

Cal Poly Humboldt

Student Health Center, Arcata, CA 95521

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Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Cal Poly Humboldt Student Health Center has in recent years seen an increase in inquiries about Adult ADHD, as well as in numbers of students already diagnosed with Adult ADHD. This sheet is intended for students who are in need of ongoing treatment, or who want to know more about it.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in adults is a treatable medical disorder, affecting as many as 50% of those who had ADHD in childhood. It leads to chronic difficulties with attention and/or hyperactivity, which first begin in early childhood. If untreated, it can significantly impair a person's ability to function in a college setting, especially tasks involving organization, concentration, and emotional stability. It is often accompanied by other psychiatric problems, including substance abuse. It is thought to be undiagnosed in a significant number of those who have it, although misconceptions about adult ADHD often lead to mistaken self-diagnosis.

At present, Cal Poly Humboldt Student Health Center does not offer diagnosis of ADHD, and can only offer treatment for ADHD with a single medicine called Strattera (see later in paragraph). This is because of a combination of factors, including the fact that the most effective and popular treatment for ADHD, namely stimulant medications such as Ritalin, Adderall, or Concerta, are controlled substances with a significant potential for abuse. This makes them difficult to safely prescribe and monitor in a campus setting. Several other state university student health services who do manage ADHD have experienced problems recently with misuse and illegal sale of these medications, in some instances resulting in death. A newer medicine named Strattera, which is not related to amphetamines, is now available for treatment of ADHD; while it appears to be helpful in a smaller number of patients, it is not a controlled substance. Some of the physicians at Cal Poly Humboldt Student Health will consider managing patients with ADHD on this medicine.

We advise students in need of diagnosis and/or treatment of Adult ADHD to contact one of the limited numbers of providers in the community, listed on the back, who do provide these services. Be aware that these providers are often extremely busy, and may limit the number of patients they see, or have long waiting lists. We suggest contacting them as early as possible. Those students already on medication may need to arrange follow-up visits with the out-of-area providers who have previously prescribed their medications, until an appointment becomes available locally. Student Health can arrange a referral if needed.

ADD / ADHD ASSESSMENT RESOURCES

Robert Soper, MD
1836 Central Avenue, Suite A
McKinleyville, CA 95519
707-445-4705

Harry Lesch, MD
2934 H St.
Eureka, Ca. 95501
707-442-1111

For additional information:

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/attentiondeficithyperactivitydisorder.html>

<http://www.help4adhd.org/en/about>