ADHD

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) has only recently come to notice of scientists. It affects 3.5 million people under the age of 18 and 5 million people over the age of 18. Its current cause of existence is due to defects at neurotransmitter sites, rendering patients inattentive and impulsive. However, every year more progress is made in locating the cause and finding more effective treatments. Some of the characteristics of ADHD are, often has difficulty waiting turn, interrupts or intrudes on others, fidgets or squirms, and talks excessively. But then there becomes a problem, is you child just hyper active or can he or she actually be diagnosed with ADHD.

The most popular method of diagnosis of ADHD is the Attention Deficit Disorder Behavior Rating Scale. In this scale observers rate children's behavior on the basis of "not at all", "just a little", "pretty much", or "very much". The results are then compared with the nation's norms to indicate whether or not a disorder exists in the child. The criticism of ADDBR is its lack of strictness. There are no set cutoffs between each level, therefore there is much left up to the observer's discretion.

Finding the cause of the disorder is crucial for proper treatment to be administered. There is much physiological evidence for the cause of ADHD. The most widely accepted cause is placed as a result of neurotransmitter deficiencies. Dopamine and Norepinephrine regulate the attention and impulsiveness areas of the brain. Without sufficient amounts of these neurotransmitters, low concentration and lack of control over impulses result.

Recent findings suggest other biological symptoms which may be associated with ADHD. Patients have decreased blood flow and lower levels of electrical activity in the frontal lobes. People with ADHD also have lower glucose metabolism in regions that regulate movement and attention. This slows the metabolic activity in these areas, due to the low energy, and thus may cause difficulty in concentrating.

Normally there are some medications used to alleviate the symptoms of ADHD are stimulants. Ritalin, Adderall, and Vyvanse are the most popular among the stimulants. They reduce most distractive symptoms of ADHD. These, too, are prescribed at low doses usually. Sometimes other medication is need in addition to either the stimulants or antidepressants. Clonidine helps to increase calmness and, perhaps, increases the effectiveness of the stimulant. In adults, depression is a common complaint of ADHD patients.

Some psychologists feel that, in the case of children, ADHD patients need special education and therapy more than medication. This view has been argued by research of the treatments as well as the biological origin of the disorder. Therapy does aid in adjustment to the disorder, but medication helps the actual symptoms.

Though there is much to be learned about Attention Deficit Disorder, current treatments are effective. Newer theories of causation are continuously being release, and the medication is altered accordingly. Presently, though, most people with the disorder are able to find a treatment that will help them at least on a minimal level to decrease such behaviors as irritability, depression, impulsiveness, distractibility, and faulty memory. Antidepressants and stimulants seem to be the most effective and other medications are often given to increase their potency or alleviate other symptoms. Since it directly affects the academic and social performance in children, the sooner ADHD is detected, the sooner the child can live a more normal lifestyle into his/her adulthood.