Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in Adults: Care Instructions

Your Care Instructions

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD, is a condition that makes it hard to pay attention. So you may have problems when you try to focus, get organized, and finish tasks. It might make you more active than other people. Or you might do things without thinking first.

ADHD is very common. It usually starts in early childhood. Many adults don't realize they have it until their children are diagnosed. Then they become aware of their own symptoms.

Doctors don't know what causes ADHD. But it often runs in families.

ADHD can be treated with medicines, behavior training, and counseling. Treatment can improve your life.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- Learn all you can about ADHD. This will help you and your family understand it better.
- Take your medicines exactly as prescribed. Call your doctor if you think you are having a problem with your medicine. You will get more details on the specific medicines your doctor prescribes.
- If you miss a dose of your medicine, do not take an extra dose.
- If your doctor suggests counseling, find a counselor you like and trust. Talk openly and honestly. Be willing to make some changes.
- Find a support group for adults with ADHD. Talking to others with the same problems can help you feel better. It can also give you ideas about how to best cope with the condition.
- Get rid of distractions at your work space. Keep your desk clean. Try not to face a window or busy hallway.

- Use files, planners, and other tools to keep you organized.
- Limit use of alcohol, and do not use illegal drugs. People with ADHD tend to develop substance use disorder more easily than others. Tell your doctor if you need help to quit. Counseling, support groups, and sometimes medicines can help you stay free of alcohol or drugs.
- Get at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week. Exercise has been shown to help people cope with ADHD. Walking is a good choice. You also may want to do other activities, such as running, swimming, cycling, or playing tennis or team sports.

When should you call for help?

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You feel sad a lot or cry all the time.
- You have trouble sleeping, or you sleep too much.
- You find it hard to concentrate, make decisions, or remember things.
- You change how you normally eat.
- You feel guilty for no reason.

Where can you learn more?

Go to https://www.healthwise.net/patiented

Enter **B196** in the search box to learn more about **"Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in Adults: Care Instructions".**

©2006-2022 Healthwise, Incorporated.

This care instruction is for use with your licensed healthcare professional. If you have questions about a medical condition or this instruction, always ask your healthcare professional. Healthwise, Incorporated disclaims any warranty or liability for your use of this information.