

## **Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder FAQs**

### **If I am already in treatment for ADHD, how do I transfer my treatment to the Student Health Service?**

If you have been previously diagnosed with ADHD/ADD you will need to first have the records of both testing and treatment sent to us. To get records sent you will need to contact the clinicians who treated, and/or tested you. They will usually require you to fill out a release of information. Your provider will usually have one of these. If not, you can use ours, here is the link:

[http://studenthealth.uiowa.edu/sites/default/files/uploads/FormsandReports/All%20Students/CONSENT\\_TO\\_OBTAIN\\_INFORMATION.pdf](http://studenthealth.uiowa.edu/sites/default/files/uploads/FormsandReports/All%20Students/CONSENT_TO_OBTAIN_INFORMATION.pdf)

If you were treated with medications, we need records from your provider. This could be your family physician, a pediatrician, psychiatrist, nurse practitioner or a physician assistant.

Testing is usually done by someone other than the treating physician, so you will need a separate release of information form sent to them. If you were tested for ADHD, but never treated, then just have the records of testing sent. If you have your own copy of your testing you can also just send us a copy of that.

When you think the records have arrived, call us at (319) 335-8394 to schedule an appointment. If you are a student at the University of Iowa, and have paid the health fee for that semester, there is no charge for the visit.

### **I think I have ADD, but I have never been diagnosed before. Do you evaluate ADD?**

If you have not been previously diagnosed with ADD/ADHD then you should first arrange to have an evaluation with a psychologist with experience in diagnosing and testing for attention deficit disorder. We do not do testing for ADHD/ADD at the Student Health Service. Resources available to students include:

- The University of Iowa Counseling service <http://www.uiowa.edu/ucs/psychoedeval.shtml>
- UIHC-Department of Pediatric Psychology, College Student ADD/LD Clinic

<http://www.uihealthcare.com/depts/med/pediatrics/divisions/psychology.html>

The testing done for ADHD should comply with the guidelines set by the Student Disability Services. The exception to this is that for the purpose of treatment the testing does not necessarily have to be within 3 years. The guidelines can be found at the Student Disability Services website: <http://www.uiowa.edu/~sds/>

If you have problems with concentration, but also other symptoms such as anxiety or depression, then we would recommend you have a general mental health evaluation. The University Counseling Service is a good resource for this. You can also use our online screening assessment of mental health symptoms:

<http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org/screening/Welcome.aspx>

### **What is the approach to treatment of ADHD at the Student Health Service?**

ADHD is a disorder is a clinical syndrome where the severity of the symptoms can vary among patients. A diagnosis of the condition does not mean someone needs to be treated with medication. There can be multiple factors contributing to the problem. As a part of treatment of ADHD it is important to look at these factors and find solutions for them. Treatment can consist of multiple interventions including psychotherapy, study skills training, exercise, and nutrition. Prior to starting treatment, we need to review the previous information and complete our initial evaluation. The diagnosis of ADHD is ultimately a clinical diagnosis based on the current symptoms and the history of those symptoms. Psychologic testing can help in the diagnosis of ADHD. Testing can also uncover learning disabilities, which are separate from ADHD, but can cause impairment. As a part of treatment of ADHD at the Student Health Service students must complete psychologic testing prior to starting

treatment. For purposes of treatment, it is generally ok if the testing was done as a child. This does have the advantage of both providing testing as well as documentation of symptoms in childhood. If testing is needed for academic accommodations then they need to be within the last 3 years.

Academic difficulty is the most common problem associated with ADHD. As a part of the evaluation we will assess the nature of academic difficulties. We do look at factors such as class attendance, study skills, time spent on study, and test taking strategies. If a student is deficient in any of these factors we recommend they first work on this prior to considering medications. Yes we do expect you to go to class and to study! We agree with the general advice of spending 1-2 hours outside of class working on school for every hour of credit a student is enrolled for.

### **Are there any policies about how stimulant medications are prescribed?**

Stimulant medications such as Adderall and Ritalin are considered controlled drugs by the US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). They are in a category of controlled drugs that cannot be called into a pharmacy; there cannot be refills of the prescription. Each time a patient goes to the pharmacy, they must bring a new signed prescription.

At the Student Health Service, we have some additional policies regarding prescriptions for stimulant medications:

- If you lose either the paper prescription, or the bottle of medication, we will not replace the lost medication. The next prescription will not be given until it would have otherwise been due for renewal (generally no earlier than one month from when the last prescription was written).
- With valid reason, we may ask a patient to bring in their bottle of medication prior to it running out to determine a pill count. We do not do this routinely, but reserve the right to request this. If the patient is unwilling to honor the request, we will not be able to provide further prescriptions for stimulant medications.

These policies do not apply to other medications you receive from any provider at the Student Health Service.

### **Do you have any links for information on ADHD/ADD?**

Here is a link to information about ADHD (follow the link to our Health Iowa Q&A, click on Mental Health): <http://www.uistudenthealth.com/question/default.aspx>

Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD): <http://www.chadd.org>

Here is a link to a screening tool for ADHD:

<http://www.hcp.med.harvard.edu/ncs/ftpd/ahd/18%20Question%20ADHD-ASRS-v1-1.pdf>

### **Are there any other resources for University of Iowa students with ADHD?**

The office of Student Disability Services can provide help to students. If the level of symptoms leads to difficulties in academic success then the student may be eligible for accommodations. The office of Student Disability Services does require that testing be within the last 3 years. Here is the link to their website: <http://www.uiowa.edu/~sds/>

The University Counseling Service can help a student who might benefit from short term counseling. Very often the stress of school can lead to academic difficulty, making the underlying problems with attention even worse. Information about the University Counseling Service can be found here: <http://www.uiowa.edu/ucs/>