

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder: Tips for Adults

Developed in collaboration with the mental health centers of NBHP and FBHP & the Client and Family Advisory Board

- 1. Participate fully in your treatment.** Be actively involved in setting your individual goals, treatment plan and attending appointments. Practice the skills and techniques you learn in treatment to address and manage your symptoms. You can be hopeful about managing your symptoms. Research has shown that interventions and lifestyle changes for ADHD are quite effective in reducing symptoms.
- 2. Ask questions.** Ask your mental health provider to explain ADHD, treatment alternatives, and suggestions on how you can take charge of your symptoms.
- 3. Be alert to your symptoms.** Many adults with ADHD have additional emotional difficulties, such as depression, anxiety, difficulties with work or relationships, and low self-esteem as a result of living and coping with ADHD. These difficulties can be treated if they are recognized. Communicate any concerns you may have about these symptoms with your treatment providers so you can get the help you need.
- 4. Create support** through family, friends and peers. Ask them for feedback about how they think you are doing with managing symptoms and how symptoms might affect your relationships. Ask your mental health provider for information about online or peer support options such as Children & Adults with ADHD.
- 5. Care about yourself.** Establish a healthy lifestyle that includes adequate sleep, good nutrition and regular physical activity. A healthy life style will help you regulate your energy level and ability to concentrate. See your Primary Care Provider (PCP) regularly and if you don't have one ask your Care Coordinator/Case Manager for help in obtaining one.
- 6. Remember, alcohol and illegal drugs can worsen symptoms of ADHD.** Adults with ADHD are at risk of abusing drugs and alcohol as a way of self-medicating. Be sure to tell your therapist or prescriber if this is a struggle for you.
- 7. Take ADHD medications as prescribed.** Talk with your prescriber if you have questions about your medication, especially if you are having uncomfortable side effects or trouble remembering to take the medications regularly. They can work with you to come up with solutions to these issues.
- 8. Create a routine/structure for yourself.** Use your phone, planner, or calendar to stay on track with your goals, appointments, etc. Create lists for remembering daily tasks, and use other types of reminders to help you organize your day. There are a number of applications available for smart phones or computers to help manage symptoms of ADHD and get organized.
- 9. Learn about ADHD** and how you can learn strategies for coping effectively with symptoms. Ask for written materials and read information on the Internet or from the library (see the resources list below).

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Resources for Clients and Families

American Academy of Pediatrics <http://www.aap.org/healthtopics/adhd.cfm>

ADDitude: Living well with attention deficit <http://www.additudemag.com/>

National Institute of Mental Health (1-800-421-4211 or <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder/complete-index.shtml>)

Attention Deficit Disorder Resources <http://www.addresources.org/?q=node/253>

Children and Adults with ADHD (CHADD) www.chadd.org

<https://www.achievementsolutions.net/achievementsolutions/en//Home.do>

Books:

Taking Charge of Adult ADHD by Russell Barkley, Ph.D.

Journeys Through ADDulthood by Sari Solden

The Gift of Adult ADD by Lara Honos-Webb, Ph.D.

You Mean I'm not Lazy, Stupid, or Crazy?! By Kate Kelly and Peggy Ramundo