

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES NEWSLETTER

5339 County Road 579, Seffner, Florida 33584-3334

Phone: (813)744-5519 FAX: (813)744-5776

Visit Our Website At: <http://hillsboroughfcs.ifas.ufl.edu>

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Is My Child Hyperactive?

Diana Converse, Family Life Educator

Ask any parent if they think their child is hyperactive and they will probably say, "Yes!" Children are supposed to be active, but that doesn't mean they are "hyperactive." However, more and more children are being diagnosed as having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

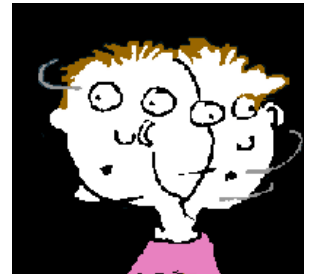
ADHD involves a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity and impulsivity. Usually children with ADHD are of school age before their parents seriously suspect that they may have a problem and have an evaluation done. If you observe the following behaviors in your school-age children over a six-month period you may wish to talk to your child's pediatrician or teacher.

Impulsivity (at least three of the following):

- Often acts before thinking
- Shifts excessively from one activity to another
- Has difficulty organizing work
- Needs a lot of supervision
- Frequently calls out in class
- Has difficulty awaiting turn in games or group situations

Inattention (at least three of the following):

- Often fails to finish things her or she starts
- Often doesn't seem to listen
- Is easily distracted
- Has difficulty concentrating on school work or other tasks
- Has difficulty sticking to play activity



Hyperactivity (at least two of the following):

- Runs about or climbs on things excessively
- Has difficulty sitting still or fidgets excessively
- Has difficulty staying seated
- Moves about excessively during sleep
- Is always 'on the go' or acts as if 'driven by a motor'

Only qualified, experienced professionals should conduct an

evaluation. Behavior problems in children can also be caused by other things such as stressful life situations and learning disabilities.

What causes ADHD?

There is no single cause of ADHD. It is defined by symptoms, not by its cause. There are a large number of biological or neurological events that singly or in combination can cause a person to be unable to pay attention and to be overactive. Research shows that sugar does not cause hyperactivity. Special diets or food sensitivities have not proven to alter ADHD symptoms.



ADHD is thought to be associated with a disturbance in functioning of neurotransmitters in the brain.

Neurotransmitters are natural body

chemicals that transfer information from one brain cell to another.

Dispelling Myths

Myth: Positive response of medication is confirmation of a diagnosis of ADHD.

Fact: The fact that a child shows improvement of attention span or a reduction of activity while taking ADHD medication does not confirm the diagnosis. Even some children without attention problems will show a marked improvement in attentiveness when they take ADHD medications.

Myth: Medication stunts growth.

Fact: ADHD medications may cause an initial and mild slowing of growth, but over time growth is affected minimally. If at all, in most cases.

Myth: Taking ADHD medications as a child makes you rely on drugs more as an adult.

Fact: There is not evidence that ADHD children become addicted to their medications. There is also no evidence of increased medication-taking when ADHD children become adults.

Myth: Medication should be stopped when a child reaches the teen years.

Fact: Research clearly shows that there is continued benefit to medication of those teens who meet criteria for diagnosis of ADHD.

Do children outgrow ADHD?

Professionals now think that thirty to forty percent of children with ADHD outgrow it as adults. Over-activity may decline, but problems with inattention and impulsivity remain. As maturity increases, these children may experience only slightly more than normal difficulty in this area. For many children, however, ADHD will remain a lifelong problem requiring extra techniques for coping successfully with life.

References: Kennedy, P., and Fusetti, L. (1993). The Hyperactive Child Book, New York: St. Martin's.

Children with Attention Deficit Disorders (C.H.A.D.D.). American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. 1991, Fall/Winter. Medical Management of Children Attention Deficit Disorders; Commonly Asked Questions. pp. 17 – 18.

