

HEALTHY MINDS
A WEEKLY COLUMN ALL ABOUT MENTAL WELLNESS
Elliott B. Sewell, MAE, LPCC, NCC

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

**Part III: Extreme Controversy Over the Diagnosis and
the Drugs Used to Treat ADHD and Related 'Disorders'**



Last week I warned that professionals who are specifically trained in ADHD should make the diagnosis, this week we are going to examine a totally different point of view that ADHD is a fabricated disease created by the psychiatric-pharmaceutical cartel, and that Ritalin and other drugs used to 'treat' ADHD are dangerous and may be fatal. You decide.

One of the leading critics of the ADHD "industry" is Dr. Fred A. Baughman, Jr., MD, who has been an adult and a child neurologist in private practice for 35 years. He has written several books and articles, worldwide, has testified for victimized parents and children in ADHD/Ritalin legal cases, has produced a video on the subject, and has an extensive website with many links to other websites (<http://www.adhdfraud.org/>) where he states:

"They made a list of the most common symptoms of emotional discomfort of children; those which bother teachers and parents most, and in a stroke that could not be more devoid of science or Hippocratic motive--termed them a 'disease.' Twenty five years of research, not deserving of the term 'research,' has failed to validate ADD/ADHD as a disease. Tragically--the "epidemic" having grown from 500 thousand in 1985 to between 5 and 7 million today--this remains the state of the 'science' of ADHD."

In addition to scientific articles that have appeared in leading national and international medical journals, Dr. Baughman has testified for victimized parents and children in ADHD/Ritalin legal cases, writes for the print media and appears on talk radio shows, always making the point that ADHD is fraudulent--a creation of the psychiatric-pharmaceutical cartel, without which they would have nothing to prescribe their dangerous, addictive, Schedule II, stimulants for--namely, Ritalin (methylphenindate), Dexedrine (dextro-amphetamine), Adderall (mixed dextro- and levo-amphetamine) and, Gradumet, and Desoxyn (both of which are methamphetamine – YES – METHAMPHETAMINE – known as "meth", "ice", "crystal", "tina" and "glass", and sometimes called "speed").

Many children die every year from Ritalin use, as verified by the FDA MedWatch program. Ten years ago the National Institutes of Health Consensus stated: We do not have an independent, valid test for ADHD, and there is no data to indicate that ADHD is due to a brain malfunction". Nevertheless, being labeled an ADHD child might get your child onto this dangerous drug, subjecting the child to great health risks, including enlargement of the heart.

It is true that Ritalin can make frustrated children more manageable for teachers; sometimes parents are threatened by Child Protective Services that they face being charged with neglect if they don't comply. Fighting the system often costs money that many parents don't have. Furthermore, in many school districts and states, a child diagnosed with ADHD is considered learning-disabled which thus qualifies the school for additional federal payments per child per semester. Thus there is a financial incentive for school districts to label and drug children in many districts, which may in part account for the rapidly rising rate of labeling and drugging children for ADHD.

Children don't always develop at the same rate or in the same way. Quality of parenting, teaching methods, home life, diet, and television/video-game use all have an effect. Furthermore, the National Foundation for Gifted and Creative Children has a 'checklist for gifted children' that is almost identical to the one for ADHD (<http://www.nfgcc.org>). Yes, there are children who cannot or will not pay attention, and may be disruptive to the entire class – any teacher will tell you that from experience. However drugging them into submission is not the answer.

Parents receiving aid to dependent children from Social Services can often receive extra funds for labeling and drugging their children as ADHD 'victims'. There are financial incentives that are tempting to some people (often from lower socio-economic parents and single-mother homes), especially when economic times are hard.

Remember that Ritalin is a Schedule II drug (same as Cocaine) as classified by the DEA, and is ONE OF THE TOP TEN ABUSED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS FOUND ON THE STREETS TODAY. Amphetamines constrict veins and arteries and make the heart work extremely hard to pump the blood, often causing damage.

A major study, the Berkeley Study, as reported in the Wall Street Journal in 1999 stated that "exposure to Ritalin makes the brain more susceptible to the addictive power of cocaine and doubles the risk of abuse." Children after the age of 12 taking Ritalin or other psycho-stimulant drugs are ineligible for military service. Furthermore, a diagnosis of ADHD will be carried on the child's lifetime medical record as having been diagnosed with a mental disorder. The DEA states that:

"Of particular concern is that most of the ADHD literature prepared for public consumption by CHADD and other groups and available to parents, does not address the abuse potential or actual abuse of methylphenidate. Instead, methylphenidate (usually referred to as Ritalin by these groups) is routinely portrayed as a benign, mild substance that is not associated with abuse or serious side effects. In reality, however, there is an abundance of scientific literature which indicates that methylphenidate shares the same abuse potential as other Schedule II stimulants."

[CHADD, or Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, is a non-profit organization that is supported financially by pharmaceutical companies – a conflict of interest.]

Dr. Baughman points out that if a hazardous toy is responsible for the death of one or two children, there is an uproar for its recall. How many hundreds or children will have to die, how many thousands of lives must be ruined, before the American People (not the ineffective government) will act?

Next week we shall discuss some of the possible causes of ADHD symptoms, and some of the other disorders that often occur with this one.

TIP OF THE WEEK: Parents are always role models for children. They imitate your words, your actions, your behavior, and your choices – good and bad. Children are always watching you, so teach them well by your positive behavior.