title: **Vyvanse not cutting it**
num_comments: 14
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upvote_ratio: 1.0

Post Text

Hi all, I recently started my job as a junior software engineer and am having a difficult time retaining information and comprehending what my peers are explaining to me. I also reread documentation and have poor recall of what I attempted to learn. I have ADHD-PI and have been taking vyvanse 30mg for a little over a week and a half. While it somewhat alleviates the mental fogginess I feel, (important) it seems like it wears off WAY too quickly after 4-5 hours and it doesn't fully feel like I have the ability to comprehend what people are explaining to me. Someone could explain a technical concept like "Item A is a queueing service that relies on dependencies H and J from repository Y to send messages to Item F".   Its a little more complicated than that, but its still a lot to take in. And I will often focus on what they're explaining and silently remind myself what they just told me — only to flub details way too often. I understand taking notes and recording are options, but there are various situations where this is infeasible. There's a LOT that I don't know about supply chain, which is the domain of my job. But the codebase is even more complex on top of that, and I'm somewhat rusty in programming on top of that. I've been flooded with information this past week trying to understand all our various frameworks and things just aren't sticking. So I have a lot going against me, but I try to reassure myself at the end of every day that I can break through this. But I'm feeling like I'm severely learning disabled and it's inevitably going to ruin my career.   My question is, what suggestions would you recommend? I don't know if it's normal for vyvanse to be wearing off this quick and me reverting to my foggy old self. Any advice would be greatly appreciated. tl;dr I'm having major difficulties comprehending technical conversations in casual settings, vyvanse has somewhat limited effect and wears off after 4-5 hours, and retaining information that I've read multiple times. Technically explaining something is pretty rough too. Wat do

Comments

Commenter_2
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 2
There might be better answers out there but I have a couple ideas, I am on 50mg vyvanse for 10 years.   Can you up your dose? Also, I have read on these forums that sometimes what you eat will affect how quickly your body metabolizes the medicine. One more thing, I take my meds at 9:30, yes I struggle in the am to get around on time, but it does last all day what time do you take yours?

> ###### OP
> ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 1
> Yeah I haven't tried taking it that much later but it's certainly an option. My productivity in the morning seems to be enough to get things done, and meetings tend to be scheduled later in the afternoon so I can try that.
>
> I'd have to see a psychiatrist in the city I just moved to in order to up the dosage, but I definitely think that's what I need. I don't think I'm at a point yet with medication to where I've fully eliminated this fogginess.. I just want to be able to understand what people are trying to explain to me
>
> > ###### Commenter_2
> > ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 1
> > my morning meetings are the worst w/o meds, I can't keep my mouth shut and i interrupt, and have a real hard time suffering fools.
> > About metabolizing the medicine someone said something about acidic food like orange/orange

juice will make you metabolize it quicker. I don't drink OJ in the am or drink pop with citric acid in it so I haven't done the research.

Commenter_4
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 2
Your dosage is probably just wrong. Keep a med log for a week and show it to your doctor.

Write when you take it, and check in every few hours with how well you're concentrating at that point. Whenever I couldn't concentrate I would turn to this thing first and write time and things like "leg is shaking, want to do anything else, feel sad and depressed."

Of course, it wasn't all bad, there were 2-3 hours windows when it was fine, but you can't build a career on that. This was on 70mg Vyvanse. After seeing the log, he changed it to 70mg Vyvanse at 8am, then a second 70mg vyvanse at 1pm. The afternoons were basically "what's adhd?", but the mornings still sucked. Next go he added 10mg dex at 8am and 10mg at 1030am and it's been pretty stable.

> ###### OP
> ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 1
> Yeah, I'm currently on my vyvanse right now at work so if that tells you how well I'm focusing....
>
> I'll definitely speak with my psychiatrist (once I find one) about upping the dosage. Did you jump from 30mg to 70mg or was it was gradual increase? I desperately want to get to the point where I can say "what's adhd?"
>
> Lastly, have you noticed any long term effects, or withdrawal symptoms when you miss a day or two? I get extremely anxious already when I'm coming down from my meds.
>
> > ###### Commenter_4
> > ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 1
> > When I miss a day I just feel how I've felt my whole life - lethargic, anxious, sad, depressed, no energy, don't want to do anything productive. I've been treated for 2 years and I don't find myself craving the tablets, but I do take on more responsibilities which is a problem when I run out or forget. I guess it's the same as any tool, you get used to it always being there and when it's not you really notice.
> >
> > I started on just dex with a different doctor, who was a general psych. He tried his best but didn't really understand ADHD. The dosage was never really right, he took me on a ride from 5mg to 60mg a day, and each up in dosage was effective for a time then became ineffective.
> >
> > After a year or so he kind of gave up and suddenly quit his practice. I spent 3-4 months of hell untreated until I plucked up the executive function to research the best ADHD specialists in my city. Found one I was happy to try, cost a fortune, but it was worth it. He said 60mg dex didn't work because of the yoyo effect and you have to remember to take them. I'd tried 30mg vyvanse before but hated it, he said it was not strong enough. 70mg vyvanse is equivalent to about 28mg dex, and he started me on that for a month and that's when I kept the log. When he upped it to my last dosage, he said I just must have a high dopamine metabolism.
> >
> > You should be feeling confident when your dosage is correct. If you're not, it's the ADHD at work. Anxiety appeared a lot in my med-log.
> >
> > > ###### OP
> > > ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 1
> > > Thanks so much, you've really given me a lot of insight. One last question: have you ever

experienced difficulty in processing/storing what people explain to you? Someone will try to explain something technical to me sometimes and I'll completely forget it almost right after or confuse details when I try to reiterate.

Commenter_4
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 1
Yeah of course! It wouldn't be ADHD without that little feature :).

