

## **ADHD and Alternative Options**

### **By Joan Dedian, Lic. Ac**

In the last ten years ADHD has been on the rise in children, teens, and adults. The CDC reports 11% of children in the US have been diagnosed with ADHD by a health care provider. This represents 6.4 million children.<sup>1</sup>

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), as defined by the Mayo Clinic, includes a combination of persistent problems, such as difficulty sustaining attention, hyperactivity and impulsive behavior. It is further noted that children with ADHD also may struggle with low self-esteem, troubled relationships and poor performance in school.<sup>2</sup>

This article is written to help you explore options that can help with ADHD, providing alternatives to medication. It is recommended to include all of the following for best results:

- Acupuncture treatments
- Dietary recommendations
- Supplements to support brain function
- Relaxation techniques

### **Acupuncture treatments**

In terms of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) ADHD can be diagnosed as Heart Yang Flaring, resulting in anxiety. This occurs when energy is not rooted, and travels to the head. Or Liver Yang Rising, resulting in anger occurring when the Liver Qi is constrained. In both cases acupuncture is helpful for nourishing the yin, calming the shen (mind) and balancing the meridians. It should be noted here that acupuncture is not painful, and non-insertive needles can be used for younger people.

### **Dietary Recommendations**

Getting adequate protein is required for balanced brain chemistry. Protein-rich foods are used by the body to make neurotransmitters, the chemicals released by brain cells to communicate with each other. Protein also prevents surges in blood sugar, which increase hyperactivity. Make sure you are having protein at breakfast and consistently throughout the day. Be on the lookout for and eliminate artificial dyes and preservatives. These chemicals create toxins in the brain putting an additional burden on the liver whose role is to detox impurities from the body. Check for food sensitivities or mal-absorption, as this can cause important minerals to be lacking, causing symptoms of ADHD.

### **Supplements to support brain function**

In order of priority, the following supplements can be taken.

1. Attention Focus (nourish the yin)
2. OPT DHA (essential building block for more brain cells)
3. Ginkgo (increases cerebral circulation)

All of these are available at D'Arcy Wellness Center in Natick.

### **Relaxation techniques**

Relaxation is necessary to support the parasympathetic nervous system. Developing a practice of meditation or implementing other ways to relax is critical to calming the body and the mind. Essential oils help to facilitate sleep and invite a sense of calmness. Getting adequate exercise will release excess tension. An end of day massage is a gentle way to relax and sooth your muscles.

To schedule a complementary consultation with Joan, please call the D'Arcy Wellness Center at 508-652-1975.

### References:

<sup>1</sup> <https://yosan.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Treatment-of-ADHD-with-Acupuncture-by-Michael-Maguire.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/adhd/symptoms-causes/syc-20350889>