



Original Contribution

BENEFITS OF NON-CONVENTIONAL MEDICINE IN CHILDREN WITH ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

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ABSTRACT

Unconventional medicine generally refers to methods of treatment and prevention that are not part of the mainstream or traditional medical practice applied in modern medicine. These methods can include a variety of approaches, such as herbal medicine, homeopathy, acupuncture, traditional practices from different cultures, manual therapy, and other alternative therapies. The main difference between conventional and unconventional medicine is that the former is based on scientific research and clinical trials, while the latter may be based on traditional knowledge and personal experiences. Non-conventional medicine offers various approaches to the treatment of children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, which can be used in addition to traditional methods or as alternative options. Although scientific research on the effectiveness of these methods is limited, some of them have advantages that may help children with ADHD. The purpose of the article is to present the advantages of unconventional medicine in children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Conclusion: Natural methods such as herbal supplements, meditation, yoga, and aromatherapy, as well as individualized approaches, can help children manage symptoms while improving their overall health and emotional well-being.

Key words: unconventional medicine, children, hyperactivity, attention deficit

INTRODUCTION

It is important to emphasize that any treatment should be discussed with the attending pediatrician or specialist before being administered, especially when combined with traditional medical therapy. Non-conventional methods may be useful as an adjunct, but should not be used as the sole treatment for HDV without agreement with the medical team (1). Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurological disorder that affects a significant number of children worldwide and is characterized by symptoms such as inability to concentrate, hyperactivity and impulsivity (2). Traditional medicine uses medication and therapeutic approaches to manage the symptoms of the condition. However, many parents are looking for alternative methods to complement or even replace traditional treatment. Alternative medicine includes various approaches such as herbal supplements, homeopathy, oriental gymnastics and other methods that are not part of the medical mainstream. In this article, we will look at the

advantages and potential benefits of these alternative methods in children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (3). Unconventional medicine often focuses on an individual approach, taking into account the child's personal needs and characteristics. This may involve adapting therapies depending on the child's responses to different methods (4). Some non-conventional therapies also focus on teaching parents and families how to work better with the child and how to create a more supportive and peaceful home environment (5). Approaches such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and other psychotherapeutic methods can help children with ADHD develop better impulse control and emotion management skills. This can improve their social interactions and academic achievement (6).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study of the benefits of non-conventional medicine in children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder is based on the existing scientific literature, using a documentary method and a systematic review of the sources used. When collecting information, databases such as: google scholar, orcid and

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researchGate were used. The research is also based on the experience of specialists and parents who have applied unconventional methods for the treatment of children with HDV.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a condition that has a serious impact on the daily lives of children and their families. Traditional approaches to treating ADHD include medication and behavioral therapy (7). Despite their effectiveness, many parents and professionals are looking for alternative methods to accompany or replace traditional therapies, due to the potential side effects and limitations of standard methods (8). Alternative medicine, which encompasses a wide range of therapies including herbal supplements, homeopathy, meditation, acupuncture and other approaches, is gaining popularity among those seeking more natural and integrated solutions for treating children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (9). Stimulants that are used to treat symptoms, such as methylphenidate and amphetamines, often lead to side effects such as insomnia, decreased appetite, irritability, and nervousness. According to research by Fone and Nutt, 2005, some children do not respond well to medication or exhibit negative effects that affect their emotional and physical health (10). Non-conventional methods, such as herbal supplements and therapeutic practices, tend to have less known side effects and can provide parents and children with a natural way to manage attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, a statement we agree with (11). An example of such an approach is the use of omega-3 fatty acids, which have been shown to have a positive effect on brain function and can improve attention and behavior in children with ADHD. Omega-3 fatty acids are found in fish such as salmon and sardines, and can also be obtained through supplements. They are relatively safe and do not lead to serious side effects, which makes them preferred by parents who want to avoid the side effects of traditional medications (12).

One of the biggest advantages of alternative medicine is that many of the methods can not only improve the symptoms of ADHD, but also support the overall health of the child. In a report by Myers et al. 2007, dietary changes, such as reducing processed foods and increasing the intake of nutrients important for brain

function, can have a positive effect on the ability to concentrate and emotional regulation (13). In recent years, research has shown that a diet rich in antioxidants, vitamins and minerals can have a significant positive effect on cognitive function and behavior in children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. For example, supplements of B vitamins, zinc, and magnesium can help improve attention and reduce impulsivity. Dietary changes can reduce mood disorders and help children cope with the daily stressful situations they encounter (14). In 2022, a study by Chan et al. shows a positive effect of physical exercises on cognitive functions in children (15). Authors such as (16) are also of the opinion that the health of children and their well-being in it is a constant relationship with their physical activity. Techniques such as yoga and meditation not only reduce stress and anxiety, but also strengthen physical health and improve a child's overall self-esteem (17). Yoga helps children learn how to calm down and manage their emotions, which can be especially helpful for those who struggle with impulsivity and hyperactivity (18).

Hyperactivity and attention deficit often go hand-in-hand with increased levels of stress and anxiety, which can make everyday life difficult for children with ADHD (19). Stress can increase the symptoms of the disorder and make the child even more distracted and restless. Non-conventional methods such as meditation, yoga and acupuncture have been shown to be effective in overcoming stress, anxiety and providing a sense of well-being (20). Meditation, for example, can be extremely beneficial for children with ADHD as it teaches concentration and self-control. Studies show that regular meditation can improve attention and reduce impulsive behavior. Aromatherapy using essential oils such as lavender and patchouli can also help regulate the nervous system and reduce anxiety. Acupuncture, in turn, works to balance energy flows in the body and can offer children relief from symptoms of hyperactivity and anxiety (21). Because attention deficit hyperactivity disorder manifests differently in each child, treatment approaches must be customized to meet the child's specific needs. Non-conventional medicine offers a wide range of methods that can be adapted according to the individual characteristics of each child. Some children may respond positively to certain supplements or foods, while others may benefit more from

psychological support such as cognitive behavioral therapy or family counseling (22). All this is of particular importance because different children have different reactions to different methods. Alternative medicine allows greater flexibility in treatment, allowing professionals and parents to try different approaches and discover the most effective strategies for each child. A study by Concannon, P. and Tang, Y. suggests that adherence to conventional medicine is insufficient. Behavioral interventions are underutilized despite their proven positive role. Non-conventional treatment methods were widely used and were helpful for a third of the children who used them (23).

Last but not least, unconventional methods offer social and emotional support for children and their families. Methods such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, therapeutic activities, and working with parents can improve a child's social skills, reduce social isolation, and improve interactions with peers. This can be essential for children with ADHD, who often experience difficulties in socialization and relationships with others (24). These approaches provide long-term benefits by helping children to adapt better in the social environment and to build self-confidence and emotional resilience, which can lead to better adjustment in both school and family life (25).

CONCLUSION

Although pharmacological treatments remain the main approach in the treatment of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), complementary non-conventional methods show potential for improving patients' symptoms and general psychophysical well-being. Approaches such as herbal medicine, meditation, yoga and aromatherapy can be applied as part of a holistic treatment plan, provided they are tailored to individual needs and under medical supervision. They should not be seen as an alternative but as a complement to conventional medicine in order to optimise the overall therapeutic effect.

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