

## Stimulant Medications

Methylphenidate (Ritalin, Equasym XL, Concerta XL, Medikinet, Elvanse): Side effects include disturbed sleep, poor appetite, moodiness, initial nausea/abdominal pain, increased pulse and blood pressure, rebound hyperactivity, growth problems.

## Non-Stimulant Medications

Atomoxetine (Strattera): Side effects include nausea, vomiting, reduced appetite, mood swings, slowing of growth, increased pulse and blood pressure. Side effects include dry mouth, sedation and low blood pressure. BP requires monitoring.

## Other useful information

ADDERS: [www.adders.org](http://www.adders.org)  
ADDIS: [www.addiss.co.uk](http://www.addiss.co.uk)  
Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder (ChADD) (American ADHD website) [www.chadd.org](http://www.chadd.org)  
ADHD Matters: [www.adhdmatters.co.uk](http://www.adhdmatters.co.uk)  
Living with ADHD: [www.livingwithADHD.co.uk](http://www.livingwithADHD.co.uk)

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Warrington Road,  
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR  
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# ADHD information

## Community Paediatrics

This leaflet can be made available  
in alternative languages / formats on request.

如有需要，本传单可提供其他语言/版式  
此單張的其他語言/格式版本可按要求提供

Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona  
w innych językach/formatach.

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**Document Number:** STHK1370  
**Version:** 001  
**Review Date:** 01 / 02 / 2021

## What is ADHD?

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is one of the most common behavioural problems in childhood. It is characterised by Inattentiveness, Hyperactivity and Impulsivity. It affects 3-9% of the population, numbering around 4000 children in Warrington alone. Unsupported it can lead to problems with education and social interaction.

These features are required for diagnosis:

**Inattentiveness:** A very short attention span, doesn't seem to listen, easily distracted, makes careless mistakes, finds it hard to organise and complete tasks, loses things easily.

**Hyperactivity:** Fidgety, has difficulty playing quietly, hard to sit still, always on the go, talks excessively, runs excitedly and inappropriately.

**Impulsivity:** Has difficulty taking turns, frequently interrupts, blurts out answers, intrudes upon others, disobeys instructions, speaks "without thinking", "in the head, out of the mouth".

**These symptoms must be:**

- ◆ Present before the age of seven
- ◆ Present from more than 6 months
- ◆ Occur in more than one setting e.g.; home and school
- ◆ Causing significant difficulties

## Causes of ADHD

The exact cause of ADHD isn't known, but there are likely to be a number of factors involved. Research suggests that people with ADHD may have differences in the parts of the brain which deal with controlling impulses and focusing attention. There is a strong genetic element; many children with ADHD have another family member with the same problem.

In addition, children are more likely to have ADHD if they were born prematurely, or if their mother smoked or misused alcohol or drugs when pregnant. Other factors including stressful family environment and anxiety can make the behaviour features worse.

## How is attention Deficit disorder diagnosed?

The signs and symptoms of attention deficit disorder are most likely to become apparent when a child needs to learn in a very formal manner. Usually, this is when a child is about 7 or 8 years of age or is in year 2 / 3 in school.

Sometimes, however, signs and symptoms may appear before 7 – 8 and may include significant restlessness or problems with sleeping or feeding.

ADHD is diagnosed through detailed history and behaviour questionnaires completed by parents and school and other professionals involved with the child's care. There are also computer-based tests for symptoms of inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity which are increasingly being used.

## ADHD and behavior problems:

Behaviour problems such as being defiant, getting angry a lot, aggressive or destructive, telling lies a lot etc may occur in about 60% of children with ADHD. Treating ADHD by medications may reduce some of the behaviour problems.

## What is the treatment of ADHD?

The treatment is a combination of three approaches: behavioural management, education and medication.