

## Understanding Medications for the Treatment of ADHD in Australia

This guide offers a brief overview of the use of medication in the treatment of ADHD and includes a list of medications which are frequently prescribed and which patients enquire about most often.

**A note of caution:** All medications have side effects. You should always consult with your psychiatrist or doctor when taking any medication. It is also recommended to check for interactions (*which you may do yourself*) and, if relevant, discuss any potential interactions with the prescribing practitioner. Furthermore, read the product information about your medications to more fully understand any manufacturers' warnings.

### MEDICATION FOR ADHD SYMPTOMS

Remember, ADHD confers on the individual advantages as well as disadvantages depending on the situation.

Medications are prescribed to help control symptoms of ADHD and can have a clear benefit for many people with ADHD symptoms who find that their symptoms pose challenges to their daily life.

The medicines you use should be seen as a tool and used along with other tools including psychotherapy, cognitive training, and adjusting behavioural and organizational approaches to life. The longer-term goal is to be less reliant on the medication, while developing techniques necessary to deal with the challenges presented by ADHD.

### SUCCESSFUL TREATMENT IS UNDERPINNED BY A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

A healthy mind in a healthy body as the adage goes. Eating well, exercising, and getting enough sleep should be a prescription for everyone. These basic cornerstones of physical health are increasingly being proven as vital to our mental health as well.

When possible, one should also limit their time in front of a screen – whether it's a TV or a mobile phone – especially outside of daylight hours.

### NOTES ON ADHD MEDICATION PRESCRIPTIONS AND COSTS

- Not all medications used for the treatment of ADHD are licensed for use in Australia or covered under the Pharmaceutical Benefit System (PBS).
- Some medications may have different costs for each patient, including out-of-pocket expenses, based on whether they are covered by PBS or by a private health insurer.
- Never exceed the maximum recommended dose without discussing with your psychiatrist or prescribing doctor.
- Genetic profiling is available at a cost from Pathology laboratories. This will help in certain situations – it is best that you discuss the relevance and utility of such testing with your treating doctor.
- To determine the optimum dose that is required to effectively treat symptoms, start with the smallest dose, then increase only as needed.

## ADHD MEDICATIONS LISTED IN THE PBS FOR TREATMENT OF ADHD

These stimulants and non-stimulants are listed as examples – there may be other brand names or different strengths as well as types of preparations.

### Quick Release Stimulants and Non-Stimulants

Type	Generic Name	Brand Name	Strength(mg)	Frequency
Stimulant	Dexamfetamine		5	As prescribed
	Methylphenidate	Ritalin	10	As prescribed
Non-stimulant	Guanfacine	Intuniv	1,2,3,4	Once daily
	Atomoxetine	Strattera	10, 18, 25, 40, 60, 80, 100	Twice daily

### Slow Release Stimulants

Type	Generic Name	Brand Name	Strength(mg)	Frequency
Stimulant	Lisdexamfetamine	Vyvanse	20-70 in 10mg increments	Once daily
	Methylphenidate Extended Release	Ritalin LA	10, 20, 30, 40	Once daily
	Methylphenidate Extended Release	Concerta	18, 25, 36, 54	Once daily

## ADHD MEDICATIONS NOT LISTED IN THE PBS FOR TREATMENT OF ADHD BUT USED BY SOME PRACTITIONERS FOR ADHD

Type	Generic Name	Brand Name	Strength(mg)	Frequency
Stimulant	Modafanil	Provigil	100, 200	Once daily
	Armodafanil	Novigil	50, 150, 250	Once daily
Non-stimulant	Bupropion	Zyban	150	Twice daily
	Clonidine	Catapres	0.1 (100mcg)	Once nightly

*Some medications may be used on an as-needed basis. You should always discuss your pattern of use and any changes to dosage or frequency with your doctor.*

## ADHD MEDICATIONS NOT AVAILABLE IN AUSTRALIA

There are other medications for the treatment of ADHD which are not available or licensed for use in Australia. Adderrall (Amphetamine-based) and Qelbree (Viloxazine) are frequently inquired about and are not available in Australia at this time.