

Can exercise help manage ADHD symptoms?

Exercise good for all of us to maintain physical and psychological wellbeing.

Why exercise?

When you exercise, your brain releases chemicals called neurotransmitters, including dopamine, which is one that help with attention and clear thinking. People with ADHD often have less dopamine than usual in their brain.

How can exercise help?

Exercise can help in a number of ways:

- Reduce feelings of stress and anxiety – it allows your brain to focus on other things.
- Help with fatigue building stamina .
- Being physically tired can also impact on your sleep which is often problematic for people with ADHD.
- It can help with executive functioning skills and help with planning, organisational and time management skills.
- Help refocus you to do a more boring task. Some people find that if they do some stretches/exercise they can then re-focus on a task they have lost interest in.

What exercise?

- ✓ The main thing is to find something you or your child can enjoy.
- ✓ Even starting with a short session of exercise is better than nothing.
- ✓ Plan the activity and make it easy for it to happen. For example, if you are going for a walk make sure your wellies, coat etc. are at hand so you are not put off hunting for them!
- ✓ Some people find something like running, or swimming can be really useful in giving your brain a bit of a break.
- ✓ Others find something like a martial art where you need to focus on you and your body and follow some complex movements can be even better for helping with focus and attention.

