

Q & A

What are some drug-free alternatives to treating ADHD?

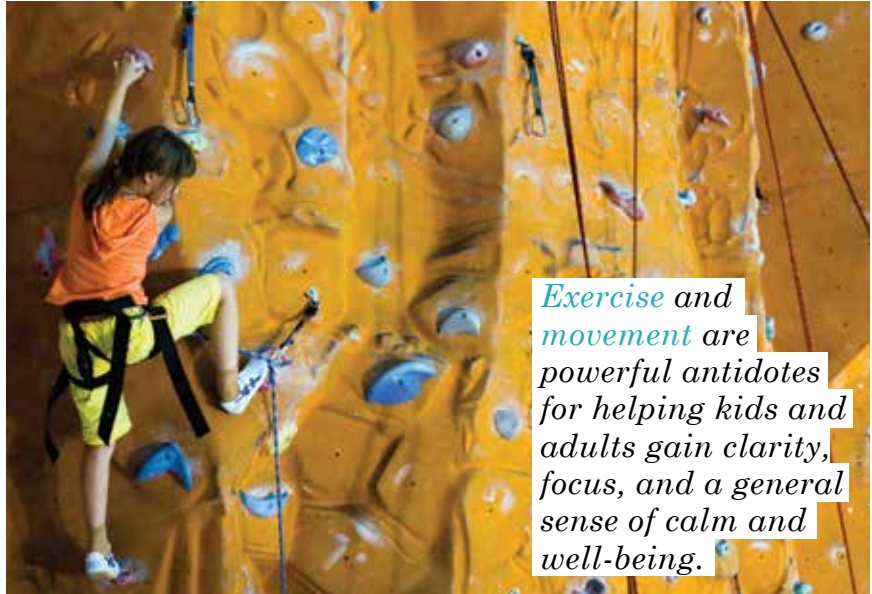
“Show up at 4:45, and make sure you bring the desserts,” might sound like a simple request, but for those with ADHD, it can be a nightmare to focus on and remember what life demands.

The mind slips and focus drifts, concentration issues become the norm, and a lot more is on the line than chocolate cake. Today, more people than ever are finding it harder to focus at work or school. But there is hope that doesn't come in a little orange bottle.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that cases of ADHD are up 42 percent from the previous decade. Whether this rise is due to environmental factors, increased awareness, overdiagnosis, or other causes, parents everywhere are wringing their hands. And it's no wonder. The lack of focus, impulsivity, and hyperactive behavior can have serious implications for kids' academic performance—not to mention the many adults who are hindered by the same symptoms.

Yet, putting your child on ADHD medication (or going on it yourself) is a serious step—and one that many people are reluctant to take. The good news is that there are natural ways to treat ADHD in both children and adults.

A lot of people don't realize that many controllable factors affect your mental performance. As more children and adults display symptoms of ADHD, it's important to be informed about treatment options. In my own clinic, I've experienced tremendous success helping patients of all ages diminish their ADHD symptoms with EEG neurofeedback and other natural treatments. Unlike prescription medication, the following



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six remedies for ADHD and ADD are side-effect-free.

Use EEG neurofeedback to optimize your brain's performance. EEG neurofeedback is a painless, non-invasive therapy that uses an electroencephalogram (EEG) to read and measure the brain's electrical activity. During the session, special software prompts the brain to subconsciously eliminate abnormal brainwave patterns by rewarding the patient—providing audible feedback or making a movie brighter, for example. In addition to successfully treating ADHD, EEG neurofeedback can help alleviate the symptoms of depression, anxiety, autism, PTSD, TBI, and related disorders.

A recent study highlights the success of neurofeedback. The subjects underwent functional MRI scans and EEGs to measure their brain activity. They were then assigned to a 30-minute session of either neurofeedback or a placebo activity.

After the session, the group that received neurofeedback experienced increased beta and alpha waves—those responsible for alertness, concentration, and relaxation. They also experienced a decline in delta and theta waves—those associated with drowsiness and deep sleep.

Get tested for food sensitivities. Undiagnosed food allergies, sensitivities, or intolerances to certain foods such as wheat or dairy may bring on inflammation and symptoms of ADHD. So if you have been feeling scattered, anxious, or your attention span has lessened, consider getting tested or try abstaining from a suspected food for at least 30 days to see if your symptoms disappear.

Make smarter dietary choices. Eat a balanced diet of proteins, vegetables, and healthy fats. Your body is designed to eat these foods and will perform at its best when you stick to these guidelines. And be sure to focus on the quality of

your meat, vegetables, and dairy products, buying free-range and organic whenever possible.

Additionally, steer clear of processed foods with artificial dyes which have been linked to hyperactivity in children. Quit or reduce your intake of gluten and grains, and avoid sugar and refined carbohydrates such as bread, chips, and white rice, which your body treats similarly to sugar. Speaking of the devil, sugar is particularly problematic because it causes cycles of highs and crashes. The sweetener makes you feel great temporarily, but after your body quickly processes it, you feel lethargic and drained—not to mention the burden sugar puts on your liver, pancreas, and brain.

Get enough quality sleep. Children and adults alike need at least eight hours of sleep per night. Adequate rest allows the body and brain to repair and will help improve focus. For optimal sleep, stop using electronics an hour before bedtime. Use orange or red lighting and avoid blue or white light, which shuts

down melatonin production. Be sure to turn off your wi-fi at night and keep your cell phone in a separate room. Always sleep in total darkness, and use blackout curtains if necessary. If you're in an area prone to noise, use a sound spa to block out random disturbances. Finally, keep the temperature cooler at night, as this also promotes sound sleep. For further relaxation, try meditation or deep breathing exercises.

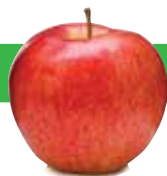
Exercise and move often. We are not designed to sit still all day, so it's no wonder that children fidget in their desks and can't concentrate when forced to remain statuesque for hours at a time. Exercise and movement are powerful antidotes for helping kids and adults gain clarity, focus, and a general sense of calm and well-being. Remember, for generations, humans had to climb, walk, run, and lift for their survival. We no longer have to move, but we desperately need to. Try to exercise every day by going to the gym, jogging, or playing a sport—just move and encourage your children to do the same.

Get a daily dose of green. Surrounding yourself with nature may improve symptoms of ADHD. A recent study reveals that children with ADHD experienced a reduction in their symptoms after spending time in green outdoor settings. Get plenty of family time outdoors—the greener, the better! Let children do homework outside after school, go for scenic walks in parks or natural areas, and take every chance to enjoy the sunlight and fresh air.

ADHD doesn't have to control your life. Optimal mental performance can be easily achieved without medication. Best of all, these remedies will improve other areas of your life as well. EEG neurofeedback—along with healthy daily habits—will help you regain your focus, improve your performance, and live up to your full potential. [ns](#)

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