Weiss, G. and Hectman, L. (1993), Hyperactive Children Grow Up, New York: Guilford.

Is My Child Hyperactive? The Ohio State University Extension Fact Sheet.

Feeling or Looking Blue Lately?

Mary A. Keith, PhD, LD, Foods, Nutrition and Health Agent



It doesn't take much searching on the Web to find dozens of sites offering to sell you **colloidal silver**. A few are well-known, most you've never heard of before. But to read their promotions, they will be

delighted to stop your colds, kill every germ in your body, open up your sinuses and cure anything else that ails you - all with colloidal silver!

Several years ago bowl and storage containers impregnated with silver hit the markets. They promised to make your food last longer because the silver would kill the bacteria. Then the odor-eating socks and exercise clothes appeared. Their secret ingredient - silver in the fibers. Silver-treated refrigerators and washers promise to decrease bacterial contamination of your food and dirty clothes.

And you know what? There is a grain of truth underneath all the hype. Silver in certain forms is toxic to germs. There have been popular medications containing silver for centuries. Silver is still used in some medical creams for use on the skin. Bandages for burn and wound treatment are sometimes soaked in a silver solution to prevent or stop infection during healing. Contact with silver will kill many germs.

No Silver Bullets

But there is no evidence, none at all, that taking liquids or pills containing silver in colloid form will do anything for your cold or other infection.

While silver is less toxic than mercury or lead, the doses recommended by some of the current products could give you as much as ten times more than the

Environmental Protection Agency considers safe in drinking water.

Since the products are being marketed as dietary supplements, the FDA can not regulate them. They don't have to prove they work, or that they are safe.



There is some risk that colloidal silver can upset your stomach, give you headaches or even damage your liver. But the most obvious injury (other than to your pocketbook) is in your skin.

Turning Blue

The official medical term for it is 'argyria'. The result is blue skin! When silver particles accumulate in the skin they show up as blue-grey skin. The silver also makes the skin turn dark, like an extra-dark tan, where it's exposed to sunlight. Unlike a tan, the darkening and bluish tint are permanent. There's no way to get the silver out.

There have been a few cases reported in medical literature recently. In one a bank teller couldn't seem to get her fingers clean. The bills she was counting had been treated with a special anti-theft coating that included silver. Her fingers were stained with the silver treatment meant to track thieves.

Another case was sent to the emergency room. He was so blue he looked like he had cyanide poisoning. He had been making his own colloidal silver and drinking it to ward off colds. Now he is a permanent blue man, whether he performs or not!

Take antibiotics when you need them, and save the silver for your rings!



Fat's Location More Important than Amount

Jessica Brennan, EFNEP & Community Wellness Extension Agent

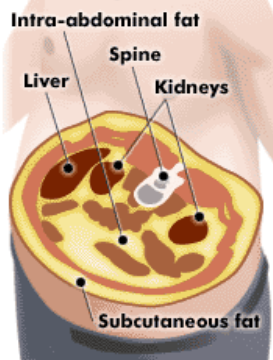
Recent studies show that where your fat is stored on your body might be more important than how much fat you have on your body in determining your risk for today's chronic diseases.

When you think of fat cells, what do you picture? A yellow glob of motionless Jell-O? Although you might have put on the fat cells by sitting motionless on the couch, these fat cells are anything but asleep in your body. Fat cells are constantly producing chemicals to send messages to your brain. Most often, these messages will be the ones telling you that you are hungry or craving certain foods.

So, if all fat does this, why does it matter where the fat is located? The fat located in your stomach area surrounds most of your important organs making it more dangerous than fat in other areas of your body. Your liver, stomach, intestines, lungs, kidneys and for women, reproductive organs are all located in your abdomen.

A hidden, dangerous fat

This is a cross-sectional view of the abdomen. The intra-abdominal or visceral fat surrounds internal organs.



