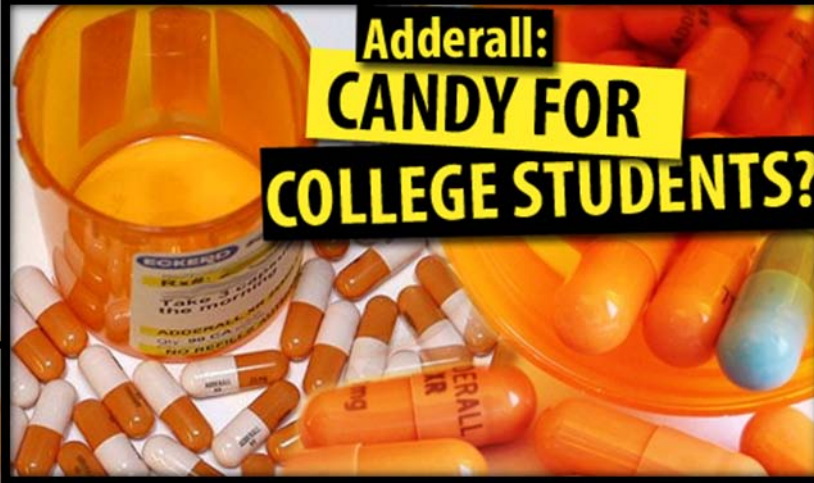


**Adderall:
CANDY FOR
COLLEGE STUDENTS?**



ADDERALL

Introduction

I chose to do my research project on Adderall because it was something I had heard about many times before, but never really knew much about it. Once I entered college was when I started to hear about Adderall. Before even knowing anything about the drug I have gotten asked either if I had any to sell or if I wanted to buy some. I quickly found out from my peers that Adderall is pretty popular on college campuses. I still did not know the reason why. All I knew at that point was that it was made for people with Adhd (Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), but still wondered why people without Adhd used it.

“Adderall is currently one of the most frequently prescribed drugs in the United States.” There are so many people who take part in using Adderall which makes it hard for researchers to pinpoint who really is using it properly and who aren't. With Psychology being my major, I was very curious to find out more on why people are using and abusing Adderall while knowing all the harmful effects it can do to you. Also, I chose this topic because I have many friends who take part in this activity, and I see what it does to them. By learning more in detail what Adderall can do, the goal is to try to ease my friends off of it.

Section 1: Background and Problem Statement

- **Web site #1 Name: Public Health Advisory for Adderall and Adderall XR**
- **Web address:**
<http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/DrugSafety/PostmarketDrugSafetyInformationforPatientandProviders/DrugSafetyInformationforHeathcareProfessionals/PublicHealthAdvisories/ucm051672.htm>
- **Background Information:**

There was no information in the Healthy People 2010 or 2020 regarding any public awareness of Adderall. However, I did find a Public Health Advisory about Adderall in the United States. There were also no findings of any non-profit organizations dealing with Adderall, and I believe this is so for many obvious reasons. The article briefly mentions how in Canada, Adderall and Adderall XR were suspended from sale due to the U.S post-marketing reports of sudden deaths in pediatric patients. The Public Health Advisory states, “Adderall XR is approved in the United States for the treatment of adults and pediatric patients 6 years of age and older with ADHD, and Adderall, the immediate-release formulation of the drug, is approved for pediatric patients with ADHD. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has been aware of these post-marketing cases, and evaluated the risk of sudden death with Adderall prior to approving the drug for treatment of ADHD in adults last year.” Even though there has been fatal deaths due to the intake of Adderall, it was said that the number of deaths were not significant enough to suspend the drug. “The FDA has not decided to take any further regulatory action at this time. However, because it appeared that patients with underlying heart defects might be at increased risk for sudden death, the labeling for Adderall XR was changed in August 2004 to include a warning that these patients might be at particular risk, and that these patients should ordinarily not be treated with Adderall products.”

- **Web site #2 Name: More Students Turning Illegally To “Smart” Drugs**
- **Web address: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=100254163>**
- **Background Information:**

Adderall is commonly referred to as the “Smart Drug” or the “Study Drugs”. It has become more and more popular on college campuses. Researchers say that despite Adderall’s purpose for those with Add or Adhd, college kids are still taking it regardless of the serious side effects it can bring. The popularity of Adderall is outstanding. Many students take this in order for them to concentrate and focus on their work without getting fatigued. In college, there are many students who pull all nighters in order for them to study and get their work done which can be a long and hard process. Now with Adderall, students are able to do so much easier. Researchers also found that Adderall becomes more popular around exam time. “Students say Adderall and its cousin Ritalin are easy to get — bought and sold in the library, the cafeteria, the dorm, pretty much anywhere on campus. The going rate, they say, is typically \$5 a pill. Unless it's exam week. Then, supply and demand kicks in and the price can shoot up to \$25 a pill.” The glamorous drug that helps students study also has its down side. “The drugs are amphetamine-based. That means they can be habit-forming, according to Martha J. Farah, director at the Center for Cognitive Neuroscience at the University of Pennsylvania.”

