

Natural Help 4...

ADD in Children



What is Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)?

Attention Deficit Disorder, also commonly referred to as ADD, is a group of symptoms that affect concentration and a person's ability to focus. It can also cause mood swings and other social problems.

How Does ADD Manifest in Children?

Children (under 12 years of age) with attention deficit disorder **lack the ability to focus and concentrate**. Attention deficit disorder in children affects daily functioning, as they may have difficulty in completing their school work and are often in trouble with parents and teachers. This is similar to adults with ADD who often experience problems at work or in relationships.

Usually, ADD child symptoms will appear over the course of many months rather than all at once. If the appearance of these symptoms is not managed correctly, it can lead to low self-esteem and other behavioral problems in the years to come.

Children who have ADD of the inattentive type are not hyperactive. However, they may have a hard time keeping their minds on any one thing and may get bored after only a few minutes on a task.

If they are doing something they really enjoy, they may have no trouble paying attention. However, focusing deliberate, conscious attention to organizing and completing a task or learning something new is very difficult.

The Difference Between ADD and ADHD

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) is the *umbrella* disorder, encompassing three sub-groups. These three groups are defined as follows:

- **ADD Inattentive Type**
A main characteristic of inattentive behavior is the inability to concentrate and focus. This lack of attention may only be noticed when a child enters the challenging environment of school. This is not classified as ADHD, as hyperactivity is not present.
- **ADD Hyperactive/Impulsive Type**
A child with hyperactive and impulsive behavior is commonly 'all over the place' and very active (both mentally and physically), making hasty decisions at any moment. This is classified as ADHD as hyperactivity is present.

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- ADD Combined Type [ADD child symptoms](#) of inattentive type are combined with the symptoms of hyperactive/impulsive type. This is the most common form of ADD. A child with more than six ADD combined type symptoms should have a comprehensive evaluation. This is classified as ADHD, as hyperactivity is present.

Diagnosing ADD in Children

Many of the techniques and principles used to diagnose **attention deficit disorder in children** are the same as those used to diagnose the adults with ADD, including teens.

To assess whether a child has ADD or is displaying [ADD child symptoms](#), specialists consider several critical questions:

- Are these behaviors excessive, long-term, and pervasive?
- Do they affect the ability to perform life tasks?
- Do these behaviors occur more often than in other people the same age?
- Are they a continuous problem and not just a response to a temporary situation?
- Do the behaviors occur in several settings, or only in one specific place like the playground or at home?

It is often very difficult to diagnose ADD in young children below 5 years of age. This is because many preschool children have some symptoms of the disorder in various situations. In addition, children change very rapidly during the preschool years.

Since children mature at different rates and are very different in personality, temperament, and energy levels, it is useful to get an expert's opinion of whether the behavior is appropriate for the child's age.

Steps in Making the ADD Diagnosis

A diagnosis of ADD is only applied to children who **consistently display certain characteristic behaviors over a period of time**. Given that children diagnosed with ADD are often treated with high-schedule drugs, it is important that the process of diagnosing ADD is comprehensive.

This requires several steps and involves gathering a multitude of information from multiple sources. Generally, the child's pattern of behavior is **compared against a set of criteria and characteristics of the disorder**.

Health care professionals and psychologists often ask questions such as the following:

- How is your child doing in school?
- Are there any problems with learning that you or your child's teachers have seen?
- Is your child happy in school?
- Is your child having problems completing class work or homework?
- Are you concerned with any behavior problems in school, at home, or when

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Michele Carelse, Clinical Psychologist



All of our natural remedies are formulated by our expert team of herbalists, naturopaths and homeopaths, and headed by Michele Carelse.

Michele has had years of experience in the manufacturing and use of natural remedies. In addition, she is a trained Clinical Psychologist and has been incorporating natural remedies into her treatment of patients with depression, anxiety, ADD, ADHD and stress for many years with spectacular results.

- your child is playing with friends?
- Your health professional/psychologist will want to know how you handle different situations and may want to observe you interacting with your child.
 - In addition to looking at your child's behavior, they may do a physical examination. A full medical history will be needed to put your child's behavior in context and screen for other conditions that may affect their behavior. Your health care professional/psychologist will also talk to your child about how he/she acts and feels.

As a parent, you will more than likely be asked to provide crucial information about your child's life at home, behavior in school, and in other social settings.

Your health care professional/psychologist will want to know what symptoms your child is showing, how long the symptoms have occurred, and how the behavior affects your child and your family.

You may need to fill in checklists or rating scales about your child's behavior. In addition, **sharing your family health history can offer important clues** about your child's condition.

For an accurate diagnosis, your healthcare professional/psychologist will need to get information about your child directly from your child's classroom teacher or another school professional.

Children 6 to 12 years of age spend many of their waking hours at school. For this reason, it is important that your child's teacher provide relevant information.

