

# ADD / ADHD

## RITALIN – A PSYCHOACTIVE DRUG

By Prof. Celene Bernstein

### ARE THERE ALTERNATIVES?

#### Introduction:

Ritalin seems to be the panacea for children suffering from learning difficulties. Is this really the answer to our crowded classrooms, indifferent teachers? Should we rather not look at nutrient deficiencies and food sensitivities?

I have been involved in the teaching profession, first having taught retarded children, which gave me an insight into the normal child. I then taught Grade 4 children at a government school in South Africa. Many children in my class were on Ritalin and I vowed I would not be the teacher to allow these children to continue with this psychoactive drug. There had to be an alternative. In my field of nutritional counseling, I do not prescribe, diagnose or claim to cure. I truly believe that the body does the healing if given the right conditions. If I improved the retarded child's behavior, surely teaching "normal children" could have the same profound effect not only on their behavior patterns but also on their concentration abilities as well.

I really believe that food plays a very big role in the lives of our children. Nutrition should be the first line of defense in improving health, concentration, learning disabilities and behavior.

#### **Nutrition, Behavior and Emotions – Is there a connection?**

"What you eat will not only affect your weight and health, but your state of mind too" – Alexander Schauss

What you must realise is that your brains are fed by your blood and your blood is made up from the food you eat. A body that is properly cared for with good cellular nutrition is able to withstand emotional, mental and learning problems. In other

#### **ABOUT RITALIN:**

Ritalin is a registered trademark of Ciba-Geigy Corporation. Medical doctors prescribe Ritalin as the current trend of treating ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) symptoms. There certainly seems to be many more children diagnosed with ADHD today than twenty years ago. Today ADHD has grown into an industry. Doctors, pharmaceutical companies, psychologists, psychiatrists, neurologists, pediatricians, teachers and schools all own a piece of this industry. The goal here is no longer to sort out the problem, but to continue to treat the symptoms.

words you have to feed the cells of your brain with nutrients from natural sources that are toxin free.

#### **► The Symptoms:**

Symptoms now described as ADHD have been around forever.

The Diagnostic and Statistic Manual for Mental disorders, 4th edition defines ADHD as follows:

#### **A Either (1) or (2)**

1. Six or more of the following symptoms of inattention must have persisted for at least six months.

#### **INATTENTION:**

- a) Often fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork, work or other activities
- b) Often has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities
- c) Often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly
- d) Often does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork, chores or duties in the workplace (not due to oppositional behavior or failure to understand instructions)
- e) Often has difficulty organizing tasks and activities
- f) Often avoids, dislikes or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort (such as schoolwork or homework)
- g) Often loses things necessary for tasks or activities (e.g. toys, school assignments, pencils, books or tools)
- h) Is often easily distracted by extraneous stimuli
- i) Is often forgetful in daily activities

2. Six or more of the following symptoms of hyperactivity - impulsivity have persisted for at least six months.

#### **HYPERACTIVITY:**

- a) Often fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat
- b) Often leaves seat in classroom or in other situations in which remaining in seat is expected
- c) Often runs or climbs excessively in situations in which it is inappropriate (in adolescents or adults, may be limited to subjective feelings of restlessness)
- d) Often has difficulty playing or engaging in leisure activities quietly

- e) Is often “on the go” or often acts as if “driven by a motor”
- f) Often talks excessively
- g) Impulsivity
- h) Often blurts out or answers before questions have been completed
- i) Often has difficulty awaiting turn
- j) Often interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g. butts into conversations or games)

If one looks very closely at the actual wording of the DSM – IV diagnosis, you will note that the symptoms of ADHD are highly subjective. Whether your child receives a diagnosis of ADHD depends upon the point of the individual making the evaluation. The child is then given a label and a drug. This is being applied to many children than ever before.

You must be aware that Attention deficit disorder (ADDS) and Hyperactivity are different. From a psychological perspective ADD and Hyperactivity have two very different underlying problems.

The two disorders definitely manifest themselves differently – i.e. these type of children present very different symptoms.