- **Web site #3 Name: Understand Adderall Side Effects**
- **Web address: <http://adderallsideeffects.org/>**
- **Background Information:**

There are many side effects when taking Adderall. Adderall is currently one of the most frequently prescribed drugs in the United States. The saddest part about people who are using it do not understand or know the harm Adderall can do to you. “The drug is used to make the user more awake, have more sexual desire, decrease tiredness, and increase focus and productiveness.” It seems to me that when college students and/or adults take Adderall they don’t use it for the right purposes, only look at the positive effects you get from it. Some other common side effects of Adderall abuse include dry mouth, chronic thirst, development of sleeping and eating disorders, headaches, stomach pains, high blood pressure, mood swings, emotional changes, higher risk of infections, chest pains, and even a slowing of growth in children. More adverse side effects include suicidal thought or actions, sudden confusion or a feeling of displacement, pain throughout the body, heart palpitations, inability to breath or shortness of breath, depression, changes in behavior, memory loss, experiencing hallucinations, having seizures or “black out” periods, and uncontrollable bodily movements. With any of these side effects, you should go seek medical help as soon as possible. Each person has a different body type and therefore can handle higher doses than others. This is why many people who take Adderall that is not prescribed to them have such horrible side effects because they are taking more than the body can handle, which can be fatal.

Section 2: Research

Web site #1 Name: Amphetamine (Effects)

- **Web address: <http://www.erowid.org/chemicals/amphetamines/amphetamines.shtml>**
- **Summary of the research:**

This Web site breaks down Adderall. The drug that is in Adderall is called Amphetamine which is why it is so dangerous. Amphetamines are stimulants that affect the central nervous

system. Medically they are used to treat depression, obesity, and other conditions. Users of large amounts of amphetamines over a long period of time can develop an amphetamine psychosis, which is a mental disorder similar to paranoid schizophrenia. The psychosis is manifested by hallucinations, delusions, and paranoia. Bizarre, sometimes violent, behavior is exhibited by those with amphetamine psychosis. Symptoms usually disappear within a few weeks after drug use stops.

(http://www.erowid.org/chemicals/amphetamines/amphetamines_effects.shtml)

“Amphetamines have the potential to produce tolerance, which means that increased amounts of the drug are needed to achieve the desired effects. Withdrawal symptoms can occur when use of amphetamines is stopped abruptly. Users may experience fatigue; long, disturbed periods of sleep; irritability; intense hunger, and moderate to severe depression. The length and severity of the depression is related to how much and how often amphetamines were used.” Even though you would think of a pregnant mother to stay pure for her baby, there are many cases where pregnant mothers use drugs with Amphetamine in it. It is possible for babies to be born with cardiac defects, cleft palate, and birth defects.

- **Web site #2 Name: Amphetamine Legal Status**

- **Web address:**

http://www.erowid.org/chemicals/amphetamines/amphetamines_law.shtml

- **Summary of the research:**

This Web site gives a clear understanding on the Legal status of Amphetamine. In the United States Amphetamine is Schedule II. This means it is illegal to sell without a DEA license and illegal to buy or possess without a license or prescription. This is also why many college students who sell Adderall like to remain anonymous because selling prescription drugs can result in a felony. As mention before, as for international laws against Amphetamine, “In Aug 2005, Canada reinstated sales of Adderall XR after banning their sales in Feb 2005. See Health Canada News Release Allowing Adderall XR back on market and BBC. Immediate release Adderall is not approved for sale in Canada. Amphetamine is Schedule III in Canada.”

- **Web site #3 Name: What are the Signs of Adderall Addiction/Abuse?**

- **Web address: <http://www.adderallabuse.net/>**

- **Summary of the research:**

There is a difference between taking medication, abusing it, and becoming addicted. This Web site notes several ways you can tell if you are abusing the drug. For instance, if you are purchasing without a prescription or faking symptoms to get a prescription then you are abusing the drug. There are many doctors who prescribe Adderall to perfectly healthy patients who fake the symptoms. In this case, it is hard to point the finger to see whose fault it is, the doctor who should know better, or the patient. Using for purposes other than those for which it is intended: You’re abusing Adderall if you take it to feel better and more confident, to heighten your capacity to study and take exams, or to lose weight--rather than to control ADHD symptoms that make it difficult to learn, or some other diagnosed medical problem. People who partake in Adderall can easily overdose and/or develop a higher tolerance to it which makes you consume more of it to get the same affect. Adderall is also abused as a study drug, a party drug, and a weight-loss drug. Adderall has a nickname of being called “college crack” or cognitive steroids”. It is abused as the party drug because it contains dextroamphetamine, which creates a

feeling of well-being, confidence and enhanced libido, and enables users to go without sleep for extended periods. Through observations, I have noticed that the sole purpose of girls who use Adderall is to lose weight. Because the media nowadays are so harsh and judgmental towards women, they feel like they have to look like models with perfectly fit bodies.

