

# TREATING ADD/ADHD

*through* Home Remedies,  
Exercise & Therapy



  
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## ADD/ADHD Solution Kit

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# TREATING ADD/ADHD THROUGH HOME REMEDIES, EXERCISE & THERAPY

## DISCLAIMER

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## DEVELOP AN ADHD MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

There are different methods of treating and handling ADD/ADHD. Such methods can include a specific focus on home remedies, exercise and therapy.

ADHD brings many challenges. As you probably already know, these challenges create many new demands and expectations that require more than what just one type of treatment can provide. You will find that multiple treatment types will be necessary to successfully deal with ADHD. One of the hardest things to deal with concerning ADHD is how to deal with the problems that come up. This can lead to frustration on both the person who has ADD/ADHD and the person or people caring for the person with ADD/ADHD. Many people don't understand the needs of their child and as a result they place unrealistic expectations on the performance of your child. People may expect your child to sit still, pay attention or use self-control. You as the parent already know that's unrealistic for your child. The ADHD management system you use will accomplish many things:

1. The system incorporates teaching others to have realistic expectations concerning your child's performance.
2. The system incorporates teaching your child to work with their skills and talents so they can still be effective despite ADHD.
3. The system controls the environment that your child is in. Actions and reactions are positive instead of negative.

## WHAT IS HOME TREATMENT?

Home treatment methods reduce ADHD symptoms in patients. Typical home treatment methods include assistance in understanding the ADHD condition, setting a daily routine and knowing how to use support systems.

Home treatment encompasses the entire family working



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together and may even incorporate teachers, friends, counsellors and other resources. The person who has ADHD has a lot to deal with but so do parents, siblings and the other people in the patient's life. As a parent of a child that has ADD/ADHD, there can be some days when it feels so overwhelming. Remember that you are there as a support for your child, who has a condition that he or she is learning to deal with in their own life. As a result, you cannot afford to quit or "lose it" because you know that it could set you back months of progress.

Maintain your own mental and physical strength by using these tips:

1. Know what your mind and body needs and take care of yourself.
2. Depriving yourself of sleep or forsaking personal time will get you a fast ticket to "Tiredville". You need to do things that keep yourself strengthened and renewed in energy.
3. Learn about ADHD. If you understand the condition and what your opportunities are with your own child, you will be better able to handle what comes your way. How can you ask questions if you don't know what to ask? How can you really decide what's best for your child when you don't know what's out there as far as treatment goes?
4. Learn what behaviour management is all about. Your ADD/ADHD child will need to learn how to get along with other people. They'll need to know simple things that most everyone takes for granted such as interacting with other people, responding to "no" and more. The idea with learning is that if you know what behaviour management is all about, then you can teach your child about it. You will understand why you need to establish consequences for misbehaviour; at the

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same time, you'll be able to help your child understand why there are consequences in the first place.

Here are some tips to help you develop your child's needs:

1. Your child needs to develop a healthy self-esteem. Your child's behaviour can affect the way they see themselves as well as the way they perceive others to see them. Help them have confidence in themselves and their abilities. Help them understand that they can and do make contributions to the family, to the class, to their school and more. Help them foster a sense of belonging in the family and with peers.
2. Your child needs to become a successful student. While ADHD presents an obstacle for children, the condition does not have to stop them from doing well in school entirely. Your child can still be a success in school.

Children with ADHD can develop properly, as peers with those their age. They can develop socially, again, with peers their age. They can also develop academically. The key is your encouragement, patience and understanding. Your child needs to learn to accomplish tasks at home. Your child will learn how to heed instructions and follow them until the task is completed.

He or she will learn what steps to take when they become distracted and they will learn new skills that will ensure that every task they have gets done. You are the right influence that your child needs. Your support, encouragement and creative thinking will give your child just what they need to learn this valuable skill.

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If you or your child has been diagnosed with ADD/ADHD, just know that exercise can do wonders for you!

There are many studies on the effect of exercise on the body for people with ADD/ADHD and people without ADD/ADHD. There are so many benefits for both your mind and body and, on top of that, you'll also feel good about yourself! Regular exercise invigorates the body. It gets your blood pumping and is a great outlet for energy and aggression. Exercise gets your body working as you move around. If you find that you're feeling irritated or angry, try going for a walk or even a run around your neighbourhood.

