

UNDERSTANDING ADHD



In just one or two generations ADHD has progressed from something nearly unheard of, to a disorder now afflicting nearly 1 in 10 kids. It's a major problem and there are absolute reasons and causes for this dramatic rise and why it's affecting so many kids (and adults).

Although it's important to understand that ADHD today is classified as one diagnosis with six subtypes, it is really much easier to look at it as just two main types:

The first, traditionally known as ADD, exhibits when a child does not have so much hyperactivity or behavior problems, but instead has trouble paying attention, staying on task, and keeping organized.

The second type is "classic" ADHD, where the "H" is emphasized. In these cases, the child has an excessive amount of hyperactivity, anger and abnormal behavior. No matter the two types, most kids have some characteristics of both types but have a "dominant" type.

Next, it is far more important to understand the cause of the disorder, than to simply label (diagnose) it. Medicine is in the business of diagnosis and treating symptoms through medication, chiropractic is in the business of discovering the cause of the disorder and removing it. One approach is unnatural and temporary at best, the latter is natural and seeks to create lasting changes. It has been my experience that most parents choose the latter given the option. A very important thing to know is you do have the option!

Here are the basics:

ADHD is absolutely rooted within the brain and/or nervous system. Medicine treats it by attempting to manipulate "chemicals" called neurotransmitters. (These chemicals are simply messengers for the nervous system). It's a neurological problem, not a genetic or chemical problem.

If the brain is taking in too much stressful stimuli, it reacts with what's called the stress response. When that "fight or flight" stress response is activated, it forces the body to create more stress chemicals, such as cortisol and epinephrine. It's exactly the same if you stomp on the gas pedal of your car -- your car's engine (brain) gets more gasoline.

ADHD is an INPUT problem. The symptoms of hyperactivity and poor focus are just the brain's natural reactions to bad input. If you calm and organize the input going into the brain and nervous system then you calm and organize it's output. If you reduce the amount of stressful stimuli entering the nervous system then you'll reduce the production and output of stress chemicals like cortisol.

Chiropractic works on the basic premise that it stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system (brake pedal) response. The adjustment takes our brain from "gas pedal" mode to "brake pedal" mode the more we stimulate it. The parasympathetic nervous system's job is to promote healing, growth, reproduction, relaxation, development, focus, learning, digestion, and rest.

After performing case history after case history with parents and their children, I have noticed many of the same ingredients (stressors/input) show up in each of the cases.

The key to helping these kids is not medicating their symptoms, it is restoring the input and function to the brain and central nervous system. By improving the input (cause) then we can change the output (effect).

If you or your child suffers from ADD/ADHD or even spectrum disorders, please don't hesitate to call or email me for more info or care.



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POINTE**

Dr. Chad Schleiger

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