**ADDS** – Attention Deficit Disorder is predominantly inattention. This term used by DSM-IV describes a child who is not hyperactive. As there is no misbehavior, this problem of these types of children often go unnoticed for years. These children are often very quiet, although intelligent, just do not do well at school. Their brain just does not know how to process the information given. This could be the only problem – they have to learn how to learn and be shown.

**HYPERACTIVITY** - This diagnosis from the DSM-IV applies to children who definitely cannot sit still, do not pay attention and often have behavioral problems according to the teacher and parents. I would rather find out initially the kinds of problems the child is having and then try and look to the underlying cause of the problem. If there is a problem, can it be fixed? Medical problems could also be overlooked. A thorough medical evaluation is very important. Whatever problem the child is experiencing in whatever area of his/her life, the problem should be addressed.

### ► **Treatment:**

The current treatment of ADHD is drug therapy, without combining behavioural modification and educational services. The most commonly prescribed drug for ADHD symptoms is Ritalin (methylphenidate HCL). There are however other drugs used, such as various anti seizure medications, and anti – depressants. Ritalin is being prescribed in such vast amounts that in December 1993, Ciba-Geigy (manufacturing company) ran out of Ritalin pills. The fact that Ritalin is a very popular form of treatment is no indication of its merit. This popularity may even prevent us from focusing beyond the quick fix rather than seeking the underlying causes of the problem. My philosophy and approach to ADHD is that we must identify and treat the underlying cause of the problem, and not the symptoms, such as hyperactivity, aggressive behaviour, and poor attention.

One of the spokespersons for Ciba-Geigy (manufacturers of Ritalin) has said that over 3 million people are currently taking Ritalin, mostly children. Imagine the revenue for the drug company. Ritalin is a substance that is structurally like amphetamines; it is a controlled substance i.e. there is concern by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) that the drug has potential for abuse and/or drug addiction. Doctors have to keep very careful records when they prescribe Ritalin. The fact that Ritalin is a very popular form of treatment is no indication of its merit.

Today, Ritalin is used for attention problems, hyperactivity and behavioural problems.

I must emphasize that drugs are a short-term answer to treating long-term symptoms, and they carry the potential of serious side effects. According to Tim Benedick of the Ohio State Pharmacy Board said on the ABC'S 20/20 Show, October 1995 "Ritalin is highly addictive. It is speed" Most of the children I have seen on Ritalin are often very subdued; others have had adverse reactions or a worsening of symptoms. Parents comment that their children are like “zombies” when on Ritalin. Ritalin can have very different effects on different people. Most teenagers and parents tell me that they don't like the way Ritalin makes them feel while on it. And they would prefer not to take it.

The drug Ritalin is very similar to cocaine. Both drugs use the same receptor site in the brain, giving the same “high”. The only difference being that cocaine leaves the receptor site more quickly, possibly making it more addictive. No wonder we have a drug problem in our country when we prescribe drugs. The only difference between Ritalin and cocaine is that Ritalin is legally prescribed and cocaine isn't.

### **The Side Effects of Treatment**

I repeat drugs have side effects. These are the short term side effects of Ritalin: loss of appetite; decreased growth; tics; visual disturbances; nervousness; insomnia; depression; social withdrawal; increased irritability; abdominal pain; increased heart rate; and psychotic like symptoms.

To date we are unaware of the long-term use of Ritalin' whether it will affect our children's hearts, kidneys, or immune system. The insert in the packet of Ritalin makes it clear that the safety and efficacy of the long-term use in children is not available.

Today too much focus is put on the psychological side which distracts from looking for the real problem, which is often more physiological than psychological. I have found conditions such as low blood sugar, allergies, and even thyroid dysfunction can contribute to ADHD symptoms and behavioral changes. When these problems are addressed the symptoms (which had been called ADHD) usually resolve.

I also believe one has to look at behavior – what is it like in the home situation, compared to the school situation. If this is different, one has to look at the reason for this and be careful of labeling the child ADHD. I do believe more often than not that ADHD symptoms have an underlying physical and/or educational cause, rather than being mental or emotional. Children diagnosed with ADHD can have emotional and self esteem problems as a result of being labeled ADHD.

