

# Facts about Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)



## What is Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, also called ADHD?

ADHD is a neurobehavioral disorder that sometimes occurs in children. It also may be called Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). Children with ADHD can have trouble paying attention, may be very active and have difficulty controlling their behavior. These issues may cause the child problems in school, at home or with friends.

## What are some signs of ADHD?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a child with ADHD may:

- Have trouble focusing or paying attention
- Daydream
- Forget or continue to lose things
- Fidget or squirm, unable to sit still
- Talk too much
- Continue to make mistakes or take risks to their safety
- Have trouble taking turns or sharing with others
- Have difficulty getting along with others

## What can you do if you think your child may have ADHD?

Talk to your child's doctor. There is no single test to diagnosis ADHD, but your child's doctor can help answer your questions and determine the appropriate next steps to take.



## WellCare of Kentucky is also here to help

Please call us toll-free at **1-877-389-9457 (TTY 711)**, Monday-Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Eastern Time. We can help you find a doctor or connect you with one of our care managers. They can help you and answer your questions.



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ATTENTION: If you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call **1-877-389-9457** (TTY: **711**).

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# My Child is on Medication for Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

## What Do I Need to Know?



**For many children, medications for ADHD can decrease hyperactivity and help them to focus.**

Sometimes several medications or different dosages are tried before finding the one that works.

Therefore, it is important for your child's doctor to monitor them very closely.



### Types of Medications often used to Treat ADHD

**Stimulants.** These are medications that increase chemicals in the brain that help with thinking and paying attention.

If your child is on a stimulant, you need to talk with your child's doctor if they have any of these symptoms:

- ✓ A decreased appetite
- ✓ Trouble sleeping
- ✓ Sudden and repeating movements or sounds
- ✓ Changes in their personality
- ✓ An increase in anxiety or irritability
- ✓ Complaints of stomachaches
- ✓ Complaints of headaches

**Non-stimulants.** These are medications doctors sometimes prescribe if a stimulant is not working, or a child has side effects from a stimulant. These take longer to start working, but can help with thinking and paying attention.

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**It is important for you and your child's doctor to work together to find what works best for your child.**

It is recommended that your child have at least one follow-up visit with their doctor within 30 days after first starting a medication and have at least two additional visits within 9 months after starting the medication to make sure the medication is working correctly.



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*Sources: National Institute of Mental Health. (2019). Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder. NIMH » Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder ([nih.gov](http://nih.gov))*

*National Committee for Quality Assurance. (2020). Follow-up care for children prescribed ADHD medication. Follow-Up Care for Children Prescribed ADHD Medication - NCQA*

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# Tips for Parents – Your Child and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)



**Does your child have ADHD? Here are a few tips that can help both of you:**

- Have a routine.**  
Follow the same schedule every day.
- Control distractions.**  
Turn off the TV, reduce noise and have a clear work area for schoolwork. But also remember that some children learn better while moving or listening to soft music. See what works best for your child.
- Limit the number of choices.**  
Don't offer your child more than two choices. This avoids your child feeling overwhelmed.
- Be clear and specific when talking with your child.**  
Use simple directions. Let them know you are listening by repeating what they said.
- Help your child plan.**  
If a task is complicated, break it down into simple, short steps. If the task is long, start early in the morning and take breaks.
- Use goals, praise and other rewards.**  
Use a chart that shows positive behaviors. It lets them know they are doing well. Reward those efforts. Make sure goals are something your child can achieve. Small goals are OK.
- Find positive opportunities.**  
Encourage activities your child enjoys and does well. This can be a school activity, sports, art, music, or even just playing.
- Have a healthy lifestyle.**  
Provide nutritious food, physical activity and exercise, and enough sleep. These can help decrease the symptoms of ADHD.



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Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). *My child has been diagnosed with ADHD –Now what? Treatment of ADHD* | CDC



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