

ADHD MEDICATIONS : EXPLORING YOUR OPTIONS

STAYING FOCUSED ON TASKS



ADHD brains have different dopamine levels available making it challenging to stay engaged in tasks that don't immediately feel rewarding.

Medication options:

Methylphenidate (e.g., Ritalin, Concerta). Boosts dopamine to increase focus and task engagement.

Lisdexamfetamine (Elvanse). Increases dopamine and norepinephrine, helping with sustained focus and energy balance throughout the day.

Atomoxetine (Strattera). Works on norepinephrine to support consistent attention over time, with a gradual effect.

ACTING WITHOUT THINKING



ADHD brains are wired for spontaneity and action, which can sometimes make pausing to consider consequences less instinctive. Variations in dopamine and norepinephrine levels add to that natural preference for quick responses

Medication options:

Lisdexamfetamine (Elvanse): Helps improve cognitive control, making it easier to pause before reacting.

Atomoxetine (Strattera): Supports impulse regulation by increasing norepinephrine.

Guanfacine (Intuniv): Regulates activity in the prefrontal cortex, promoting calm focus and impulse control (often prescribed for young people but may be used for adults with different health conditions like high blood pressure).

EMOTIONAL UPS AND DOWNS



ADHD brains often experience emotions with greater intensity, influenced by natural variations in dopamine and norepinephrine levels. This heightened emotional awareness can sometimes make regulating responses more challenging

Medication options:

Atomoxetine (Strattera): Increases norepinephrine to support emotional stability over time.

Guanfacine (Intuniv): Helps regulate emotional responses by calming brain activity, useful for managing mood swings and frustration in young people.

Although they are not specifically ADHD medications, sometimes antidepressants (such as Sertraline and Fluoxetine) or mood stabilisers (such as Lamotrigine) are helpful for people with ADHD where mood swings and anxiety are making everyday life hard.

PROCRASTINATION



ADHD brains are geared towards interest and challenge, and differences in dopamine levels can make it harder to get going for tasks that feel mundane.

Medication options:

Methylphenidate (Concerta, Ritalin): Increases dopamine, helping with motivation and interest in tasks.

Lisdexamfetamine (Elvanse): Supports motivation by boosting dopamine and norepinephrine, improving task initiation and reward response.

PLANNING AND ORGANISING



ADHD brains excel in creative and quick thinking, which can make slower, structured tasks like planning and organisation more challenging, especially when dopamine and norepinephrine levels fluctuate.

Medication options:

Methylphenidate (Concerta, Ritalin): Improves executive functioning by enhancing dopamine, making it easier to plan and stay organised.

Lisdexamfetamine (Elvanse): Supports working memory and task management by boosting dopamine and norepinephrine.



A quick overview to help you plan your conversation with your doctor about whether ADHD medication might be right for you. There are non-medication options that might also be helpful.

Remember: each person's brain is unique, and you will need to work with healthcare providers to find the plan that meets your specific needs and goals.