Your child's teacher may write a report or discuss the following with your health care professional or child psychologist:

- Your child's behavior in the classroom
- Your child's learning patterns
- Any school records that report a problem in the past
- How long the symptoms have been a problem
- How the symptoms are affecting your child's progress at school
- Ways the classroom program is being adapted to help your child
- Whether other conditions may be affecting the symptoms

In addition, your health care professional/psychologist may want to see report cards and samples of your child's schoolwork. Other caregivers may also provide important information about your child's behavior. Former teachers, religious leaders or coaches may have valuable input.

If your child is home-schooled, it is especially important to assess their behavior in settings outside of the home. Your child probably does not behave the same way at home as he does in other settings.

Direct information about the way your child acts in more than one setting is required. It is important to **consider other possible causes of your child's symptoms** in these settings.

In some cases, other mental health care professionals may also be involved in gathering information for the diagnosis. Ideally, the diagnosis should be made by a professional in your area with training in ADD treatments or in the diagnosis of

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mental disorders.

Child psychologists, developmental/behavioral pediatricians, or behavioral neurologists are those most often trained in differential diagnosis. Clinical social workers may also have such training.

Psychometric tests are available to **test neurological, intellectual, and emotional development problems**. These tests may only be administered and interpreted by clinical and educational psychologists who are trained and licensed in the use of this category of test.

Most of these tests involve **learning and problem-solving tasks** that help define the particular areas that are most disabling. Clinical or educational psychologists will perform a battery of tests over a number of sessions.

These psychometric tests may include tests of intellectual functioning, memory, attention, concentration, planning and organizational skills. In addition, scholastic tests and tests to screen for emotional problems, learning disabilities, hearing and vision dysfunction may be used.

Currently psychometric testing by a qualified psychologist is arguably the most comprehensive and accurate diagnostic procedure available to correctly diagnose [attention deficit disorder in children](#).

Together with a good health history and information from multiple collateral sources, such an assessment can help to rule out other possible causes of the problem and can also be very important in deciding on a treatment plan.

Recognizing the Symptoms of ADD

It is important to realize that ADD is not a physical ailment like a broken arm or chicken pox. ADD does not have clear physical signs that can be seen in an x-ray or show up on a lab test.

It can only be identified by looking for certain characteristic behaviors, and these behaviors vary from child to child. Symptoms of ADD typically occur in early childhood, but may also be developed later in life.

The symptoms of ADD in children are often quite different from those of ADD in adults. However, the biggest indicator of ADD in children is usually inattention that is inappropriate for the age and not caused by any other environmental, psychological, or physical factors.

This means that a child with a primary diagnosis of depression, for example, should not be diagnosed with or treated for ADD.

The following symptoms are common indicators of ADD in children:

- Difficulty keeping attention on work or play activities at school and at home
- Losing or forgetting things like toys, pencils, books, or tools needed for a task
- Avoids or dislikes activities that require sitting still or a sustained effort
- Seems disorganized and doesn't pay close attention to details



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- Has trouble with tasks that require planning ahead
- Forgets things and is easily distracted
- Does not follow directions or finish tasks, often skipping from one uncompleted activity to another
- Does not appear to be listening when someone is speaking
- Does not pay attention and makes careless mistakes
- Is forgetful about daily activities
- Has a tendency to daydream
- Becomes easily distracted by irrelevant sights and sounds
- Rarely follows instructions carefully and completely

To help recognize ADD, some of the symptoms that cause impairment must:

- Be present before seven years of age
- Be present consistently for a period of six months

Above all, the behaviors must severely compromise at least two areas of a child's life, such as school, home, or social settings.

A child whose schoolwork or friendships are not impaired by these behaviors would not be diagnosed with ADD. Similarly, a child who seems overly active at school but functions well elsewhere would not be diagnosed with ADD.

To complicate things further, different symptoms may appear in different settings, depending on the child and the demands of different surroundings:

- A child who can't sit still will be noticeable in school, but the daydreamer may be overlooked. Yet both may have different types of ADD.
- The impulsive child who acts before thinking may be seen as a 'problem child', while the child who is sluggish may be seen as 'unmotivated'. Yet again, both may have different types of ADD.

Inattention may not become apparent until a child enters the challenging environment of school. Homework is particularly hard for these children. They will forget to write down an assignment, or leave it at school.

They will forget to bring a book home, or bring the wrong one. The homework, if finally finished, is often full of errors and erasures. Homework is often accompanied by frustration for both parent and child.

True ADD symptoms appear on a regular basis across a wide variety of situations and can interfere with learning. That is why a teacher sometimes is the first to notice inattention, [hyperactivity](#) and/or impulsivity, and bring these symptoms to the parents' attention.

What Causes ADD in Children?

One of the first questions a parent will ask is "Why is this affecting my child? What went wrong?" or even, "Did I do something to cause this?"

When correctly diagnosed, there is **little evidence that ADD can arise purely from social factors or child-rearing methods**. Most substantiated causes appear to fall in the realm of **neurobiology and genetics**.

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Environmental factors may influence the severity of the disorder, and especially the degree of suffering the child may experience. However, these factors do not seem to give rise to the condition by themselves.

Experts in the field are finding more and more evidence that **legitimate ADD does not stem from the home environment**, but from biological causes. Knowing this can remove a huge burden of guilt from parents who might blame themselves for their child's behavior.

