

# Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

by William R. Mayer, B.S., D.C., P.A.

Q. Dear Dr. Mayer,

My child has been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). My MD wants to put him on Ritalin. I would rather try other approaches first. Do you treat kids with ADHD?

A. ADHD has been getting a lot of attention lately. Approximately 3 percent of the U.S. childhood population have been diagnosed with ADHD. Some experts believe that close to 20 percent actually have the disorder. ADHD is nearly ten times more common in boys than girls. About 50 percent of the cases appear before the age of four. There are many symptoms and they vary from case to case. Some of the most common are:

• Distractibility and Confusion

- Constant Movement
  - Impatience and Recklessness
  - Emotional
  - Inflexibility and Unpredictability
  - Food Cravings and Food Allergies
- The more symptoms a child has, the better the diagnosis is, some say.



Not only are the symptoms varied in ADHD children, the causes and the theories of the causes are also varied.

A popular theory is that many of the symptoms are related to diet, especially fluctuations in the blood sugar levels. For instance, the child who eats a high sugar cereal for breakfast like Kix, Captain Crunch, Fruit Loops, etc. will have a high level of blood sugar. They will start out high and then two to three hours later, in school, they will "crash." When this happens, few children or adults are able to think clearly and are easily distracted. I have seen excellent results by simply changing the diet of the ADHD child. Some experts believe that 80 percent can get better by changing their diet and having them take certain vitamins, the most

important of those vitamins being C, B complex, calcium and magnesium.

Ritalin is currently widely overused, in my opinion. Its use is up approximately 33 percent in the past year. Approximately 4 million children are currently on Ritalin.

Ritalin is an amphetamine that works to slow down kids with ADHD. Ritalin has numerous possible side effects and long-term use effects are not yet available. If your child is currently on Ritalin, please read what the Physician's Desk Reference (PDR) says about it.

In my clinic, we consider the current condition of the child's nervous system. I have seen lots of children show excellent results by having their nervous systems straightened out. It is crucial that

the developing child be as free as possible from interference to this developing system. A chiropractor is best trained to determine this.

In conclusion, I believe that a chiropractic evaluation and a diet profile are the first two steps in helping treat the ADHD child. Please try everything before you resort to Ritalin or some other drug — your child deserves it.

*Dr. William R. Mayer, B.S., D.C., P.A. can be reached at 574-8000, Cape Coral Family Chiropractic Center, 1510 Hancock Bridge Pkwy., Cape Coral. ♦*



*Dr. William R. Mayer*