

# ADHD Non-Prescription Alternative

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According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control as of 2011, 11 percent of people ages 4-17 have been diagnosed with ADHD. I've read statistics that say 4-5% of adults also have ADHD and Adderall is the drug of choice for both children and adults.

Adderall is a combination of two types of stereo isomer amphetamines. Between the years 2007 and 2011 scripts went up 40%. Just to give you an idea, the DEA says close to 50 million prescription stimulant drugs like Adderall were dispensed in 2011 to treat symptoms of ADHD. That's a lot of amphetamines.

I spoke to one of my colleagues and she gave me a protocol that she has had great effectiveness with adults who want an alternative to Adderall. While discussing the adult protocol with Dr. Greg Peterson for his feedback, he shared his successful protocol for children. We'll consider both here.



Patients with ADHD experience stress far greater than the average person because they are constantly feeling overwhelmed. The cause of ADHD can be a lack of energy due to mitochondrial dysfunction, brain inflammation, one of many forms of anemia, a diet loaded with refined foods and additives, leaky gut, blood sugar dysfunction, poor digestion, food sensitivities or a combination thereof.

So before we go further please consider looking for clues for these underlying factors as a foundation to any therapy you may employ.

You may be aware that Adderall increases the levels of dopamine, norepinephrine, serotonin and even glutamate in the brain. One of the reasons Adderall is addictive is because over time, the natural production of dopamine is reduced so patients have difficulty experiencing pleasure without the drug.

For Adult ADHD, my colleague took a slightly different approach from Adderall. Rather than push the dopamine pathway she supplied the precursors to facilitate the acetylcholine and serotonin pathways. Her goal

was to promote brain clarity using natural formulas. She also added adaptogenic botanicals and the mineral lithium.

We've had other discussions about lithium and its neurogenic and neuroprotective effects on the brain. One study compared lithium carbonate to Ritalin in a randomized, double-blind, crossover study in adults with attention-deficit / hyperactivity disorder. They summarized, "In this preliminary study, lithium and Ritalin (methylphenidate) produced similar improvements on the primary outcome measure and on measures of irritability, aggressive outbursts, antisocial behavior, anxiety, and depression."

Li-Zyme Forte by Biotics Research Corporation uses a vegetable culture sprouted concentrated food form of lithium which avoids all the side effects of pharmaceutical lithium carbonate.

To support serotonin pathways, my colleague recommends the product Mood Enhancer which supplies St. John's Wort, 5-HTP and the co-factors needed to make serotonin.

To support the acetylcholine pathway she used Cognitive Enhancer, developed to enhance brain function by stimulating neurogenesis.

Cognitive Enhancer contains: 100 mg of acetyl L-carnitine, 100 mg of GPC choline, 25 mg of a standardized ginkgo biloba and 5 mg Huperzia serrata, a form of huperzine A.

The adaptogenic formula used was called Energi by Professional Botanicals; however, Bio-Ashwagandha by Biotics' is much less expensive and has natural anti-anxiety properties.

The dosage she used for each supplement was 2 capsules twice a day. After 30 days, instruct patients to titrate doses based on amounts of stress experienced. I would always suggest a blood test to look for B6, folate, magnesium,

zinc and iron deficiencies. And as Dr. Vasquez and others have pointed out many times, everybody should consider essential fatty acids to reduce systemic inflammation and to support both cell and mitochondrial membrane integrity.

So how is the protocol different for children? I don't mind suggesting neurotransmitter precursors for adults as we search for underlying causes of ADHD. But with children there are many factors that should be considered first. Dr. Peterson agreed and his protocol reflects a gentler foundation building approach.

For children with ADHD use the following supplements at 1 tablet / capsule twice a day: Bio-Cyanidins, a mixture of pycnogenol and grape seed extract. You can see a previous TM on the benefits of the plant based antioxidant pycnogenol and ADHD.

ADHS, an adrenal support product to balance cortisol levels; Basic Nine, a plant based mineral formula with nine balanced trace minerals; Bio-B 100, which contains phosphorylated B vitamins to support overall energy production.

In addition, use combination essential fatty acids like Optimal EFAs, one B12- 2000 Lozenge and 2 drops of Bio-D-Mulsion Forte daily.

I have attached a paper and pencil test to help you understand some of the symptoms of ADHD. Sometimes just knowing you have underlying symptoms of ADHD allows you to give yourself grace when you are frustrated.

Knowing there are natural ways to enhance cognitive function whether a patient has diagnosable ADHD or not could give your patients a distinct advantage. And if they are already on Adderall or another prescription drug, they may appreciate another option.

Thanks for reading this week's Tuesday Minute edition. I'll see you next Tuesday.