Regular exercise improves one's mental capacity. This is essential for people who have ADD/ADHD. Exercise can also involve the outdoors. The fresh air and freedom to move in almost limitless space can generate a feeling of happiness and peace. People become more alert and better able to concentrate.

As your blood is pumping, neurotransmitters start firing. As a result, feelings of depression and anxiety decrease. However, one of the best reasons to exercise is the fact that you'll look and feel better about yourself! People who exercise regularly are in general healthier and have a better outlook on life! Your body will flourish physically and your mind will flourish as well. Studies have even shown that a regular exercise program can promote good behaviour as well as brain growth.



When your body moves vigorously (aerobic exercise), your heart starts to beat faster. Aerobic exercise is so critical because it increases the amount of dopamine, serotonin and norepinephrine in the brain. These are the exact same neuro-transmitters that help with emotional stability, focus, alertness and calmness. The lack of neuro transmitters has the potential to cause depression, sleeplessness, mood swings and irritability,

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anxiety and stress-related problems. There is also the problem of a lack of attention or poor attention span issues.

One other thing that regular exercise does is release endorphins. Endorphins help to increase happiness and pleasure as well as minimize pain. The harder your body works during a workout, the more benefits from endorphins it experiences. Again, this change depends upon how long, how fast and how hard the workout. With this in mind, it's no wonder that studies demonstrate that exercise has a positive effect on negative emotional behaviours in the ADHD child. One study monitored children between the ages of 5 – 12. They were asked to exercise for 40 minutes five days per week. The exercise was intense.

What they found was that there was a significant improvement in behaviour. What's also interesting is that the study was only for six weeks and changes were noticeable within 2 – 4 weeks of starting the exercise program.

### **SAMPLE EXERCISE PROGRAM**

One key factor in the success of the exercise program is the length and the intensity of the exercise being performed. As a result, it is recommended that the exercise be at least 30 minutes of activity daily with at least 20 minutes at a higher than normal type of movement. Here are some activities that you can do. One thing you might also consider is doing the exercise together as a family. Not only will you be promoting your child's physical health, but you'll also uplift your child's self-esteem as well.

- Aerobics class
- Bicycling (more than 10 mph)
- Fast dancing (like on Dance Revolution)
- Jogging / Running
- Jump roping
- Hiking



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- Ice skating
  - Skateboarding
  - Skiing
  - Sports activities – basketball, tennis, volleyball
  - Swimming
  - Washing the car
  - Weight training

### **WHAT STRESS DOES TO THE BODY**

Children and adults who have been diagnosed with ADD/ADHD essentially have a lot of stress hormones working in their bodies all day long! Most people start with high levels but then those levels subside towards the end of the day. People who are diagnosed with ADD/ADHD stay at the high level all day; there is little change in the levels of cortisol and epinephrine. For this reason, people diagnosed with ADD/ADHD don't sleep well at night. Their hormone levels are too high when they should be down to almost nothing.

### **CHOOSE THE RIGHT KIND OF EXERCISE FOR YOU**

The best kind of exercise is the one you actually do and do consistently! Part of staying motivated with the exercise program will be enjoying what you do. As a result, you'll want to choose a program that is right for you and your family. Here are some tips and guidelines to follow as you choose an exercise regime:



1. Vary your activities! On Monday and Wednesday, go bicycling. On Tuesday and Thursday, go to an aerobics class. On Friday, go for a brisk walk or jog around your neighbourhood.
2. Schedule your activities. Plan and set aside time to exercise!

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3. Do an activity that you can easily do. If you have to focus too much on how to do the activity, rather than actually doing it, you might have a problem.
  4. Select an activity that you and your family enjoy. If you're going to do this as a family, then get them involved in deciding what you will all be doing!
  5. Get an in-home exercise station (Nautilus equipment, Stair Master, etc.)
  6. Monitor the progress of the activities selected. If they aren't performing as well as you would like them to, consider changing the activity.

## HOW COUNSELLING AND FAMILY THERAPY CAN HELP

Therapy is a traditional method of treating ADD/ADHD and it can be effective in discovering the causes and actions that occur within the daily life of a person living with ADD/ADHD. Family therapy is unique for every family. The family's beliefs and values are taken into account as well as the personalities of individual family members to create a positive environment for the person with ADD/ADHD. As you might already guess, family therapy involves the whole family. It integrates strategies and resources to help the family become a success as a core social unit.