The **exact cause of ADD in children is not known**, although researchers continue to study the brain for clues. They suspect that there are **several factors that may contribute** to the condition, including:

- **Heredity and genetics:** The fact that ADD tends to run in families suggests that children may inherit a genetic tendency to develop an attention-deficit disorder from their parents. Studies indicate that 25 percent of the close relatives in the families of ADD children also have ADD, whereas the rate is about 5 percent in the general population. Many studies of twins now show that a strong genetic influence exists in the disorder. The relatives of ADD children (both boys and girls) have much higher rates of ADD, anti-social, mood, anxiety, and substance abuse disorders than the families of non-ADD children.
- **Chemical imbalance:** Children who have ADD may not make enough chemicals in key areas of the brain that are responsible for organizing thought. Experts believe an imbalance of the chemicals that helps nerve cells in the brain communicate with each other, called neurotransmitters, may be a factor in the development of ADD symptoms. Without enough of these chemicals, the organizing centers of the brain don't work well.
- **Brain changes:** Areas of the brain that control attention are less active in children with ADD than in children without the disorder.

Myths Surrounding the Causes of ADD

Although the following factors may present symptoms similar to those of ADD, research has shown that there is **no evidence that legitimate ADD is caused by the following:**

- Immunizations
- Too much TV
- Poor home life
- Poor schools or colleges
- Bad parenting
- Aspartame (or sugar substitutes)
- Lack of vitamins
- Fluorescent lights
- Video games

However, in some cases, the above factors could certainly cause symptoms similar to those seen in ADD in certain individuals, and it is worth investigating their impact if a link is suspected.

Help for Children with ADD



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Children with ADD are often treated using conventional prescription medications.

While there is a place for prescription medication in certain cases of ADD, **careful consideration should be taken** regarding possible side effects and cautions.

There are also **alternative treatment options** available for children with [attention deficit disorder](#). Making simple changes in diet, sleep, exercise and routine can also help. Even trying more involved approaches like incorporating relaxation therapies such as guided imagery, meditation techniques, or yoga can be beneficial.

There are also many **herbal and homeopathic remedies** which can help maintain harmony, health and systemic balance in the brain and nervous system, without side effects or sedation. These products are known for their supportive function in maintaining brain, nervous system, circulatory health, and well-being.

Other Symptoms & Behaviors that can Manifest as ADD

Many symptoms and behaviors can appear to be symptoms of ADD in children, but this is not always the case. These include:

- Underachievement at school due to a learning disability. Children who suffer from dyslexia or other learning disabilities may feel embarrassed or incompetent, and keep their inner struggle a secret from their parents and teachers. This may then result in problematic behavior.
- Attention lapses caused by petit mal seizures also known as absence seizures. Children who suffer with absence seizures appear to be staring into space (with or without jerking or twitching movements of the eye muscles). These periods last for seconds, or even tens of seconds. Those experiencing absence seizures sometimes move from one location to another without any purpose.
- Concentration and learning difficulties due to a sleep disorder, or breathing problem. Sleep disorders and breathing problems can interfere with mental and emotional function. Lack of adequate oxygen during the night and disruptive sleep patterns can cause a child to be tired, moody, and unable to function properly at school or at home.
- A middle ear infection or hearing impairment. This may cause an intermittent or chronic hearing problem, which can then present itself as a symptom of ADD. If a child cannot hear properly, they may seem distracted and uninterested in schoolwork or participation in class.
- Difficulty sitting still due to low muscle tone. Low muscle tone is especially prevalent in young boys that are growing. This is not a disease, but rather an ailment that causes great discomfort in the limbs, especially the legs when a child is required to sit still for long periods of time. This may result in pronounced squirming and restlessness while sitting in the classroom.
- Disruptive or unresponsive behavior due to physical abuse. Understandably, physical abuse can cause great emotional distress. As a coping mechanism a child may then seem distant, unresponsive, and distracted.

- Disruptive or unresponsive behavior due to parents' substance abuse or dependency on alcohol. Substance abuse in the home often leads to problems manifesting in the child. It is important that the root problem be treated (the substance abuse) rather than the symptom (behavioral problems in the child).
- Attention-seeking behavior due to parents' lack of interest. A child may feel negative attention is better than no attention!
- A sudden life change. Children often have difficulty adjusting to a change in routine and can be adversely affected by a parents' divorce, a death in the family, moving, or a change in neighborhoods and friends.
- Substance abuse. Children may be over-medicated for another unrelated condition, which can then bring on hyperactivity, restlessness, sleep disorders, and in severe cases, hallucinations.
- Medical disorders affecting brain function. A brain in its developmental stages that is not functioning at its best will affect physical and mental abilities.
- Incorrect level of schooling. An education level that is too easy or too difficult for a child can cause great frustration, resulting in troublesome or agitated behavior.

A child in a class that is too advanced for their level may quietly struggle to do the work required, and 'act out' due to feelings of inadequacy or embarrassment. Similarly, a child who is ahead of his/her peers may need extra stimulation, and may feel frustrated and bored.

