

Homeopathic Treatment of Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) in Children

The thoughts of dealing with irate teachers and the dreaded phone calls to parents regarding the disruption of classes by one's dear child is enough to drive most parents to distraction. Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder is a behavioural label which should be treated as such, a behavioural problem. Each child manifests the restless behaviour in slightly different ways, which is as it should be considering we are all individuals. For those parents who are reluctant to heavily medicate their children, there are other alternatives for treatment. Homeopathic medicine by definition treats all people as the individuals they are with differing manifestations of disease. One child may be violent and aggressive, another just incredibly restless but sensitive and easily moved to tears while another may be displaying inattention at school as a result of stress in the home. Labels such as ADHD, while convenient for categorizing children with behavioural problems from the viewpoint of psychology, are a bit misleading in the sense of problem sources.

Holistic healthcare professionals have recognised a connection between artificial foods, dyes and stimulants such as colas as being particularly harmful to children with the tendency to be hyperactive. With diet controls and vitamin and mineral requirements having been met, many children show improvements. Certainly there is improvement with essential fatty acids which nourish the nervous system. Enrolling the child in some exercise outlet such as Judo or soccer will help with the venting of excess energy. Let us not forget that some of these hyperactive children given the support educationally and socially will grow up to be the successful, spicy professionals who seem to have a fire under them. Certainly the education system could benefit from improvements in one-on-one attention which so many children require. In this day of working households, parenting disciplinary skills may be left at bay due to exhaustion and desire for peace in the home. These are complex issues. However,

if the child is showing deeper manifestations of problems such as bedwetting, frequent nightmares, skin conditions, self-injury, depression, or other signs of disorder, much can be done from a Homeopathic point of view.

Homeopathic medicine is excellent for children with their high vitality. They are quick to respond to treatment. Minimal numbers of doses are required and these are prepared from natural sources. The homeopathic case-taking procedure is long with inquiries as to diet, childhood illnesses, stresses, shocks, vaccination reactions if any, state of the mother during pregnancy, home situation, foods craved, sleep habits etc. The goal is to find just the right medicine for the individual child. There are over 2000 medicines to choose from in the Homeopathic repertoire. The Homeopath's job is to identify just the right medicine for the child in front of them- not the one with ADHD as a label.

Treatment is based on symptomatology on all levels of the body, including mental, emotional and physical. It is very pain-staking work on the part of the Homeopath to research each case as if it is the only unique one of its kind. Treatment is for the person with certain behavioural manifestations, but for the person above all.

On TVOntario's May 29th, 2002 show called Your Health, two medical doctors, debated the issue of Ritalin for ADHD children. While one suggested that Ritalin in small doses is the treatment of choice, the other suggested that we in Canada use 90% of the world's Ritalin. These are psycho-active drugs, amphetamines and there is some concern in their use as to suppression of growth hormone, apathetic behaviour, obsessive/compulsive disorders and suppression of appetite in users. There is no clear neuro-biological marker for ADHD identified as yet. In fact it seems that the greatest push for the use of drugs for children comes from teachers. One can certainly empathize with the frustration they feel, but as parents, such a huge decision as to

the medicating of young children is daunting. It is advised that we retake responsibility for our kids, look at each child separately as to needs and look with caution at the long-term effects of such medicating, the effects of which are not yet known.

To give an example of a homeopathic medicine which treats manifestations in children which look much like ADHD, I will portray the picture necessary to warrant the prescribing of the homeopathic medicine, Stramonium. (caution: do not give homeopathics without the full consultation of a qualified homeopath) The Stramonium child is hyperactive, hurried and worried. Concentration span is very short. He cannot keep still for long and roams from one object to another, picking it up, putting it down and going on to the next. There is ceaseless talking, laughing, shouting, and singing. They are inclined to babble on about all sorts of unrelated things, which drives people away. Depending on the vitality of the child, the Homeopath would decide the best dosage and repetition of the medicine. It is given only as prescribed and then there is a waiting period to see the results. The first to improve usually are the unconscious behaviours such as sleep, nightmares etc. Often bedwetting improves and over time, it varies with each child, a happier, calmer child emerges. This is still lively Joey, but different, happier, more likely to listen.

Homeopathy is deep-acting medicine and should never be viewed as something to dabble with. It is not a quick fix and parents need patience to wait out the required span of time needed for the body to react in its own way, in its own time. Over time, other medicines may be selected depending on what surfaces. Each child is different. Seek out a professional in your area by contacting in Toronto, the Ontario Homeopathic Association who have a Directory of professionally trained regulated Homeopaths. Above all, don't despair.