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Friday Focus



Study Links Early Mortality with ADHD

Hyperactivity and impulsivity are a dangerous mix that can lead to potentially lethal behavior. People diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) display these behaviors often. The Lancet, led by Soren Dalsgaard from the University of Aarhus in Denmark, studied 32,061 individuals who had a diagnosis of ADHD. The study found that the mortality rate from all causes was 5.85 for every 10,000 person-years in the ADHD population compared to 2.21 per 10,000 in people without ADHD. This is a two-fold rise in the mortality rate ratio in people with ADHD over those without ADHD.

Early diagnosis and intervention may make a difference when treating ADHD and ADD diagnosed patients. When the researchers began looking into specific groups within the ADHD population they found that if the person diagnosed with ADHD was not given that diagnosis until they were over 18 years of age, the mortality rate increased four-fold over their peers without ADHD. The researchers suggest this may be because individuals with ADHD lasting into adulthood may have the severest form of the disorder. Another cause may be the delay in treatment of the disorder caused by the late-in-life diagnosis.

Recommended Treatments

- Children under six are recommended to start with behavior therapy first.
- For children six years and older, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends both behavior therapy and medication therapy as treatment options. Both treatments together are the preferred method.
- Adult treatments can include a combination of behavioral modifications and environmental modifications along with medications.

All patients starting a new ADD or ADHD medication require a follow-up appointment within 30 days of the initial start date and again within the subsequent nine months per NCQA guidelines.

To learn more about ADHD or ADD, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/treatment.html>.

As always, we appreciate your ideas and feedback. Thank you for the quality work you do. All editions of Friday Focus are available on the SWHP website: <https://swhp.org/en-us/prov/news/providers-friday-focus>.

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