- Chronic fear due to a traumatic event. Psychological trauma can have an enormous impact on a child. Fear may then manifest as physical, emotional, and psychological symptoms, affecting a child's ability to function at a normal level.
- Disruptive or unresponsive behavior due to anxiety or depression. Emotional disorders can take their toll on a child's ability to function. This is especially delicate when a child's relationship with peers and his or her identity is being formed in a school environment. Both anxiety and depression can cause physical and psychological symptoms that range in severity.

Under no circumstances should ADD be diagnosed in children who have been diagnosed with emotional disorders such as anxiety or depression.

This list is not comprehensive, and there are many other factors that affect a child's behavior and concentration levels. This is why it is very important that children are thoroughly evaluated, and an in-depth history is investigated before the diagnosis of ADD is reached.

This is especially vital for the treatment for ADD. Drastic behavioral changes are not to be taken lightly. It is important that a health care professional/psychologist first determine any other causes for these behaviors and address them accordingly.

Special Tests for Diagnosing ADD in Children

You may have heard theories about other 'tests' for ADD. Unfortunately, there are no reliable physical means of diagnosing ADD at this time. However, your health care professional/psychologist may see other signs or symptoms in your child that warrant blood tests, brain imaging studies or an EEG.

- **Screening Tests** - The Continuous Performance Test is sometimes helpful in evaluating sustained attention and impulsivity (but not ADD/ADHD specifically). The child sits in front of a computer screen and is asked to press or not press certain keys in response to images on the screen.
- **Investigative Objective Tests** - To date, there are no objective physical tests for diagnosing ADD. Blood or other laboratory tests are currently recommended only if your psychologist/health care professional suspects lead toxicity or other medical problems. Some, however, are being investigated for diagnosing ADD using recent knowledge of specific brain abnormalities.

The quantitative electroencephalographic procedure (QEEG) assesses the electrical activity in a part of the brain called the prefrontal cortex. Evidence suggests that ADD may sometimes be associated with low activity in this region.

Studies are reporting that it may be highly accurate in both diagnosing and ruling out ADD in patients (Zametkin AJ, Nordahl TE, Gross M, et al. "Cerebral glucose metabolism in adults with hyperactivity of childhood onset." N Engl J Med. 1990 November 15;323(20):1361-6. PMID 2233902).

- **Drug Trials** - A trial of Ritalin is sometimes used to facilitate diagnosis, but experts strongly recommend against this method of diagnosis, because it is not always accurate. An improvement in symptoms is considered suggestive of ADD, while in non-ADD children the stimulant often increases agitation and hyperactivity. However, many children without the disorder have a similar response, and such a diagnostic trial may lead to unnecessary prescriptions of this drug.

Controversial Treatments for Children with ADD

No comprehensive discussion of ADD is possible without considering the benefits and disadvantages of prescription drugs – a subject fraught with controversy.

The Controversy

Oftentimes, parents feel that by researching alternatives to prescribed drugs, they are in some way neglecting their child and endangering their health. Ironically, side effects of these **prescription drugs can also seriously endanger a child's health.**

Therefore, investigating the possible side effects and long term impact of prescription drugs is almost certainly an example of good parenting! Educating yourself on each of the prescription drugs used to treat ADD as well as **exploring alternatives is a necessity** if you want to provide the safest treatment for your child.

Do not allow teachers, social workers, or doctors to bully you into giving

prescription drugs to your child without doing your own research. While prescription drugs for ADD may sometimes be the only way to help your child, **many children will respond to alternative and less harmful alternatives**, and it is important that other options are attempted before considering drug therapy.

Remember that ADD represents a growing market for pharmaceutical companies. Although psycho-stimulants may be helpful for many families, no one should underestimate the influence of the economic issues involved.

Furthermore, the **long-term effects of prescription drugs for the treatment of ADD has not yet been determined**, especially in the case of children (the main target market for these drugs)!

For this reason, treatment of ADD with prescription drugs or stimulant drugs should be regarded a last resort when all other avenues have been exhausted.

Available Medications & Known Side Effects

While there is a place for prescription medication in certain cases of ADD, careful consideration should be taken regarding **possible side effects and cautions**.

The following information on the most commonly-prescribed drugs has been compiled using a database of pharmacy-based literature, outlining their precautions and warnings.

It is recommended that parents considering drug therapy for their children should thoroughly investigate both the risks and the benefits involved.

Although there are some Web sites that may sensationalize the dangers of prescription drugs, you will find information on side effects and possible risks on the manufacturer's Web sites as well as on reputable web sites associated with professional bodies/individuals or universities.

Before deciding to administer stimulant drugs to your child, please heed the following cautions:

- Exceeding the recommended dose or taking these stimulants for longer than prescribed may be habit-forming.
- Laboratory and/or medical tests, including heart function, blood pressure, complete blood counts and platelet counts should be regularly performed both before and during prescription drug use in order to monitor your child's progress and to check for side effects. This is particularly important with stimulant drugs.
- Before your child has any medical or dental treatments, emergency care, or surgery, tell the doctor or dentist that your child is using these medicines.
- Serious side effects including heart attack, stroke, and sudden death have occurred with the use of stimulant medicines in patients with heart defects or other serious heart problems.

