

# FACING ADHD TOGETHER

## WHAT'S NEW

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## PHARMACOTHERAPY FOR ADHD IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

- a summary and overview of different European guidelines

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### ABSTRACT

Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by a persistent pattern of inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity. It is the most common neurodevelopmental disorder presenting to pediatric services, and pediatricians are often involved in the early assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of children with ADHD.

The treatment of ADHD typically involves a multimodal approach that encompasses a combination of psychoeducation, parent/teacher training, psychosocial/psychotherapeutic interventions, and pharmacotherapy. Concerning pharmacotherapy, guidelines vary in drug choice and sequencing, with psychostimulants, such as methylphenidate and (lis)dexamfetamine, generally being the favored initial treatment. Alternatives include atomoxetine and guanfacine.

Pharmacotherapy has been proven effective, but close follow-up focusing on physical growth, cardiovascular monitoring, and the surveillance of potential side effects including tics, mood fluctuations, and psychotic symptoms, is essential. This paper presents an overview of current pharmacological treatment options for ADHD and explores disparities in treatment guidelines across different European countries.

**Conclusion:** Pharmacological treatment options for ADHD in children and adolescents are effective and generally well-tolerated. Pharmacotherapy for ADHD is always part of a multimodal approach. While there is a considerable consensus among European guidelines on pharmacotherapy for ADHD, notable differences exist, particularly concerning the selection and sequencing of various medications.



**ABSTRACT cont.****What is Known**

- There is a significant base of evidence for pharmacological treatment for ADHD in children and adolescents.
- Pediatricians are often involved in assessment, diagnosis and management of children with ADHD.

**What is New**

- Our overview of different European guidelines reveals significant agreement in the context of pharmacotherapy for ADHD in children and adolescents.
- Discrepancies exist primarily in terms of selection and sequencing of different medications.

**CONCLUSION**

- 1** Various pharmacological treatment options are available for the treatment of ADHD in children and adolescents. Most medications have moderate to high effect sizes and are well tolerated.
- 2** Systematic monitoring of cardiovascular parameters and physical measurements, as well as a frequent evaluation of benefits and possible adverse effects, is crucial.
- 3** Prescribers of medication for ADHD need specific knowledge regarding evidence-based recommendations. While our overview of European guidelines reveals significant agreement in the context of pharmacotherapy for ADHD, there are also relevant discrepancies among them, primarily in terms of selection and sequencing of different medications.

