

5 Myths About ADHD Treatment



Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder is a developmental disorder that affects attention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity. Symptoms commonly start in childhood and can affect daily life.

ADHD Treatment

Treatment for Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) can include stimulant and nonstimulant medications. The goal of these medications is to reduce the symptoms of ADHD and help improve daily functioning of individuals with the condition.

- ADHD treatment can include stimulant or nonstimulant based medication.
- Stimulant medications do not change someone's personality or make hyperactivity worse.
- ADHD medications do not make people more likely to develop a substance use disorder.
- ADHD treatment does not make the condition go away but makes it easier to manage.

The most common stimulant-based medications for ADHD are Ritalin and Adderall. These drugs require a prescription; however, those without ADHD may misuse them to make themselves stay awake later or party longer. They are also misused as "study" drugs in an attempt to increase energy and concentration.

Myth #1: ADHD Medications Will Put People at a Higher Risk of Developing a Substance Use Disorder (SUD).

Due to the popularity of stimulant medications as party drugs, some think that these drugs make people with ADHD more likely to develop a substance use disorder later in life. However, there has been no evidence found to support this. Individuals taking this medication as directed are not more or less likely to develop a SUD.

It is important to note that people with ADHD are more likely to develop SUDs due to the nature of the condition, not the treatment. Untreated ADHD can lead to impulsivity, making these people vulnerable to substance misuse and self-medication.

Myth #2: ADHD Medications Will Change Someone's Personality.

It is possible for these medications to affect someone's mood or make them appear sedated; however, this is an uncommon side effect. If someone does experience a change in personality, it may suggest that the dosage of the medication is incorrect.

As with any condition, there is no "one size fits all." If a change in dose doesn't help, it may mean that specific medication is not right for that individual.

Myth #3: Stimulant Medication Will Worsen ADHD Symptoms.

Many believe that stimulant-based medications will make the individual more hyper, and in turn, make the symptoms of the condition worse. This is not the case. Stimulant-based medications tend to have the opposite effect on people with ADHD and decrease hyperactivity.



Wheeler

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Clearinghouse
a program of the Connecticut Center
for Prevention, Wellness and Recovery

800.232.4424 (phone)
www.ctclearinghouse.org

A Library and Resource Center on Alcohol, Tobacco, Other Drugs, Mental Health and Wellness

Connecticut Resources

CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

www.ct.gov/DMHAS

24/7 Access Line

1.800.563.4086

2-1-1 of Connecticut

www.211ct.org or call 2-1-1

National Resources

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

www.samhsa.gov

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)

www.nida.nih.gov

CHADD

<https://chadd.org/>

Myth #4: Treatment Will Completely Cure ADHD.

Some believe that ADHD treatment will cure the condition, and that the long-term goal is to get off of the medication.

ADHD is a chronic condition, and there is no treatment that will make it go away forever. Instead, ADHD changes as the individual grows older. They may structure and live their life in a way that makes it easier to do daily tasks. For some, this is enough to allow them to stop medical treatment, but for many, medical intervention is still a key part of their treatment plan.

The goal of treatment is to help an individual manage their ADHD so they can function well at all stages of their life, not to cure the condition all together. ADHD is something that does not need to be cured, people with ADHD go on to live full and happy lives, and ADHD does not prevent that from happening.

Myth #5: ADHD is a Condition That People Outgrow, Treatment is Not Needed.

ADHD commonly develops and is diagnosed in childhood or early adolescence. As a result, many think that ADHD is something that people will outgrow when they enter adulthood.

For most people with ADHD, this isn't the case. The majority of individuals with this condition grow up and continue to have some aspects of ADHD for the rest of their lives. The main difference is that as people grow older, they develop more skills to manage and cope with the condition. This may allow some individuals to taper off and eventually discontinue medication, but ADHD does not disappear with age.

What Happens When ADHD Goes Untreated.

Misinformation may lead some to skip treatment. However, leaving ADHD untreated can have serious consequences.

Children with untreated ADHD may fall behind in school and experience difficulty forming or maintaining friendships. They also tend to have more emergency room visits and are more likely to sustain self-inflicted injuries than children who are receiving treatment.

Teens and young adults with untreated ADHD are more likely to participate in high-risk behaviors including impaired driving, and tend to have more motor vehicle accidents than peers who receive treatment for ADHD.

Where to Get Treatment for ADHD.

There are a variety of treatment methods for ADHD, and the best course of action is unique to every individual.

It is always best to speak to a medical professional if one suspects that their child or themselves may have ADHD. A doctor can screen for this disorder and work with them to find the best course of action for that individual.



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