. In some people, ADHD may continue into adolescence and adulthood.

People who have ADHD should be checked regularly by their doctors. Most guidelines suggest follow up within 1-2 weeks after a change of medicine and require six month follow up for those who are stable on a medication. During these checkups, the doctor will want to hear what the parents have to say about a child with ADHD. Your doctor may suggest that your child take a break from his or her medicines once in a while to see if the medicine is still necessary.