Section 3: Statistics

- **Web site #1 Name: Adderall: College Students' Best Friend-- Or Worst Enemy??**
- **Web address: <http://serendip.brynmawr.edu/exchange/node/366>**
- **Summary of the statistics:**

Many users of Adderall on college campuses are openly honest to the fact of why they take Adderall. It is mainly due to the fact to help them get work done. There are 1 in 5 college students that admit to using this drug and not having ADHD. Why? Athletes have steroids, depressives have “happy-pills”, and those who wish to do it all, and do it fast, have Adderall. After being surrounded by users around campus I would have to agree with that statistic and say it seems about accurate. Before knowing much about Adderall and before entering college, if you someone would have told me that on campus there is a drug that 1 in 5 students use, I would not believe it. In the article, the author mentions and brings up the concern of not just why student take Adderall but why they feel like it’s a necessity in a way. “There is even more to this issue than menacing side effects, however. What is it about academics today that have students popping pills to succeed? And is it fair? Athletes that use steroids are kicked off their sports teams because they are assumed to have an unfair advantage—so isn’t this the same general principle? Many students, especially those that actually suffer from ADHD reply “Yes.” “It’s the kind of medication that can help anyone,” says ADHD afflicted student Josie, “For people with ADD, it just makes them normal, and for people without ADD, it makes them above average. If both me and someone without ADD were both on Adderall, I could never outdo them (8).” It seems to me that the users who take part in this activity will always find a justification to their actions.

- **Web site #2 Name: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**
- **Web address: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder/complete-index.shtml#pub4>**
- **Summary of the statistics:**

The source of Adderall goes back to those with either Add or Adhd. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is one of the most common childhood disorders and can continue through adolescence and adulthood. Symptoms include difficulty staying focused and paying attention, difficulty controlling behavior, and hyperactivity (over-activity). Since having Adhd is so common and easily disguised by those who don’t have it, Adderall is becoming more and more available to everyone. I remember my friends’ roommate was diagnosed with Adhd and was prescribed about 60 pills a month. In her eyes it was very moderate so she didn’t use all the pills and just gave them away to other friends. I feel like this goes to show how doctors are so nonchalant about giving out prescriptions. At this rate, it feels like the more people take Adderall the better they will do academically, and will soon have everyone taking part in it in order to do better in school. This is so wrong in my opinion because it is so unfair. Sure it helps you in the short run of things, but long term it ends up hurting you, if not killing you.

- **Web site #3: Statistics on Stimulant Use**
- **Web address:**
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/medicating/drugs/stats.html>
- **Summary of the statistics:**

Adderall and Dexedrine in the U.S. have soared since 1990. Since these drugs are considered to be potential drugs of abuse under the Controlled Substances Act, the DEA sets quotas regulating the amount of the drugs that may be produced each year to meet the demands for legitimate use, in order to ensure that there is not a surplus of production which could lead to drug diversion and illegal use. “In comparison, amphetamine prescriptions, primarily Adderall, have increased dramatically recently, from 1.3 million in 1996 to nearly 6 million in 1999.” At this rate, either people are having more diagnoses or that doctors feel like they don’t want to neglect someone in need so they feel the need to prescribe anyone and everyone who thinks they need Adderall. I feel as if Doctors need to start being a little more strict or else before you know it, the United States will take up the majority of the Amphetamine intake compared to other countries.

Section 4: Consumer Information

- **Web site #1 Name: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**
- **Web address:** <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder/complete-index.shtml#pub4>
- **Summary of the information:**

As looking through this Web site I noticed a table of different medications prescribed to those with Adhd and how old they can be to start taking the medication. The first on the list was Adderall with the generic name of Amphetamine. The part that shocked me the most was not that it was on the top of the list but because of the approved age it had listed. The approved age for Adderall is age three and older. It was hard for me to fathom the fact that Adderall can be given to a three year old. I remember reading about how it can hurt the growth of children which is why I didn’t understand why it would be given. Even though a three year old wouldn’t be given a large dosage, it still feels like it would be harmful in the long run.

