



Kids Our Family Newsletter First

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Our goal is to inspire you, to provide you with the latest health care options available, make you smile, and help you to help us fulfill our mission – *to reach as many parents and children as we can!*

I hope you've all enjoyed the October and November issues of this newsletter. The reason I decided to write about the topic of Disc and Spinal Degeneration is simply because the vast majority of patients that I see in my office are somewhere in the midst of that process – even children!



And the reason is that the Vertebral Subluxation which starts this whole ball rolling, usually begins in childhood – we covered all that. And by now, you should understand why it is so important to have all your kids checked. It is absolutely crucial!

So, let's move on to a topic which has been a source of frustration for kids, parents, and teachers alike:

ADHD:

Those four letters strike fear into every parent whose children are in the school system – home-schooled children

don't fit into this category – you'll see why.

The acronym "ADHD" simply stands for **Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder** – the scourge of the school system.

The next two issues of my **Kids First Pediatric & Family** newsletter will focus on this problem – what it is? How can it be treated? Do medications work? Are they safe? Are there alternatives? How Chiropractic can help, and the controversy surrounding the diagnosis of ADHD. That is a mouthful!

I want to warn you: This is a very difficult topic to discuss with any degree of impartiality – but I am going to try. Why is it so difficult to be impartial? Because it involves our children!



So, let's just dive straight in: It has been called by many as "Teacher's Little Helper." I'm referring to the popular drug Ritalin, which is widely prescribed to "treat" the condition of ADHD - commonly referred to as simply "**Hyperactivity.**"

The number of children taking this drug has risen by drastically in the last 15

years or so, much to the delight of the shareholders of Ciba-Geigy (now Novartis), the drug's manufacturer. And as many as 100 percent of all children (if you can believe it), in second through fifth grade, have been prescribed the drug Ritalin, even though many of them probably don't have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. That was the conclusion of Dr. LeFever and researchers who published their findings in the *American Journal of Public Health*.¹

The United States and Canada are leading the parade in Ritalin use, while European countries are far down the list. As a matter of fact, Health Canada has launched an investigation to delve into the over prescribing patterns of this narcotic just recently. Maybe children across the ocean are different? Perhaps our kids are "sicker?" Could it be marketing? Could it be hype?



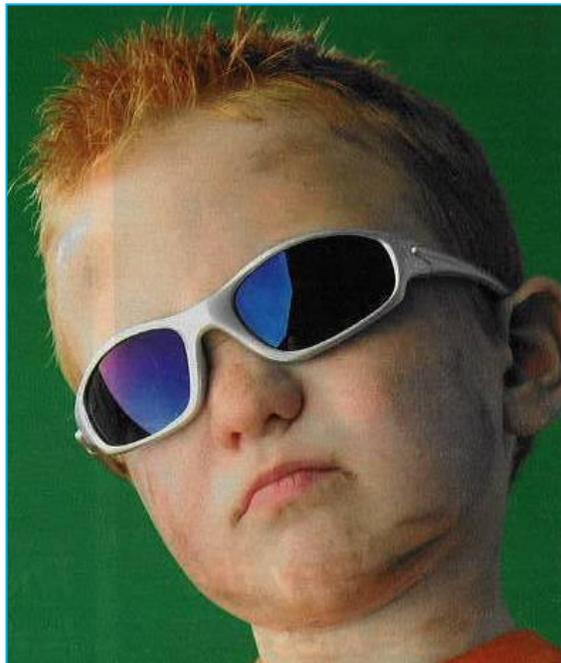
Please read on . . .

According to Dr. LeFever, doctors are overprescribing Ritalin, which is a psychotropic drug and a Class II narcotic. *"It's hard to believe this many children actually have the specific brain-related problem called ADHD,"* stated Dr. LeFever, an assistant professor of Pediatrics and Psychiatry at the Centre for Pediatric Research.

Health care advocates say that physicians are routinely diagnosing children with ADHD, even though there are no clinical tests for this condition. *(I want to make sure that you understand this statement: There are no tests for this condition – I am trying to remain impartial!)*

¹LeFever, Gretchen, et al, *The Extent of Drug Therapy for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder among Children in Public School*,. American Journal of Public Health,

Instead, they find it easier to write a prescription for Ritalin - or other stimulants - than discuss diet or parenting skills with the child's family. Ok.... I need to be emphatic: I really want you to get this. *There are no tests for this condition – None!*



The diagnosis of ADHD is purely made on observation and someone's personal view of what constitutes "normal behaviour." Taking into account that approximately 20 percent of the population have antisocial tendencies, and 2-3 percent are anti-social, this type of criteria used to establish a true diagnosis of ADHD, then sits on very perilous ground. Would you not agree?



