

Wake Forest Baptist Health [Center for Integrative Medicine](#)

ADDressing ADD/ADHD, Naturally

[Dr. Kathi Kemper's](#) 15 Tips

1. Be sure it's really ADD/ADHD. Screen hearing and vision. Check thyroid, ferritin (iron), and symptoms such as itch, learning disabilities (neuropsychological evaluation), toxins (lead exposure, tobacco or alcohol exposure), or acute stress reaction. Reframe the problems into a) positive characteristics (e.g., exuberance) and b) goals (better concentration). Avoid exposing child to tobacco smoke.
2. Assess symptom severity by having two independent observers complete the [Vanderbilt Parent Rating Scale](#) and/or [Vanderbilt Teacher Rating Scale](#).
3. Diet: Avoid allergens, any triggering foods and foods containing artificial flavors, colors, and sweeteners, MSG. Drink pure water. Focus on non-fried foods, more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, seeds, beans, and nuts; minimize processed foods. Eat breakfast and snacks to keep blood sugar stable
4. Sleep at least 8 to 9 hours per night. If sleep is a problem, discuss good sleep hygiene and [melatonin](#).
5. Exercise vigorously in the morning or early afternoon at least 5 days week for 40 to 60 minutes. ABC = Activity Bursts in the Classroom. Take brief breaks during homework for activity to keep blood flowing. Consider yoga, tai chi, martial arts training that focus on body awareness and discipline and develop coordination. Use safety equipment for contact sports, biking, etc.
6. Manage stress – music, biofeedback, guided imagery, meditation, prayer, autogenic training (CareNet 336-716-7339 or Jeff Feldman 336-716-8400). Consider Neurofeedback (EEG biofeedback) to learn to modulate brain waves to decrease theta and increase beta.
7. Reduce TV and electronic game/computer exposure to 2 hours or less daily.
8. Increase time in nature.
9. Use organization charts for daily routine, chores, etc. Set aside time each week for clean-up, organizing time, tasks, clothes, and possessions.
10. Focus on the positive. Praise progress! Manage mistakes as learning opportunities. Practice patience and delayed gratification. (Impulse control game) Reflect, anticipate, and rehearse stressful situations.
11. Get support from CHADD and other parents. Join church, Scouts, volunteer groups, sports, etc.
12. Work with the teacher and schools to get testing and appropriate accommodations.
13. Supplements – consider with your doctor. (See CIM Website [Dietary Supplements](#) for brand information.)
 - ◆ Omega-3 fatty acids (1000 – 2000 mg daily of EPA+DHA). [Omega-3 Effective for Treating Child ADHD](#). Omega-3 fatty acid supplements may provide "small but significant" decreases in symptom severity in children with ADHD, according to a new meta-analysis. Medscape, September 2011.
 - ◆ B-vitamin complex – necessary vitamins to make neurotransmitters
 - ◆ Magnesium: 350 – 500 milligrams daily to decrease anxiety and tension (excess leads to diarrhea)
 - ◆ Iron (if ferritin is low), zinc (if diet is poor)
 - ◆ Other Considerations:
 - 5-HTP starting with 25 milligrams daily to help with moods and sleep
 - Pycnogenols; green tea (theanine); AD-fX (ginseng/ginkgo blend)
 - Tyrosine, SAM, SAM-E, acetyl-L-carnitine (amino acid supplements)
14. Massage – consider professional bodywork (WFUBMC 336-716-8304). Have someone you trust learn to provide it regularly (3 to 5 times weekly), especially before bed while giving positive suggestions about the next day.. Osteopathy and chiropractic can also help. If Healing Touch helps today, consider having someone in your family take training classes (WFUBMC 336-716-6067).
15. Consider castor oil pack five days per week over right side of abdomen, up to one hour daily.