Recently there have been similar side effects associated with the use of some of these stimulant drugs in children without pre-existing heart problems –

some of which have resulted in death. This has led to at least one drug, Adderall, being taken off the market in Canada.

- These stimulants may cause drowsiness or dizziness.
- These stimulants may affect growth rate and weight gain in children and teenagers. They may need regular growth and weight checks while taking this medicine.
- Caution is advised when using these stimulant medications on children because they may be more sensitive to the effects of the medicine. Particular problems can be loss of appetite, stomach pain, trouble sleeping, and fast heartbeat.
- There has been some evidence of an increase in suicidal thoughts and tendencies in children taking prescription medication for ADD.

Other Important Facts

Physicians still have a difficult time predicting which prescription medications will produce beneficial results, so treatment is individualized and performed on a trial and error basis.

This **'hit and miss' technique** requires close observation and cooperation between all participants and is understandably not ideal.

If an initial regimen doesn't work, doctors often change the dosage, switch to a different drug or even add another medication! Some doctors even recommend trying a second psycho-stimulant if a first one fails.

If the child still doesn't respond, anti-depressants or other second-line drugs may be prescribed. Before long a child may be taking a **cocktail of drugs to treat the side effects of the initial medication** and a domino effect is created.

Remember that **medications don't cure ADD**-- they only control the symptoms on the day they are taken. Although the medications may help the child pay better attention and complete school work, they **can't increase knowledge or improve academic skills**.

The medications can only help the child to use those skills he or she already possesses. However, this result may **just as easily be obtained through behavioral therapy and other proactive techniques**, such as out-of-the-box creative teaching methods.

It is vital that you educate yourself on all aspects of ADD before making a decision.

While teachers can provide valuable insight, it is important to keep in mind that they are often under great pressure in the classroom, as having to manage many children at once can be extremely hard and stressful.

This means that their account of the classroom environment and your child's position within it may be a little distorted. This is just another reason why an in-depth analysis of your child's behavior from as many different sources and viewpoints as possible is so important.

The Natural Approach

While Western medicine has become the norm in many cultures, it is not the only treatment option. Conventional western medicine, often called allopathic medicine, is the system of medicine taught at most medical schools and most pharmaceutical and synthetic medicines are manufactured and marketed according to the principles of allopathic medicine. Allopathic medicine is also sometimes called orthodox medicine.

Because most of us in the Western world have grown up in a society in which allopathic medicine is the prevailing norm, we forget that, only a few decades ago, homeopathic, herbal and other natural medicines were commonly available – and freely used even by conventional doctors. While there are often heated debates about which system of medicine is ‘better’ than the other, many responsible doctors (whether they are allopathic or not) recognize that both have a role to play in the treatment program.

Natural medicine has often been frowned on by conventional doctors, especially by those who did not have sufficient knowledge of these medicines. However, it is encouraging to note that some medical schools are now beginning to re-introduce it into their course work, thereby providing doctors with a wider range of treatment options from which to choose. In many countries, especially in Europe, India and China, natural and homeopathic medicines are commonly prescribed by conventional doctors and represent a significant part of the total annual drug sales.

Naturopathy is a branch of medicine (just as allopathy is a branch of medicine) which operates according to the underlying philosophy that the body has an innate capacity to heal itself. While natural medicines are often called ‘alternative’ or ‘complimentary’ medicines, they are, in fact, a unique and independent form of medicine in their own right, well able to treat a variety of conditions. Perhaps the term ‘holistic’ medicine is more apt, given the broad range of treatment options and approaches which are to be found within the practice of natural medicine, which encompasses many different disciplines, including herbalism, homeopathy, iridology, osteopathy, chiropractic, therapeutic massage techniques, aromatherapy, acupuncture and many, many more.

Most naturopaths will use a variety of treatment modalities in order to treat their patients in a holistic way to support health, relieve symptoms and prevent future disease. In fact, even the World Health Organization defines health as being "... more than simply the absence of illness. It is the active state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being." This is a wonderfully clear description of holistic or natural medicine, which strives to support health (thereby relieving or preventing symptoms), rather than simply eliminating disease.

Although allopathic medicine certainly has a role to play and has made a tremendous contribution to medical science during the past century, there is a growing perception that it is not the only answer and that, in many cases, holistic medicine can accomplish just as much, if not more – without the risk of side effects, addiction and sacrifice to health so commonly associated with pharmaceutical drugs. Contrary to common perception, and provided that they are manufactured in the correct way, natural medicines can work quickly and safely to promote healing.

In many cases, they can succeed where pharmaceutical drugs have failed. Despite

frequent reports that they are ‘unproven’ and ‘untested’, the opposite is true. Natural medicines have a long history of usage and there is a wealth of empirical evidence to support their effectiveness and safety. In addition, active clinical research is carried out by many academic hospitals and universities to support the extensive traditional and empirical evidence behind natural medicines.