There are several reasons that it is bad for fat to be so close to these organs. First, this means the fat is pushing against these organs, making it more difficult for them to function the way they are supposed to. This includes the lungs, making it harder to breathe. Second, it means that the fat has first pick of the food that travels through the intestines and can have as much as it wants. Finally, since the fat is so close, the chemicals released by fat go directly

to important organs, either causing damage or triggering them to act as the fat wants.

Unfortunately, where your fat grows is determined by your genes. Your body will store the fat where it is told to. The good thing



is that you can prevent fat from growing in the first place and even reduce its size once you have it. The dangerous abdominal fat is the first to go when a person loses weight. The general recommendation from doctors is that women keep their waists below 35 inches and men keep theirs below 40 inches.

Another way to tell if you have too much fat in your stomach area is to measure your waist, which is the area directly in between your bottom rib and your hip bone. Now measure your hips, around the largest part of your buttocks. Divide your waist number by your hip number. The smaller the number, the healthier your shape is.

What steps can you take to get rid of your abdominal fat?

- ✓ Loose weight. Lowering your Body Mass Index by even 10% can significantly reduce your risk factors for disease.
- ✓ Avoid *Trans fat*. Those with diets high in *Trans fats* are often the ones carrying their fat in their stomachs.
- ✓ Exercise. Walking even 30 minutes a day for most days of the week can stop the deposit of fat in your belly, and greater amounts of physical activity will reduce what is already there.
- ✓ Reduce your stress. Some hormones given off during stressful times actually produce abdominal fat.

No Money Down, Can Leave You Upside Down

By Lisa Leslie, Hillsborough County Extension Agent

No money down can sound like a great option when financing an automobile but it can be very expensive. It is a fact of life that new automobiles depreciate in value very quickly. The first few years of ownership tend to have the greatest depreciation. As the saying goes, "as soon as you drive it off the lot, the dollar value takes a plunge."



According to the National Association of Automobile Dealers, the average retail price of a new vehicle was \$28,451 in 2006. The average consumer does not have \$28,000 on hand to purchase a new car. Unfortunately, some financing options can make a new car even more expensive and cause you to owe more than the car is worth. This is also known as being upside down on a car loan.

Many lenders require borrowers to purchase gap insurance to cover the gap between the car's value and the amount owed on the loan. This is required because if you total your brand new car in an accident the insurance company will pay the value of the car, which may not cover the amount owed on the loan.

For instance, you buy a \$25,000 car and finance the total amount. Four months later because of depreciation the car is only worth \$19,000. Since you financed the total amount and

are paying interest, you probably still owe close to \$25,000. Gap insurance should cover the value gap in case of a collision.

So if gap insurance will cover some losses in value why worry? The bottom line is that heavily financing something with depreciating value is expensive. The fact that you owe more than an item is worth can lead to financial instability. Consumers who are upside on a car loan and are also carrying credit card debt may be spending a significant portion of their income on interest payments.

Steps to Avoid Being Upside Down

- Make as much of a down payment as you possibly can. Try to put at least 20% down.
- Limit auto loan terms. Extending loan terms can reduce your car payments, but they will increase the total purchase price.
- Before you shop for an auto, decide the total amount (including interest) that you want to spend. Don't exceed this amount just because the monthly payments seem low.
- Keep your car until the loan is paid.
- Avoid deferring payments. Pay off the balance as soon as possible.
- Before you go to the dealer, check with a bank or credit union about finance options.



Hillsborough County Extension Service
University of Florida
5339 County Road 579
Seffner, FL 33584-3334



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Diana Converse
DIANA CONVERSE, EAIV, MS
FCS Program Leader
Family Life Education
Mary A. Keith
MARY A. KEITH, EAI, PhD, LD
Food, Nutrition & Health
Lisa Leslie
LISA LESLIE, EAI, M.Ed
Home Environment
Jessica Brennan
JESSICA BRENNAN, EAI
Expanded Food & Nutrition
Program

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