

MEDIA RELEASE

23 October 2008

Many factors to consider getting treatment right for ADHD

The quality of a child's relationships and their diet are now known to be minor risk factors for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). However, biological factors, including genetics, are significant so many factors must be considered before treatment can begin.

"ADHD is rarely encountered as a pure, discrete disorder," says Professor Alasdair Vance from the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, writing in this month's *Australian Prescriber* medical journal. "That's why it is so important that children are properly assessed so they can get the right support such as speech therapy, educational remediation and occupational therapy".

To begin with, the treatment for ADHD involves these kinds of psychological and social interventions however, studies are starting to show that some children will do better when medicines are given at the same time as these other interventions.

"About three to five percent of primary school children have ADHD and often have behavioural problems and do poorly at school if they are not treated properly," says Professor Vance.

He says untreated ADHD is associated with academic underachievement, social isolation and compromised career progress later in life. It can lead to adult psychiatric disorders and drug or alcohol abuse.

Although education and counselling alone may be sufficient for milder cases, moderate to severe cases of ADHD may also need medication, says Professor Vance.

If a medicine is considered appropriate, it is important parents, carers and children consider and understand the possible side effects first. It is important to talk with your health professional about any questions or concerns you may have or call Medicines Line on 1300 888 763 and speak to a pharmacist.

For the complete article visit the Australian Prescriber website www.australianprescriber.com

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