

Effective Strategies for ADHD athletes

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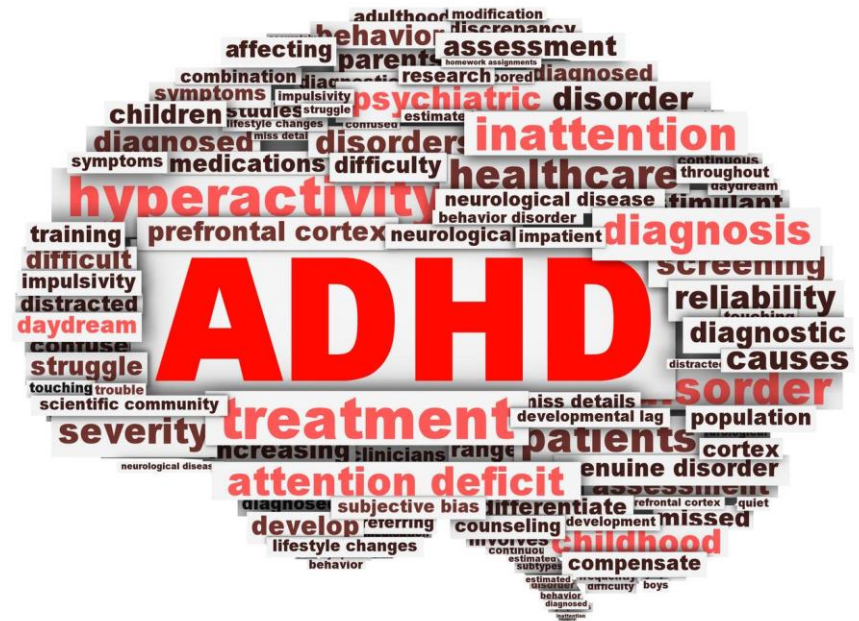
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Does this look familiar?



Overview

- What is ADHD
- Treatments
- Parents
- Strategies
- Conclusion



What is ADHD?

A neurological disorder that presents with a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity that interferes with daily functioning or development. It is characterized by at least six symptoms of inattention or hyperactivity/impulsivity.



Examples of Inattention

- Easily distracted by stimuli unrelated to the task at hand
- Individuals often appear as if they are daydreaming and not listening
- Difficulty in organizing tasks and managing instructions in sequential order.



Examples of Inattention

- Tasks requiring sustained mental effort are experienced as unpleasant and often result in the individual avoiding such activity that demand organization and close concentration



Examples of Hyperactivity/Impulsivity

- Individuals move excessively
- Difficult to contain as if driven by a motor
- Unable to play or engage in leisure activities quietly
- Talks excessively
- Difficulty waiting his/her turn
- Impulsivity makes it difficult to behave within expected boundaries of family interpersonal, academic and athletic settings



ADHD is...

- Neurological disorder
- Treatable
- Disability
- A challenge to coach



ADHD is not...

- Bratty behavior
- Curable
- Within their control
- Impossible to manage



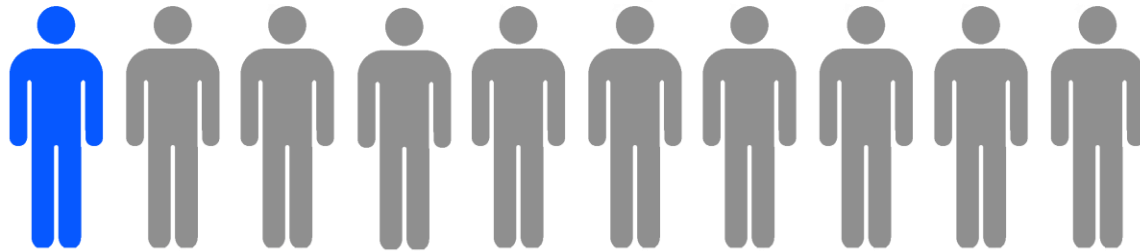
Causes

- Strong genetic component
- Prenatal environment
 - Low birth weight
 - Environmental toxins
- Likely a combination of both