From my perspective as a doctor, it seems as if almost every child today is being labelled with ADHD. It appears to be a catch-all name given to kids who don't fit into someone's definition of how a child "should" behave. The criteria used to make this diagnosis fit almost every child I have

encountered in practice. It probably fits most of your friends and relatives also. Maybe even you! There's a concept! So much for being clinical and objective!

According to Peter Breggin, M.D.,² director of the International Centre for the Study of Psychiatry and Psychology and faculty member at Johns Hopkins University, in his book, *The War Against Children of Color*, ADHD tends to be a middle class diagnosis. A yuppie "thing."



Let's look at the factors that would label a child as having ADHD.

1. Often fidgets and squirms in his/her seat.
2. Has difficulty remaining seated when required.
3. Is easily distracted.
4. Often blurts out answers to questions before they have been completed.
5. Has difficulty waiting his/her turn during games.
6. Has difficulty following instructions.
7. Jumps from one thing to another.
8. Often talks excessively.
9. Interrupts others.
10. Often loses things.
11. Does not seem to listen.
12. Has difficulty playing quietly.

If your child displays at least six to eight of these criteria, he is a candidate for the ADHD diagnosis. (*All of a sudden I'm very concerned about myself, and most of my friends and colleagues!*)

These criteria sound like a normal,

² Breggin, P., *The War Against Children of Color: Psychiatry Targets Inner-city Youth*, Login Brothers,

healthy, exuberant, bored child. Think about it; your child is excited to be alive and very curious! Much better than being a zombie, I would think! Would you agree?



Many authorities feel that these children are quite gifted, bright, and are very right-brained, i.e., creative. These children function with two speeds only, hyperdrive and collapse. There is no in-between. They are also highly visual and non-sequential processors. In other words, they learn by pictures in a non-traditional manner.



Many feel these children are "scanners;" they scan life and the world around them in the same manner as they

would scan a computer screen. Many clinicians also feel that these children are a product of our fast-paced, over-stimulated culture. To that end, I must applaud the Waldorf School system and their founder, Rudolf Steiner, who frown on the use of computers and TV in their teaching methods.

Still others are convinced that this supposed “hyperactivity” is the result of a lack of certain nutrients and minerals. There is also a growing suspicion that the diagnosis of ADHD was actually concocted by the drug manufacturer to increase their sales of a newly discovered drug; Ritalin.³ What a shock! (*I'll allow you to draw your own conclusions at the end of this series.*)



To make my point much clearer, permit me to ask you this question; *“What if Einstein and Edison were on Ritalin?”*

If they were born today, they would surely have been labelled with ADHD. Both have been expelled from school for disruptive behaviour. Where would we be today without their brilliance?

I mentioned earlier that most parents do not realize that this “diagnosis” is made

³ Citizens Commission on Human Rights, *Protesters Claim Psychiatry Targets Children for Profit*, May 26, 2000.

purely on observation and is most often initiated by a teacher who is having difficulty controlling the behaviour of a certain child. I am emphatic when I stress that this is NOT an attack on teachers, rather it is an observation; many teachers have simply been misled by drug company and government promotional campaigns for Ritalin, Adderall, and other stimulants. *“Educate—don't medicate, should be the motto of every parent or teacher who is tempted to resort to Ritalin or other chemical means of controlling behaviour,”* Breggin urges.

It is interesting to note that some teachers have very few ADHD children in their classrooms, while it seems that others have a whole classroom full of these kids. We forget that these children need a different teaching method, and in most cases this is often difficult as schools demand obedience and conformity. It is often very challenging to be an individual.

Dr. Wayne Dyer once put it this way: *“You belong to the Right-Turn society. In this society we do not turn left - only right. And the Elders of the Right-Turn society will speak with you in you ever turn left. The other society over the hill turns left. And if you want to belong with us, you must conform – you only turn right!”* Brilliant!



As you can see, this is a very contentious and controversial issue. I've always found it best to use common sense with respect to ADHD. (Please look to Part II on this problem in the January 2011 issue. I'll also discuss how Chiropractic care can help children with ADHD, alternatives to Ritalin and much more. Stay tuned!) **Please...if you have any questions, or would like any information on any health topic, it would be my pleasure to help you! Talk with you next month.....**