A very important issue here is that some children do not know how to learn. Just as we teach children how to read, we should also teach them how to learn. Again, some children are born with the ability of how to learn, and this is an advantage. Many children diagnosed with ADHD or learning disabilities often have gifts, perhaps creative endeavors that they can do naturally well, but they also have areas, such as maths, or reading in which they struggle. We must stop calling these children learning disabled. In fact these children are not learning disabled. In fact, they are often very bright and especially gifted in some area outside of school.

It is our responsibility to teach children how to learn. If a child has a problem learning in school, we must know the source of this problem, what area of learning is problematic for him or her and address that problem. A child with a learning difference may be erroneously labeled ADHD. We really expect so much from our children at such an early age that we often forget how a child is supposed to behave. Children spend most of their early years being taught by paid teachers. The teacher's jobs are made much easier if all the children are perfectly well behaved and give them no trouble. AND if a 3-year-old cannot sit quietly all day, or blurts out of turn, becomes frustrated and hits other children occasionally, is this not acceptable? Yes, it is acceptable!

This kind of behavior has been going on for centuries and most of such is normal.



### **N.R.G. (Nature's Raw Guarana)**

Guarana is a climbing shrub native to South America, especially Brazil and Uruguay. Amazon Indians have been using this medicinal plant since before the discovery of Brazil.

Today, its popularity has grown worldwide and is being used by an increasing number of athletes, dancers, students and sportsmen as a natural aid to maintain peak performance.

#### **Did You Know?**

- 80% of the world's commercial production of Guarana is still performed by the Guaranis Indians who wild harvest the seeds by hand.
- Guarana is the main ingredient in the "national beverage" of Brazil, "Guarana Soda".
- 1998 toxicology test have show that Guarana is non-toxic even at high dosages of up to 2 grams per kilogram of body weight (safe for all to use).

So why don't you try our all-natural zesty citrus flavoured N.R.G. beverage

## **Product Results**

### **Fran de Villier's Family Results**

My name is Fran de Villiers, and I have been on the products for a little more than a year. I have lost 12kg and has kept it of for nearly a year now. My husband has suffered from high blood pressure, and his feet were swollen. He has lost 9kg and his blood pressure has normalised and his swelling has completely disappeared.

But my best story is about my two sons. They are both clever, but did not achieve the marks they ought to, because they never wanted to learn, or it was just too much effort to do anything. I first started my youngest son, David on NRG, because he came home with a history class assignment for which he got 17%. Just too much effort to finish it, or he dreamed in class! Since he started on NRG his average has increased from 71% to 81%, and at the end of last year (Gr. 7), he had 83% average. He was SO proud of himself! He has changed completely, and is a much easier child to live with, as he always was very negative. This has changed a lot.

My eldest son, Francois, then said he also wanted NRG, as he did not do too well in his first term in Gr.10. Since he started using NRG, his average has also increased with 10%, and he has received his academic colours for the 3rd year last year. He says he can immediately see the change in his handwriting when he has drunk NRG.

**This is not mediation**

I give them only half a teaspoon as a tea in the morning after breakfast, and sometimes after school, they ask for it, when they know they have lots of homework, or are writing a test.

My children really believe in our products, especially NRG, as they realised that it changed them for the better!

### **Concentration Problems – NRG Testimonial**

To all, our daughter Marilize, is 8 years and have concentration problems etc, etc. The School advised us last year 1999 that various problems are busy surfacing .It costed us a fortune with various doctors everyone had a different perception, everyone prescribed Ritalin etc .It was recommended at one stage that we place her in a special School on the East Rand to which I objected .We attended the Function at Sun City and while listening to all testimonies of other .People we decided to put her on NRG and the shake.