It is also important to know that, like any medicine, herbal and homeopathic medicines must be manufactured in the correct way, following acceptable procedures and manufacturing methods to ensure maximum effectiveness and safety. Due to the recent rise in popularity of natural remedies, many companies have sprung up to take advantage of the market. Unfortunately not all of them are equipped to manufacture to the correct standards, often resulting in a flood of inferior (and sometimes even unsafe) remedies onto the market – and giving natural remedies a bad name.

Even some pharmaceutical companies have rushed to claim their market share by producing so-called ‘standardized’ extracts of herbs and offering these as superior to the tried and tested methods of naturopathic manufacturing. Nothing could be further from the truth. While ‘standardized’ extracts may offer benefit of easy consistency of dosage (and cheaper more efficient production lines), they have grave disadvantages. These include an increase in side effects as the medicines produced in this manner lose the natural protective properties of the herbs. In some cases, these side effects have proved fatal – as was seen in the liver toxicity associated with standardized extracts of kava kava, a herb previously safely used for generations without any known side effects.

Most naturopaths recommend what is called the Full Spectrum Method of extraction – which retains the benefits of ALL the active ingredients within the herb as opposed to isolating only one – thereby providing a more complete treatment as well as superior protection against side effects.

Whatever your choice, always choose wisely. Research what is best for you. If you have a chronic or life threatening condition, don’t make changes without first discussing them with your doctor in order that your condition may be monitored. Well informed and supportive practitioners will support patients who want to take responsibility for their own health.

Related Natural Remedies:

BrightSpark: Aids in concentration, mental focus, and helps control tic disorders and anger outbursts in children.

BrightSpark is a safe, non-addictive, natural remedy containing 100% homeopathic ingredients especially selected by our clinical psychologist. BrightSpark has been especially formulated for children and is a registered OTC homeopathic remedy to provide a balanced physical, cognitive and emotionally healthy climate to support healthy concentration and mental focus.

Many children fail to reach their potential despite the fact that they are **highly creative and intelligent** individuals with a wonderful sense of humor. Parents and teachers may be reluctant to suppress this spirit but recognize the need to help their children to improve concentration and conform to classroom standards of behavior. BrightSpark works by assisting the body in the **control of behaviors, emotions, and other obstacles** to effective concentration, thereby reducing

distractibility, irritability and restlessness. It may be used to safely maintain health and systemic balance in the brain and nervous system, without side effects.

BrightSpark will help keep your child alert and focused while at the same time encouraging balanced mood and a positive demeanor. It will help with consistency and staying on-track with tasks, thereby improving classroom performance and helping children to reach their potential naturally.

BrightSpark is also particularly helpful for those who struggle with anger outbursts and inappropriate behavior that seems to resist all parental discipline.

This remedy is **registered with the FDA** according to the requirements governing homeopathic over-the-counter medication. All the proven ingredients in BrightSpark are listed with the HPUS (Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States) and the remedy is manufactured in a registered facility under pharmaceutical conditions.

In combination with a healthy lifestyle and diet, BrightSpark helps children to maintain **healthy consistent behavior, clear focus, and optimum performance** by providing a sound platform to support wellness and vitality. BrightSpark, along with other herbal supplements to support healthy brain functioning, can make all the difference without compromising health.

[Learn more about BrightSpark](#)

Focus Formula: Improve concentration and attention, and calm high energy levels.

Focus Formula is a 100% safe, non-addictive, natural, herbal remedy. Formulated by a Clinical Psychologist for both children and adults, Focus Formula has been used for many years to **safely maintain health and systemic balance** in the brain and nervous system.

Focus Formula contains a selection of herbs known for their supportive function in **maintaining brain, nervous system and circulatory health, and wellbeing.**

The formula remains true to the full spectrum method of herbal extraction, ensuring the bio-availability and balance of all the active ingredients contained in the remedy.

This method of manufacturing also significantly reduces the likelihood of side effects and ensures that all active ingredients are in perfect balance - exactly as nature intended.

Focus Formula can make all the difference, without the risk of sedation, compromising health or serious side effects. In combination with a healthy lifestyle and diet, Focus Formula supports the healthy functioning of the brain and nervous system, helping to **maintain motivation, concentration and memory, and optimum performance.**

[Learn more about Focus Formula](#)

BrainTonic: Aids in cognitive processes including concentration, memory and attentiveness.

Triple Complex Brain Tonic is a combination of three cellular-supporting biochemic tissue salts selected for their effect on brain and nervous system health.

This combination of tissue salts can be used regularly to promote **systemic balance in the brain and nervous system**, as well as in conjunction with other remedies to maintain therapeutic effectiveness.

Tissue salts, also called cell salts or biochemic salts, are composed of **minerals that occur naturally at a cellular level** in our bodies and all organic matter on earth (plants, rocks, and soil).

There have been twelve essential tissue salts identified as important components of all body cells. Without these components, true health is not possible. Each tissue salt plays a different yet vital role in **maintaining cellular health in the organs and systems** of the body.

Ensuring the healthy functioning of all brain and nervous system cells **enhances the bioavailability of supplements, remedies, and even nutrients** in your diet.

