

## Educational Links (English):

- ❖ <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/mental-health-medications/index.shtml>
- ❖ <http://www.clinicaladvisor.com/features/psychostimulants-effective-for-adhd/article/197328/>
- ❖ <http://www.webmd.com/add-adhd/adhd-stimulant-therapy#1>
- ❖ <http://www.webmd.com/add-adhd/adhd-medical-treatment#1>
- ❖ <http://www.webmd.com/add-adhd/tc/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd-medications>
- ❖ <http://www.chadd.org/Understanding-ADHD/For-Parents-Caregivers/Treatment-Overview/Managing-Medication.aspx>

## Emergencies:

*These medications when ingested in large quantities can cause heart problems and can be lethal. If you have taken a high amount of one of these medicines or a family member of yours call 9-1-1 immediately and request an ambulance or visit the nearest emergency room as possible.*



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Lumos Psychiatric Services



## Educational Booklet: Psychostimulants

Psychostimulants are medicines for the treatment of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in children and adults. In addition, they are indicated in Parkinson's disease and Narcolepsy. In some patients, they may be effective when added to major depression treatment.

ADHD is characterized by three categories of symptoms: inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity, although not all symptoms are always present at once.

Psychostimulants increase levels of motor and cognitive activity, strengthen wakefulness, alertness and attention.

### Before starting a psychostimulant, tell your doctor if:

- ❖ Suffers from drug allergies
- ❖ Are pregnant or nursing
- ❖ Use over-the-counter or natural products
- ❖ Suffers from heart disease

### Names of the most common psychostimulants:

- ❖ Dextroamphetamine (Dexedrine)
- ❖ Dextroamphetamine / Amphetamine salts (Adderall)
- ❖ Methylphenidate (Ritalin, Metadate, Concerta)
- ❖ Methylphenidate transdermal patch (Daytrana)
- ❖ Dexmethylphenidate (Focalin)

When you start taking psychostimulants, the therapeutic effect (decreased symptoms) usually begins in the first week of treatment and is expected to increase over the next 3 weeks.

The medicine should not be discontinued unless your doctor tells you to.

### **Indications for the use of a psychostimulant:**

- ❖ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- ❖ Parkinson's disease
- ❖ Narcolepsy
- ❖ Obesity (Dextroamphetamine – Only in the United States)
- ❖ Treatment-resistant depression
- ❖ Depression in patients with serious medical complications
- ❖ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

### **Most common psychostimulant side effects:**

- ❖ Irritability
- ❖ Increase in energy
- ❖ Anxiety
- ❖ Insomnia
- ❖ Increased aggression and hostility
- ❖ Loss of appetite, weight loss
- ❖ Nausea or upset stomach
- ❖ Blurred vision
- ❖ Dry mouth
- ❖ Increased pulse or blood pressure
- ❖ Headache
- ❖ Decrease in growth in children
- ❖ Sore throat or cough
- ❖ Tics or involuntary movements
- ❖ Rash
- ❖ Tiredness, weakness
- ❖ Mood changes

### **Contraindications for using psychostimulants:**

- ❖ If you have had a drug allergy
- ❖ If you have:
- ❖ High blood pressure
- ❖ Heart disease
- ❖ Atherosclerosis
- ❖ Anorexia Nervosa
- ❖ Hyperthyroidism
- ❖ Glaucoma
- ❖ Severe anxiety or agitation

### **How is the medicine prescribed?**

There are several preparations of medicine (for example, short-lived or slow release). The dose is determined by body weight and may be prescribed several times a day. Your doctor may recommend a recess of the medicine at times when the therapeutic effect of the medicine is not necessary (for example, during school holidays or weekends).

### **Important facts:**

- ❖ All psychostimulants can be very effective.
- ❖ Psychostimulants tend to reduce verbal and physical aggression and reduce negative and unsocial interactions.
- ❖ Treatment with psychostimulants reduces the risk of developing substance abuse disorder in ADHD patients.
- ❖ If there are any other untreated psychiatric conditions, the response to psychostimulants may be decreased.

### **General recommendations:**

- ❖ See a psychiatrist to treat your mental condition.
- ❖ When taking medicines, be aware of any side effects that may occur.
- ❖ Do not discontinue medications without first discussing it with your doctor, as it may cause insomnia or severe changes in mood.
- ❖ Do not take alcohol or other substances while using medicines.
- ❖ Do not operate vehicles or machinery that depends on your motor skills until you know the effect of medications on your body.
- ❖ Do not chew or crush the tablet or capsule.
- ❖ If you miss a dose, you can wait until the next time you get the medicine. Do not double the dose of the medicine.
- ❖ It is important to supplement the use of your medications by attending psychotherapy.

**REMEMBER TO TAKE YOUR MEDICATIONS AS INDICATED BY YOUR MEDICAL WITHOUT MAKING CHANGES IN FREQUENCY OR PRESCRIPTION DOSAGE.**

**For questions or concerns, talk to your doctor.**