

Drugs for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder



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This document has been translated into other languages.
In case of any discrepancy or inconsistency, the English version shall prevail.

What are ADHD medicines?

ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) medicines are a group of drugs used to manage the symptoms of ADHD. These symptoms include hyperactivity, impulsiveness, and inattentiveness. ADHD medicines do not cure ADHD but help to enhance and balance neurotransmitters in the brain, improving focus and reducing hyperactivity and impulsive behavior.

They are prescribed when patients have significant difficulty with everyday life tasks due to their ADHD symptoms. These difficulties may include issues with school or work performance, relationships, and self-esteem. The decision to prescribe ADHD medication is based on a comprehensive assessment by your doctor.

Types of ADHD medicines

ADHD medications fall into two main categories: stimulants and non-stimulants. Both types function differently and have different effects on the brain.

➤ Stimulants

Stimulants are the most commonly used medications for ADHD. They work by increasing the levels of certain chemicals in the brain that help with attention and focus, and reduce impulsive behavior. Common stimulants include **Methylphenidate** (also known as Ritalin, Concerta) and **Lisdexamfetamine** (also known as Vyvanse).

➤ Non-Stimulants

Non-stimulant medications work differently from stimulants. Instead of increasing the amount of these chemicals, they change how these chemicals interact with parts of the brain that help with attention and impulse control. Common non-stimulants include **Atomoxetine** (also known as Strattera).

Side effects and cautions of ADHD medicines

There are some possible side effects that can occur when taking ADHD medication, however these generally wear off after the first few weeks. Inform your doctor if you experience any side effects, your doctor may adjust the dosage and/or provide you additional treatment to minimize the side effects.

ADHD Medicines	Common side effects	Cautions
<u>Stimulants</u>		
Methylphenidate	Insomnia, decreased appetite, weight loss, mood swings, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, dyspepsia, headache, dizziness, joint pain, muscle twitching, increased blood pressure and pulse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ It is best to stick to the same brand of methylphenidate. Different brands and preparations of methylphenidate tablets work differently in how they release the medicine into your body.➤ Avoid taking the last dose of Methylphenidate after 6pm to prevent insomnia.
Lisdexamfetamine	Insomnia, decreased appetite, weight loss, aggression, dizziness, headaches, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting, increased blood pressure and pulse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Preferably to be taken in the morning. Avoid afternoon doses due to the potential of insomnia.
<u>Non-stimulants</u>		
Atomoxetine	Insomnia, decreased appetite, weight loss, constipation, dizziness, headaches, nausea and vomiting, increased blood pressure and pulse	/

Can I stop taking my ADHD medicines?

It is important to discuss any decision to stop taking your ADHD medications with your healthcare provider. Abruptly stopping medication without medical guidance can lead to a recurrence of ADHD symptoms. Your healthcare provider will work with you to determine the appropriate time to discontinue medication, taking into account factors such as symptom management, overall progress, and individual needs. It is crucial to follow your healthcare provider's instructions and have regular check-ups to monitor your progress and make any necessary adjustments to your treatment plan.

How long do I need to take my ADHD medicines?

The duration of ADHD medication treatment varies for each individual and depends on several factors, including the severity of symptoms, treatment response, and individual needs. Your doctor will work with you to determine the appropriate duration of treatment. In some cases, medication may be used for a specific period, such as during the school year, while in other cases, long-term or ongoing medication may be recommended. Regular check-ups and ongoing communication with your doctor are essential to assess treatment effectiveness, monitor any changes in symptoms, and make any necessary adjustments to your treatment plan.

What should the caregiver do if patient refuses to take their ADHD medications?

If a patient refuses to take their medicine, it's important for caregivers to approach the situation with patience and understanding. Open communication is key. Discuss the importance of the medication, the benefits it provides, and the potential risks of not taking it. If the patient continues to refuse, it may be helpful to involve the doctor or a mental health professional in the conversation. They can provide further information and reassurance, or suggest alternative treatments if necessary. It's crucial to respect the patient's autonomy and feelings while also ensuring their health and safety.

DO

1. Strictly follow the doctor's instructions
2. Pay attention to the drug name, dosage and frequency, etc. before taking your medication
3. Read the prescription label carefully
4. Pay attention to the dosage, indication, contraindication and side effects
5. Understand the method of administration
6. Store your medication properly
7. Complete the prescribed course unless otherwise directed
8. If you have any questions, talk to your family and ask your health care professionals

DON'T

1. Change the dosage of your medication on your own
2. Stop taking your medication except on your doctor's advice.
3. Drink alcohol with your medication.
4. Put your medication in other bottle.
5. Take other medication unless directed by your doctor.
6. Lie to your doctors about your compliance