Brain Tonic **maximizes all health efforts of the brain**, in addition to herbs and vitamins that promote mental focus in diet alone. And, because our tissue salts are naturally occurring in the body and manufactured to ensure safe, yet optimum potency, they are safe to use for all ages as well as during pregnancy.

[Learn more about Brain Tonic](#)

Read the testimonials for these quality products [here!](#)

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Alternative Healing Academy

[Advanced Color/Crystal Reflexology Practitioner](#) | [Basic Anatomy & Physiology](#) | [Basic Reflexology Practitioner](#)
[Basic Aromatherapy Practitioner](#) | [Advanced Reflexology Practitioner](#) | [Advanced Aromatherapy Practitioner](#)
[Basic Color/Crystal Therapy Practitioner](#) | [Mini Courses](#) | [Advanced ReflexAromatherapy Practitioner](#)

With the increasing popularity of aromatherapy, reflexology, color & crystal therapy and a return to a more holistic lifestyle, people have begun searching for ways to earn more money; expand their skills; improve the health of themselves, friends & family; and increase their knowledge of alternative medicine.

The Alternative Healing Academy has developed several new courses in the holistic health care field for those who would like the opportunity to learn a healing modality at their own pace and in their own homes.

A Doctor of Reflexology with The Alternative Healing Academy is teaching classes with curriculum very similar to the Reflexology Practitioner Course and the Basic Aromatherapy at her local community college.

Our holistic health courses were developed by professionals in the Holistic Health Care field trained in the following modalities: Aromatherapy, Advanced/Master Aromatherapy, Reiki, Tuning Fork Therapy, Color and Crystal Therapy, Homeopathy, Herbalism, and Advanced Reflexology.

Furthermore, since we at the Alternative Healing Academy also realize that not everyone wants to make alternative medicine a career choice, we also offer [basic courses](#) as well as several [Mini Courses](#) which will teach you the skills you need to help improve the health and quality of life for yourself, your family and your friends.

[Check out our Affordable Payment Plans!](#)



All graduates of an Alternative Healing Academy home study course will receive a 20% discount off [AHHA Practitioner Membership](#) if they meet qualifying criteria and join within six months of their graduation date.

About Our Courses

Would you like to learn accurate, detailed aromatherapy, reflexology and/or color & crystal therapy information at your own pace in the comfort of your home? Would you like to become certified in Reflexology, Aromatherapy or Color and Crystal Therapy? An Alternative Healing Academy Distance Learning Course could be what you're looking for...

If you own or work for one of the following:

Natural Foods Store, Aromatherapy Store,
New Age Retail Store, Gift Shop, Herb Store,

Aromatherapy Manufacturer,
Massage Center, Holistic Center, Day Spa, or any type of Salon

If you are a practitioner:

Massage Therapist, Esthetician, Chiropractor, Nurse, Herbalist,
Acupuncturist, Bach Flower Therapist, Body Worker, Reiki,
Doula, Midwife, Energy Worker

If you are interested in personal development or improving the health of yourself and your family - these courses are also for you!

[Advanced Color/Crystal Reflexology Practitioner](#) | [Basic Anatomy & Physiology](#) | [Basic Reflexology Practitioner](#)
[Basic Aromatherapy Practitioner](#) | [Advanced Reflexology Practitioner](#) | [Advanced Aromatherapy Practitioner](#)
[Basic Color/Crystal Therapy Practitioner](#) | [Mini Courses](#) | [Advanced ReflexAromatherapy Practitioner](#)

Common Questions Asked About Holistic Health Distance Learning Courses:

What is Certification?



Most schools will offer an exam that tests the student's knowledge of the material taught in the respective course. Upon successful completion of this exam, a Certificate or Diploma will be issued by the school attesting that the student has successfully met the requirements as specified by that school. The only governmental recognition of Aromatherapy in North America is the occupational title designation granted to the BCAA under the Societies Act of British Columbia.

What is a Certified Aromatherapist or Reflexologist?

Most prospective students want to know whether taking our courses will lead to their becoming 'Certified' in that healing modality, thereby leading to the title of Certified Aromatherapist, Certified Reflexologist or Certified Color/Crystal Therapist. The answer to this really depends on what you mean by 'Certified.' We believe it can be misleading to purport that completing a course in a healing modality such as reflexology, aromatherapy or color/crystal therapy will lead to a designation of 'Certified' Therapist. These are not official

title designations nor are they ones which are recognized by any country's governmental body. All that these titles mean is that this is what an Individual Instructor, School or Institution decided to put on the Diploma it awards those who successfully complete their course.

What is an accredited course in Aromatherapy or Reflexology?

The answer to this will depend on who you are asking. At the present time, British Columbia is the only government to recognize Aromatherapy as a distinct profession and has granted Occupational Title Protection to the members of the BCAA (British Columbia Alliance of Aromatherapy) with the exclusive right for its members to call themselves Registered Aromatherapists (R.A.).

