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ADD & ADHD Health Center

ADHD Medication Chart

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Class	Drug Name	Form	Duration	Common Side Effects
Amphetamine Stimulants	Adderall	Short-acting	4-6 hours	Some loss of appetite, weight loss, sleep problems, irritability, tics. Short-acting medicines require frequent dosing.
	Dexedrine	Short-acting	4-6 hours	
	Dextrostat	Short-acting	4-6 hours	
	Dexedrine Spansule	Long-acting	6-8 hours	Some loss of appetite, weight loss, sleep problems, irritability, tics. Long-acting medicines are convenient but may have greater effects on appetite and sleep.
	Adderall XR	Long-acting	8-12 hours	
	Vyvanse	Long-acting	10-12 hours	
Methylphenidate Stimulants	Focalin	Short-acting	4-6 hours	Some loss of appetite, weight loss, sleep problems, irritability, tics. Short-acting medicines require frequent dosing.
	Methylin	Short-acting	3-4 hours	
	Ritalin	Short-acting	3-4 hours	
	Metadate ER	Intermediate-acting	6-8 hours	Some loss of appetite, weight loss, sleep problems, irritability, tics. Longer-acting medicines are
	Methylin ER	Intermediate-acting	6-8 hours	
	Ritalin SR	Intermediate-acting	4-8 hours	
	Metadate CD	Intermediate-acting	8-10 hours	

	Ritalin LA	Intermediate-acting	8-10 hours	convenient but may have greater effects on appetite and sleep.
	Concerta	Long-acting	10-12 hours	Some loss of appetite, weight loss, sleep problems, irritability, tics. Longer-acting medicines are convenient but may have greater side effects on appetite and sleep.
	Focalin XR	Long-acting	6-10 hours	Longer-acting medicines are convenient but may have greater side effects on appetite and sleep.
	Daytrana patch	Long-acting	10-12 hour	Skin irritation, some loss of appetite, weight loss, sleep problems, irritability, tics.
Non-stimulants	Strattera (<i>atomoxetine</i>)	Long-acting (extended release)	24 hours	Sleep problems, anxiety, fatigue, upset stomach, dizziness, dry mouth. Rarely, liver damage. There are some concerns about a link between Strattera and suicidal thoughts.
	Intuniv	Long-acting (extended release)	24 hours	Sleepiness, headache, fatigue, abdominal pain. Rarely, Intuniv can cause low blood pressure and heart rhythm changes.
Antidepressants	Wellbutrin	Short-acting	4-5 hours	Sleep problems, headaches. Although rare,
	Wellbutrin SR	Sustained release (long-acting)	12 hours	

	Wellbutrin XL	Extended release (long-acting)	24 hours	Wellbutrin may increase the risk of seizures.
	Tofranil	NA	8-24 hours	Sleep problems, anxiety, fatigue, upset stomach, dizziness, dry mouth, elevated heart rate, risk of heart arrhythmias.
	Pamelor	NA	8-24 hours	
	Aventyl	NA	8-24 hours	
	Norpramin	NA	8-24 hours	Not recommended for children. Associated with cases of fatal heart problems.
Blood Pressure Medicines	Catapres	NA	4-6 hours (tablets)	Fatigue, dizziness, dry mouth, irritability, behavior problems, low blood pressure. Stopping this medicine suddenly can result in high blood pressure.
			24 hours (patch)	
	Tenex	NA	6-8 hours	

ADHD Medicines and Safety

The FDA has issued a warning about the risk of drug abuse with amphetamine stimulants. FDA safety advisors are also concerned about the possibility that all amphetamine and methylphenidate stimulants used for ADHD may increase the risk of heart and psychiatric problems.

The FDA has also issued a warning about a connection between antidepressants (including the non-stimulant Strattera) and an increased risk of suicide in adults aged 18-24, especially in the first one or two months of treatment.

While these risks may seem alarming, keep in mind that experts generally consider these medicines safe. Serious problems are rare. Still, you should discuss the risks and benefits of these drugs with your doctor.

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