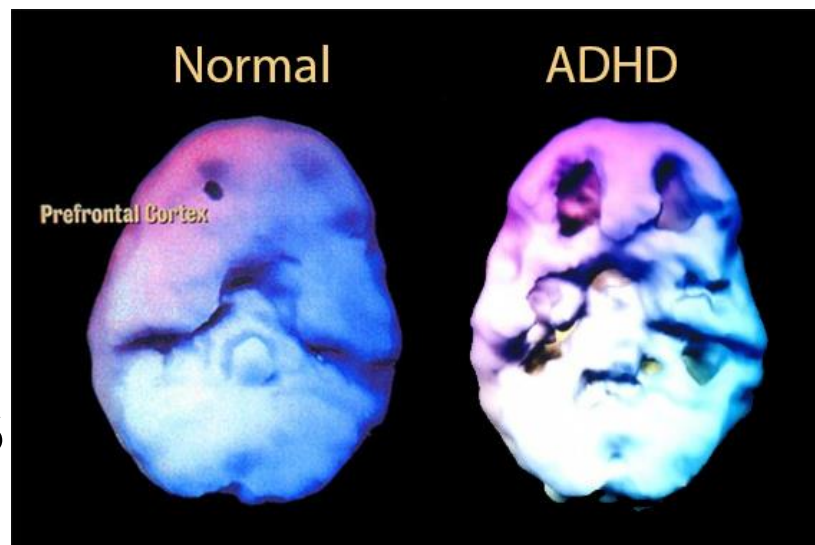
Prevalence

- Can be found in 5-10% of population
- 3 times more prevalent in boys
- More common in Caucasians and Afro-Americans



Diagnosing ADHD

- Only by clinical psychologist
- Behavior analysis
- Brain Imaging
- Need to rule out
 - Learning disabilities
 - Mood disorders
 - Bi-polar disorders



Other Common Conditions

- Central Auditory Processing Disorder
- Depression
- Addiction - especially with teens



Myths vs. Facts



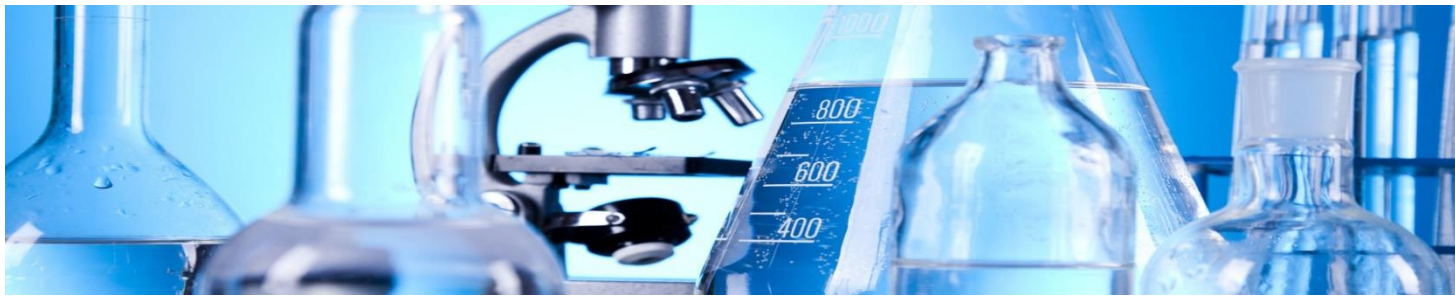
Myth – It's willful Behavior

- Behavior is a result of a malfunction in the brain
- The brain does not behave normally
 - Can't "put on the brakes" for motor activity
 - Can't filter out unimportant stimuli
 - Impulses and not processed first through a "circuit board"



Myth – It's a fad diagnosis

- One of the best and longest researched disorders in pediatric medicine
- Studied in detail for over 40 years
- Actually under-diagnosed



Myth – Drugs only sedate them

Drug therapy is with stimulants to “awaken” the slower processing functions of their brain to bring them into normal ranges.