With family therapy, the whole family can address the issues they are facing with living and caring for someone with ADD/ADHD. Family therapy is based on the following key principles:

1. A problem with one family member may signify a larger family problem. Just because one person has a problem doesn't mean that other people in the family may not be the cause. A system of finding out the root causes of issues is used to determine where the problem actually lies. For example, the problems shouldn't always be attributed to ADD or ADHD.



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Sometimes insecurities in other family members may be that actual stress causer.

2. A change in one person of the family affects everyone else. The whole group must be considered when looking for solutions to issues. How will the siblings be affected? How will the finances be affected? Are there any safety nets for the family to fall back on should an issue arise?

When your family goes through therapy, you will likely be connected specifically with a family therapist. This therapist serves in the following capacities:

1. The therapist will teach everyone about how families operate.
2. The therapist will focus on the entire family versus just focusing on the one who has ADD/ADHD.
3. The therapist will help the family identify issues and potential problems. He or she will also help the family work on finding ways to overcome those issues and potential problems.
4. The therapist will act as a support to family members so that they can effectively deal with the problems that arise.
5. The therapist will teach the family strategies to handle issues in a positive manner. They will also teach the family how each solution impacts the entire family.

## **WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT IN FAMILY THERAPY?**

Family therapy is very complex and there is no cookie cutter process to solve problems. Rest assured that the needs of each family member are taken into account when solutions are presented.

The basic understanding is that each family member adds value to the family unit as a whole. The strengths of the family as well as the strengths of individual members are

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used in problem solving. At the same time, there is also a general understanding that behavior changes will need to be made. Group and individual assignments may be given after each session. These will deal with implementing changes or solutions for the problems identified. Goals and a timeline for achieving them are set. The number of sessions that your family will have to attend is dependent upon how well you progress, the severity of the issues at hand and each individual family member's willingness to be a part of the solution.

The family's progress is a lifetime journey. Once therapy is completed, the family will be left with the skills necessary to deal effectively with problems and create positive solutions. Families often find that they've learned about how families operate and also about themselves.

### **WHO USES FAMILY THERAPY?**

The families that stand the most to gain from this type of therapy often have a condition that impacts the entire family. ADD and ADHD families are one such case. Family therapy works best when it is started before it is actually needed.

### **HOW EFFECTIVE IS FAMILY THERAPY?**

Therapy has been proven to be very effective in dealing with relationship issues and problems within the family. Like with anything though, you will get out of it whatever you put into it. A well trained counsellor is critical to the success of family therapy. Check this person's credentials.

Also, do your own research on the solutions presented to make sure that your counsellor is meeting all of your family's needs. Learning more about the condition can enable you appreciate the symptoms and improve your response to triggers that can make ADD/ADHD worse. It will also be important to maintain an open line of communication with your counsellor to report any further problems you might have.

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Keep in mind that problems may not really be solved if therapy is stopped too soon. Your solution process is a process. When the process is cut short, your family will not develop to the degree it would have had the therapy continued. Unwilling participants hinder a family's progress. The idea of family therapy is based on assessing the family unit as a whole. If one member doesn't participate, then the root problems will have a harder time being addressed.

Everyone needs to work together as a family. The more open and honest individual members are with each other, the more effective the therapy will be. When everyone has the right attitude success as a family is inevitable.

## **INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING FOR ADHD PATIENTS**

Although family counselling is beneficial to the family of someone who has ADD/ADHD, individual counselling is also usually required. Individual counselling can prove to be very helpful for ADHD patients. Your child will learn:

- A variety of techniques for successful living, such as how to take the time to stop and think.
- How to problem solve and limit or deter impulsive actions.
- How to monitor his or her own behaviour so that they can have successful interactions with people all the time.

If your child is ADD/ADHD, then there are other things that will need to be learned. ADD/ADHD patients need to learn the following:

- How to finish their work
- How to limit impulsivity
- How to be polite
- How to follow rules
- How to focus on the right things

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- How to obey their parents

Your goal is to find a counsellor who will help your child learn these skills. They should also help your child implement these skills in the home and at school.