



A Few Simple Truths About ADHD and Stimulant Drugs

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Responses to Common Professional Statements Made to Parents About Their Children Doctors, mental health professionals, and educators often say things about "Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder" (ADHD) that are unproven. These same professionals often say things about drugs that are supposed to treat "ADHD" that are not true. This brochure reveals and responds to six common lies or misleading statements you might be told.

1. *"ADHD" is a brain-based biological disorder, caused by a chemical imbalance in your child's brain.* The simple fact is that there is absolutely no reliable test that accurately distinguishes between children that are supposed to have "ADHD" and those that are not. The simplest way to counter this statement is to ask for a medical test to prove that your child has "ADHD." Many physicians will respond to your request by saying that the test is too expensive. You must persevere and ask that your insurance company pay for those tests. You can also ask any professional to show you the article or articles in the scientific literature that proves the existence of a confirmatory physical or chemical abnormality that validates the existence of ADHD as a medical disease. The plain truth is that no such article exists. If someone gives you an article, please share and discuss it with someone who can critically analyze it.

2. *The symptoms are clearly printed in a book called the DSM-IV which stands for the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association, Fourth Edition.* Yes, the "symptoms" are printed there, but as described in point 1, these alleged "symptoms" in no way prove that ADHD is a disease. Furthermore, these "symptoms" are actually nothing more than someone's observations of your child's behavior, and the truth is they are not even reliable as behavioral observations. To be reliable, people must agree that your child has "ADHD." An article in the prestigious *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, printed in September 2000, says that the diagnosis is very unreliable. Many children who are supposed to be "ADHD" are not identified, and many children who are identified as not having ADHD are identified as having it. This means that research done to support the identification and treatment of ADHD that uses the DSM-IV definition totally lacks support. It also means that *no medical person correctly diagnoses ADHD.* ADD and ADHD are politically manufactured concepts, created by committees of the American Psychiatric Association. ADD was created in 1980, ADHD in 1987. The plain truth is that they are not real diseases in any legitimate scientific meaning of the term disease. To declare otherwise is not medicine; it is fraud.

3. *Medication (such as Ritalin) corrects the chemical imbalance.* Remember first there is no demonstrated chemical imbalance (see point 1). The brain does have chemicals that help cells "talk" to each other that are called neurotransmitters. However, when a professional says that one of these chemicals, usually a variety of something called Dopamine, needs some kind of correction, and that they have just the right kind of medicine to do this, you are being misled. This idea assumes that nerves only "talk" to nerves that use the same chemicals. That is absolutely positively false. It is a lie at worst, a gross oversimplification at best. It is unethical for a medical professional to state or imply otherwise.

4. *The medication (e.g., Ritalin) is a mild stimulant with few or no side effects.* "Side effect" is a euphemism; all drugs (alleged medications) have a variety of effects. It is vitally important that you personally research the effects of any drug you might consider for your child. Go to the Physicians Desk Reference (PDR), ask your neighborhood pharmacist to print you a list of side effects, and/or get the references listed at the end of this brochure. You need to find out about all possible effects -- those considered common (such as nervousness, insomnia, and loss of appetite, and those considered rare (such as toxic psychosis and death). The lie that Ritalin is a mild stimulant is even more difficult to maintain since a recently concluded study at the Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL), and published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, not only confirmed the similarities of cocaine and Ritalin, but found that Ritalin is more potent than cocaine in its effect on the dopamine system in the brain. Referring to Ritalin as "kiddy cocaine" is not a joke.

It is important to know that the use of stimulant medication can mask the symptoms of potentially fatal disorders that could be causing your child's problems with inattention or activity. It is also important to know that if your child really is having problems with attention and concentration, this could be caused by problems within the class environment (no work breaks, poor environmental temperature regulation, poor acoustics, poor lighting, poor teaching, etc.) or within other areas of your child's life (nutrition, TV and video overstimulation, family stress and conflict, etc.).

5. *If your child had diabetes, you would give him insulin, wouldn't you?* This is one of the most common, and heinous statements that doctors and other professionals make to parents. It is a heavy guilt trip telling parents they are negligent and irresponsible if they don't go along with the pressure to drug their children. Remember clearly, as described in point 1 above, that ADHD is in no way a real disease; to imply otherwise is a lie. The truth is that protecting your children from toxic drugs is being completely responsible. It is those who advocate these drugs for children who are abdicating responsibility and avoiding the challenge of truly meeting the needs of our children.

6. *You are going against medical advice.* Physicians work for you. There is something called informed consent. If they have given you false or inaccurate information, or attempted to deceive you in any way, then the advice that they have given is faulty and you can justifiably take matters (concerning "ADHD") into your own hands. It is your responsibility to protect the short and long-term health, well-being and development of your child.

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