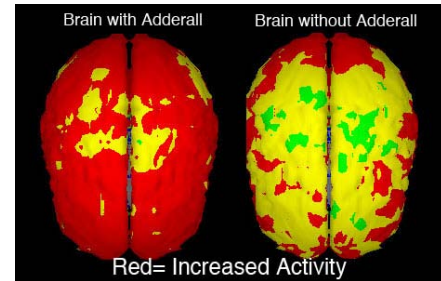
- **Web site #2 Name: Adderall Lawsuit**
- **Web address:** <http://www.drugalert.org/adderall/lawsuit.htm>
- **Summary of the information:**

“Shire Pharmaceuticals manufactures and distributes Adderall. Numerous class action lawsuits have been filed against Shire Pharmaceuticals by individuals or by families that have experienced health issues stemming from the use of Adderall. Along with the health issues that this medication causes, it is also addictive. Even though the FDA put the black box warning on Adderall, stating the potential abuse, it remains controversial on whether it is a safe and beneficial drug overall.” When I came across this quote it initially caught my eye. I think this would be an interesting thing to tweet about because it is very controversial and I am sure many would have strong opinions about it. I would have to take the side of the fact that Adderall users remain oblivious to the warning signs because that is not their main focus before purchasing them. Also, many buyers like on college campuses don’t receive the pills in bottle form. Usually

Adderall pills are sold individually, therefore they don't have any warning signs to look at or be concerned about.

- **Web site #3 Name:**
- **Web address:**
- **Summary of the information:**

A very interesting fact that I noticed was that one in 10 teens, 2.3 million nationally have tried Adderall without a prescription and 29 percent of those surveyed have close friends who have abused Adderall. I think this would be a good thing to twitter about but unless researching it and looking up facts and statistics about Adderall, people really do not know how popular it has become. The sad thing is, the number keep going up. People need to start realizing the dangers that come with Adderall. Unfortunately, people are blinded because of all the positive things that come with it in the beginning like, help ace a test, get work done, stay awake, get to your goal weight and much more. The picture to the right shows the effect Adderall has on brain activity.



Section 5: Solutions to the Problem (or Issue)

- **Web site #1 Name: Drug News**
- **Web address: <http://www.adderall.net/>**

Summary of the information:

The main problem with Adderall is that you end up building up a higher tolerance which makes you consume more which then leads you to becoming addicted. It gets to the point where you actually rely on Adderall just so that you can function normally. It is said that if you are trying to quit then you should ease off of it slowly. If you stop taking it altogether then it may result in withdrawals. Withdrawal symptoms are psychological and stopping suddenly can cause extreme fatigue and severe, even suicidal, depression in adult patients.

- **Web site #2 Name: Adderall Addiction Problem?**
- **Web address: <http://www.drug-addiction-support.org/adderall-addiction-problem.html>**
- **Summary of the information:**

This Web site provides some stories told by others who have had an addiction to Adderall. It is almost like a support group to help others overcome their addiction. Just like other support groups, this one seems to be just as effective. Cognitive and behavioral therapy should include counseling, cognitive therapy, behavior modification and psychotherapy. Unfortunately, not many admit they have a problem or once they do realize it, it ends up being too late with them resulting in death. Seeing so many people use Adderall, I hope to see the majority of them get help if not just stop altogether. Having a support group with you is very helpful and gives you the feeling that you are not alone.

- **Web site #3 Name: Amphetamines**
- **Web address:**
http://www.erowid.org/chemicals/amphetamines/amphetamines_effects.shtml
- **Summary of the information:**

Overall, it seems to be that considering all the short and long term effects of people who abuse or are addicted to Adderall, there really isn't a solution to take care of the issues besides from just not doing it to begin with. If students' expectations weren't so high then I am sure they wouldn't take it anymore. In regards to people with Adhd and who are actually prescribed the medication, then the only solution to them is to not abuse it. Adderall is not a bad drug to take if taken responsibly. People just need to be more responsible.

Conclusions

After doing all my research on Adderall, I have become a lot more knowledgeable on the topic. It has made me realize that everyone I see around me doing it is at risk. I understand the benefits of taking it but what happened to just putting your natural effort into things. I believe that the main cause of why people take it is because of their lack of time management. If students would learn how to manage their time better, then I believe they wouldn't find a reason to take Adderall and cram for tests. The long term effects should be more important to those taking it rather than just getting a good grade on a test. Also, for those who take it to lose weight need to realize the damage they are doing to their bodies. As tempting as it sounds sometimes to try it when I am struggling to get my work done, it is simply not worth it and definitely shouldn't be tampered with.

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