#### **THE RESULTS AFTER TWO DAYS WAS AS FOLLOW:**

1. She stopped crying about everything you could start reasoning with her
2. She started going to bed on her own at night,not sleeping on family room floor while watching TV.
3. No more fighting with her sisters
4. No more fights getting her to school
5. Her headaches stopped
6. No more fights in supermarkets you could reason with her

We monitored her re action's she became more and more confident in going to school .no fights anymore when dropping her at school in the morning " many a day we had to return her home ".She had more interest in her home work daily .My wife could reason more and more with her on home work problems. This year the most wonderful thing happened one morning .with morning prayer she got up went to her bedroom and returned with the HOLY BIBLE. She insisted that she want's to read which she did to our surprise . Ever since she just go from strength to strength. Marilize is not yet over her problem but the improvement since we started giving her NRG and Shake is tremendous. Her School work improved a lot. Reading, spelling, math's etc.

#### **WE THANK OUR HEAVENLY FATHER FOR THE IMPROVEMENT**

Thank you HERBALIFE FOR THE PRODUCT'S.

REGARD'S

Barry and Marinda

### **Shelly's story**

My 10 year old son Zac has had several different diagnosis' in his young life. We tried all sorts of medication & he had some horrible reactions. It has been a non-stop, ongoing heartache trying to help this child. We have never been able to enjoy him for just being who he is.our boy. We've been so wrapped up in "finding answers", we've missed the "wonder years". That is so so sad to me. We had a beautiful 10 year old boy who supposedly was Autistic, Epileptic, ADHD, OCD, with Tourette's. It looked like we were facing a life of one medication after the next, with the doctors doing nothing but prescribing new drugs. Well, in the meantime, my sister happened to have been on the Herbalife products for 4 months and had lost 40 pounds. Myself, having had given up on weight-loss long ago (figuring after everything I'd tried and failed at, it was my destiny to be obese) had no intention of listening to her rave about yet another "miracle weight-loss plan". So, my mother gets in my van one day and says HERE! WE'RE LISTENING TO THIS!. She pops in a tape with all these child testimonies about NRG.

We did NRG for 6 weeks with no improvement. I never felt more discouraged. From there I went to work. I pretty much lived at the library and read everything I could get my hands on about herbs and alternative methods of treatment. I made a list of symptoms that I wanted to improve with Zac, then went after the herbs that dealt with those issues. I saw where I could find those specific herbs in the Herbalife products and started a plan of action. The second month it wowed me. We did the same plan but he was now free of medication. He slept like a baby. The dark circles that were always a part of his face were visibly lighter. He was eating like a teenager. These things were huge to us. It was great. 3rd month we added Tang Kuei, Tics decreased dramatically, he had gained 9 pounds.(still 10 underweight). 4th month we introduced Rose Ox. His teacher and principal were amazed at the improvement. The attention and focus was right on track and he was making social strides every day. He is now able to be involved in team sports and absolutely loves it! As I write this he is at a sleepover. (An unheard of thing in the past) He went with his pack on a 5 day cub scout camping trip (alone!) and took his herbs with him (proudly!) I made the "shake bar" recipe so he didn't have to deal with mixing his shakes. He has now caught up the 20 pounds that he was lacking and has shot up 3 inches. (Ritalin stunts growth) He has not "ticked" in over 2 months and for all intents and purposes is enjoying a normal healthy childhood. The biggest thing I think is that I've been reacquainted with my boy. I forgot what his true personality was. The cute little things about him that were masked by drugs. Now I'm reminded of the little boy before medication. The little boy who was lost, that Herbalife helped me find again. I will always and forever be eternally grateful for these products. I thank God every day for this. I know Zac does too. The good things don't stop there either. I have since lost 54 of the impossible pounds that I thought would torture me forever. I need to be rid of 40 more, but I know I'm doing it this time. I'm looking forward to every new day of my Herbalife life. Zac is too. He can't wait till he's old enough to become a distributor himself. He actually wrote up his own flyers on the computer. It says Herbalife has changed my life, it can change yours too. You only have one chance so protect it! I thought those were powerful words for a 10 year old. This is not just a weight loss program...It goes WAY deeper than that. We're proof positive of that! What a blessing!!

**This is not mediation**



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