At this time, neither Reflexology nor Color/Crystal Therapy have such occupational designations in any country although one prominent Reflexology school in Colorado, The Modern Institute of Reflexology, has gained occupational designation for their institution in that state. MIR has been designated by the Colorado State Division of Private Occupational Schools - Dept. of Higher Education as an approved school. Our Reflexologist who developed the reflexology modules for our courses was trained at MIR as a Certified Reflexologist, a Master Reflexologist and a Dr. of Reflexology.

In the United States, the NAHA (National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy) has put into place their Approved Standards for Aromatherapy Training. The Alternative Healing Academy's Advanced Aromatherapy course meets and exceeds these standards and we are in the application process of becoming an approved program through the NAHA.

In Canada, there are a number of different Associations including the BCAPA (British Columbia Association of Practicing Aromatherapists) and the CFA (Canadian Federation of Aromatherapists). Time will tell if one authoritative body or association becomes the standard by which to judge and govern the educational offerings of these alternative healing modalities.

It has to be noted that NO form of aromatherapy "certification" is currently recognized in the USA by anyone other than those in the trade, nor is aromatherapy (or essential oils in the aromatherapy trade) regulated by any governmental body.

Some information about the courses we offer:

1) You can receive the course in one of two ways: A cd with the modules and tests in PDF format can be shipped to you; or, The modules can be emailed to you three at a time. Each time you complete the tests for the current three modules, a new set of three modules will be emailed to you.

2) All modules are clearly explained, are in pdf format and fully

illustrated.

3) The Advanced Aromatherapy Practitioner and the Advanced Reflexology Practitioner courses are designed to meet the National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy (NAHA) guidelines.

4) A tutor will be available via email to answer any questions you may have.

You will be contacted after purchase to find out how you would like your course delivered. All tests for the course can be either emailed or snail-mailed to The Alternative Healing Academy.

Upon successful completion of any full diploma or certification course (with a score of 80% or higher), you will receive a beautiful Diploma, suitable for framing.



Course Testimonials

"I'm done! Going through the final and the case studies and having such amazing experiences and opportunities to help people, I truly feel blessed and honored to have had the intense education that came with this course. I discovered in me a new ability to serve others, not only through education but through the power of healing that comes with the use of essential oils. I am continuing to train personally with Alexandria Brighton and have begun work toward opening an aromatherapy practice. Thank you so much for your patience and knowledge. Most of all thank you for this new way of living and enjoying Life."

-A. Lindquist - Advanced Aromatherapy Practitioner

"I am finding the course great. It is written very well so even people like me can understand the human body a whole lot better. I just hope that I can remember it all. I don't think I have a chance of remembering the names of everything in the muscular system or the movement system. But, I do have more of an understanding of how everything works now. I find it just amazing. Thanks Heaps."

-M. Oliver - Basic Anatomy & Physiology

"This information is great that you are teaching. I would really like to talk my oldest daughter into taking your course. It really goes into detail which is very informative."

-Debbie F. - Basic Reflexology

"Seven years ago I started to see a reflexologist for migraines and sinus problems. I was amazed that I finally found relief without medication. I decided this year to search out a course in reflexology so I could help family and friends and show them the benefits of reflexology. I researched various courses on the internet and decided to go with the basic course through the Alternative Healing Academy. I was impressed with course material and the ease of receiving the course material."

"I was given an choice of having a CD sent to me or to receiving and sending back the assignments through email. I choose email. I received 3 lessons at a time that I could read and study on my own time frame and return the lessons when I was done. Everything was sent in a very timely manner and communication was open and quick. If I needed help, I knew it was only a click away and the response time was very quick. The techniques used also came in a video mode in the email that I could replay as much as I needed to."

"I felt I learned a lot and am able to help myself and others. Being able to log 20 hours of treatment time and writing the case histories for the final exam was extremely rewarding and helpful. I would recommend this course to others interested in reflexology because the course material was very informative and complete and written in easy to understand language."

-Jean Russell - Basic Reflexology Course

"I'm so excited about (the Advanced Aromatherapy course) and I'm particularly excited about the possibility of making custom blends for people! I hadn't anticipated having that opportunity when I took the course so I'm excited to have everything done! I'm very excited to have finished. I really enjoyed this course and really appreciate all the work you've put into it! This has been a fabulous jumping off point for me and I'm so glad I took it."

"p.s. I know the boys are much slower at the Reflexology, but my son is loving the classes."

-Megan P. - Advanced Aromatherapy Course

Our Associations

Organizational Member of the American Holistic Health Association - <http://www.ahha.org/>

Professional & Business Member of the National Association of Holistic Aromatherapy - <http://www.naha.org/>

Professional Member of the International Reflexology Association - <http://www.holisticbenefits.com/ima/international-reflexology-association.html>

Professional Member of the International Aromatherapy Association - <http://www.internationalaromatherapyassociation.com/>

Payment plans are available, please [Click Here for More Info](#)

Sales & Refund Policy

We will, within 30 days, refund the purchase price of any course you purchased ***MINUS* the cost of the modules you have already received**. This policy does ***NOT*** apply to our informational Mini Courses. Please see the [Mini Courses page](#) for more information on those. Please [email support](#) if you wish to be refunded or have questions about our refund policy.