Myth – Drugs are overprescribed

- Many children with ADHD are not getting any treatment at all
- Those that are receiving drug therapy are often at less than effective dosage levels



Myth – They will outgrow it

- 50% continue to have the disorder into adolescence.
- 30-70% of adolescents with ADHD will continue to have the disorder as an adult



Treatments

- Stimulants
 - 65% receive stimulants
 - Ritalin, Dexedrine, Adderal
 - Brings slower thinking processes “up” to normal ranges
 - “Like wearing glasses for the first time”



Treatments

- Behavior Modification
 - Modeling and praise/reward good behavior
 - Discourage unwanted behavior - consequences
- Sports
 - Individual vs. Team sports
 - Physical benefits
 - Socialization



Why Soccer is great for ADHD

Game environment:

- Fast pace
- Intense
- Chaotic
- Lots of opportunities to work on impulse control

Executive functioning:

- Planning abilities
- Scheduling
- Working memory
- Task coordination
- As these increase, stress levels decrease



Parents



ADHD Parents

- May not tell you that their child has ADHD to avoid them being ‘labeled’
- One or both of them may have ADHD themselves
- Usually willing to work with you if you are sincere



Starting the conversation

- Will be awkward but probably better than you might imagine
- Use the C.U.S. Technique
 - State the Concern
 - Describe why this is Uncomfortable
 - Explain why this is a Safety issue
- Brainstorm and develop a game plan together



How the parents can help

- Establish a preparation ritual and identify a location for equipment storage
- Arrive prepared and on time
- Share successful calming techniques with the coach
- Will decrease chaotic feelings



Other parents

- May feel that the player with ADHD is holding the team back
- Stress the importance of every player on the team and the gifts of that athlete
- Do not disclose their diagnosis with them



Strategies



Start of the season

- Team meeting with parents – ask them to contact you privately with any known issues that you should be aware of
- Don't assume, assess over a few practices
- Share a questionnaire with them to identify behaviors



Before practice

- Share lessons plans ahead of time
- Structure and repetition is good
- Disorganized practices invite misbehavior
- Look for ways to utilize their energy for each exercise
- Remind yourself that following directions is the hardest thing for an ADHD athlete
- Expect oppositional behavior and plan your responses ahead of time.



Practice/Game day

- Pick a remote location away from distractions
- Repeat directions with eye contact and ask them to confirm the directions to you
- Reduce laps, lines and lectures
- Praise often (behavior modification)



Practice/Game day

- Act – Don't yack
- Devise a “signal” with them to let you know their frustration level is getting high
- Use cones to define boundaries and progressions
- Utilize them to demonstrate new exercises



Practice/Game Day

- Give them additional duties and individual training outside of the group training
- Utilize assistant coaches and parents



Behavior issues

- Praise in public, critique in private
- Humiliation and punishment will not return positive results
- Discourage critique from teammates
- Let them choose a corrective response
- Allow for bad days



Other tools – Point systems

Task	Tom	Sam	Jack	Mike
Arrived on time & prepared to play	III	IIII	I	II
Knew score when asked	III	IIII	III	IIII
Knew 2 coaching points delivered at halftime	II	III	II	II
Spontaneous positive remarks toward teammates	IIII	II	III	III
Showed examples of good sportsmanship to other team	II	I	III	ii



Other tools - Fidgets

- Allows for constructive use of extra energy
- Helps them filter and pay attention
- Can be small and used when not engaged in play



Success Stories

- Michael Phelps – Swimming
- Terry Bradshaw – Football
- Pete Rose – Baseball
- Cammi Granato – Hockey
- Payne Stewart - Golf



Conclusion

- Change your perception if needed
- Be an advocate – promote inclusion
- View the player as a gift to the team
- Simple accommodations can yield amazing results
- Find a role they love to play – they will hyper focus on that task



Additional information

- Play Like a Champion Today: www.playlikeachampion.org
- Children and Adults with ADHD: www.chadd.org
- ADDitude The Magazine: www.additudemag.com
- Council for Exceptional Children: www.cec.sped.org
- Well Played: <https://vimeo.com/69503467>

Questions?



Thank You



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