People have said ADHD is a working memory problem, and they're not wrong. Dopamine is involved with that, too.

If I'm feeling lost in the conversation, what I have to do interrupt and ask a lot of questions until I have a context I can relate to. I'm not sure if it annoys them, but I find I can pay attention to them if they're answering a question I asked directly. This means I give better answers, they appreciate being heard, and neither of us suffer the consequences of miscommunication, so I'm not shy about it. After your question just now, I've realized that this is how I get around the low memory problem. That context is like having pointers to information that managed to make it into my long term memory. You don't need to bring it all out to short term just yet, but you can retrieve it as you need it, and still have space for the conversation that's related to it.

e.g. today my colleague and I had a call about a big complicated crawler we're working on. He launched into something he didn't understand, which was why some results were being categorized as a redirect, but my brain just couldn't place what the hell he was talking about. I told him to stop, and load up our new categorization map, which we both did. I then asked him which part of that map he was talking about, which he couldn't, so I said "ok, so what are you talking about?"

Then, he talked about another older document, which triggered the context thing in my brain. I then said "keep in mind when colleague 3 updates the classification code those redirects will be categorized according to the new map. I'll probably just manually adjust our existing database to match the new classifications." To which he said, "ah yeah, forgot about that". Problem solved!

It's all about context, and if you don't have it, take the trouble to find it and save yourself a lot of unnecessary suffering. Don't try to memorize anything either, it'll be a waste of time. Speaking of which, can you give me an example of a recent conversation where that happened to you?

OP
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 1
I think being the greenhorn that I am, I'm failing to contextualize a lot of what they're explaining to me. I don't have much networks experience because I graduated with more emphasis on artificial intelligence (but decided software engineering at the last minute) so whenever they throw around lingo related to networks or other subjects I'm not yet fully knowledgeable on, my brain turns to mush and I end up nodding my head or am like "uh huh, okay, gotcha!" I'll try to reiterate what they say to me obviously but I try not to overdo it.

As for a recent conversation where I relied on memorizing everything, my coworker who is pretty much responsible for training me on our company's frameworks and our UI came by my desk to check up on me. I gave him a quick

update on what I'd been working on and he quizzed me on this concept of extensibility, which I answered correctly. But then he took it a step further by elaborating on how extensibility and the code we write enables the user to select various actions to transform the output of a process. That's an oversimplification of what he explained but absorbing details never felt harder.

I wanna say that it's really due to the fact that I feel even more spacey when my vyvanse starts to lose its kick. The same thing happened the day before yesterday where my other coworker was explaining the drawbacks to this codegen framework we have. I was well off my meds and couldn't help but smile and nod! Our software is so huge and grossly complex that it's actually reassuring to know it's not humanly possibly to understand everything in two weeks, so that's the bright side of things

Commenter_4
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 1
Sounds like you did alright. I guess the other thing you should know is that no one is going to expect you to know everything and be right all the time. I will often tell people to remind me about something they've told me before but it didn't go in. As long as you're trying, and always ready to learn, and keep reading (god damn endless reading to keep up with software), it'll all start connecting and filling in.

Recently I decided to learn coderedcms. This is a module that sits on wagtail, which is a module that sits on django. I knew python well, I have been using web.py for years, but this was my first batteries included cms solution I've attempted. Holy crap what a bad idea. I spent weeks just going in circles to do the most basic things. Months. The worst part was figuring out which part was responsible for what features so I could know how to even seek help. Every time I tried to read any of the documentation my eyes would gloss over. I kept using it to build sites for people. I was charging fixed fees that were typical for the site but they took me weeks longer to do. But eventually, maybe once a week, something would click, and that learning was a permanent increase in understanding. I'm still not proficient, but I have an idea on how to seek help for which part now, so that's a huge confidence hurdle. You're going to find the same thing. Be prepared for that slog and earn your stripes. But get your meds sorted, because you're not going to win any medals for making it harder for yourself. Find the best doctor you can afford.

Commenter_5
ID: REDACTED! ~(o.o)~ <3, Upvotes: 2
Hey, I'm not sure if this is advice I'm qualified to give but your experience with Vyvanse sounds so close to mine that I thought it might be worth sharing.
Vyvanse was the first med I was ever on (I have ADHD-PI as well) and I had exactly the same side effects as it sounds like you do. So my doctor just kept upping it and upping the dose. It got to 2 x 70mg a day, at which point I seriously thought I was losing my mind - but my focus was better, so I was terrified of trying anything else and losing that. I finally switched meds to Ritalin last year and that made a world of difference. I don't think I realised how poor a fit Vyvanse was for me until I wasn't taking it anymore.
You might just need a different dose, and I've got zero expertise, but just wanted to say don't be afraid of changing your meds up if you're not happy living with their side effects. Sometimes it's worthwhile.

OP

Have you experienced any differences in your memory switching to Ritalin? My working memory is trash so whenever someone explains something to me it's gone from my mind the next second usually. It's also pretty difficult for me to commit things to long term memory as well

Commenter_5
Yeah I have actually! It's still not perfect, but when I took Vyvanse, I used to have such bad short term memory that I'd leave my phone in the fridge while going to grab a snack.
Ritalin has really helped with short term stuff, and for longer term memory I just do my best to write things down - my psychologist says writing uses a different part of the brain than rote memory to access long term 'storage', and this part of the brain is generally not nearly as affected by ADHD as your usual memory centers are. Hope this helps :)

Commenter_6
As others have suggested, 30mg might not be your dose. However, you probably don't want to be using how you're doing at a new job as the only benchmark. There's a lot of information to take in, and neurotypicals would probably struggle a bit too, and stimulants aren't magical performance enhancers. If you're taking it when you're not at work, take note of how much it's helping then, including with reading and housework, not getting distracted by noises, and so on.