



HORMONES AND ADD/ADHD IN WOMEN

"I'm 45 and since the "flashes" began, my ADD/ADHD symptoms are so much worse."... "I'm a 56 year old woman with ADD/ADHD on Adderall and it seems like my medication just isn't working as well these last few months."... "I'm 53 and never been diagnosed, but suddenly seem to have more problems with depression and ADD/ADHD-like symptoms now that I am entering menopause."

Does this sound like you or someone you know? Studies in women have shown that estrogen improves memory and cognitive functioning. Estrogen appears to exert a global effect on cognition enhancing or maintaining aspects of verbal memory, mood, and mental state. Low levels of estrogen in women are associated with PMS, postnatal depression and post-menopausal depression. It has been proposed that whenever brain estrogen falls below the "minimum brain estrogen" requirement, for whatever reason and at whatever age, brain dysfunction may result.

Patricia Quinn M.D., an internationally recognized authority on ADD/ADHD and author of numerous ADD/ADHD books states: *"I have found this to be a very critical, but often overlooked area in treating women with ADD/ADHD. I often hear from women who report that as they enter menopause and the "flashes" begin, they have more problems with their ADD/ADHD symptoms or that their stimulant medication does not seem to be working as well as it did previously."*

The majority of women entering menopause begin to experience cognitive changes, but those with ADD/ADHD need to partner with a physician who is aware of the interaction between ADD /ADHD symptoms and estrogen levels. Sometimes, these changes bring managed symptoms out of balance, and some women may actually seek treatment for the first time in their 30s, 40s, or 50s. According to Quinn, *"At that time, she may present to a physician with full-blown ADD/ADHD... Before that time, girls and women are often misdiagnosed as having depression or an anxiety disorder. Even if these are secondary conditions, treating them does not get to the root of the problem, which is ADHD."*

With a similar approach as with adolescence, ***it is advised to monitor symptoms during hormonal changes and design a holistic approach for treatment in order to manage the ADD/ADHD successfully.*** It is important to emphasize that no two women experience ADD/ADHD the same, and neither are support needs during hormonal changes. While challenging at times, much can be done: stimulant medication can be introduced/alterd, sleep issues can be addressed, nutritional habits can be altered, and sometimes antidepressants/estrogen/thyroid hormone supplements are prescribed. Alternatives such as omega-3 fatty acids may also prove helpful.

"Above all," Quinn comments, "a woman with ADD/ADHD should be kind to herself and get all of the help and support she can to make this difficult transition time more comfortable for her."

Patricia Quinn M.D. is an internationally recognized authority on ADD/ADHD, and has authored and co-authored numerous ADD/ADHD books for children, teens, and adults. Additionally, she is co-founder of the National Center for Gender Issues and ADHD and the ADD/ADHD website www.ADDvance.com.

YAWNING COOLS THE BRAIN: PEOPLE YAWN WHEN THE BRAIN IS OVERHEATED

On a hot day, students have trouble focusing and begin to yawn in a classroom. Did the teacher prepare a boring lesson? Possibly, but not necessarily.

The cause of yawning has been a mystery. Just what purpose does a yawn have? The answer is surprising.

Cooling the Brain

It is a hot August day and students are struggling to focus. A few in the group begin to yawn and the yawn spreads to other students. The assumption is often made that the students are bored, the lesson is boring, or students don't care about the lesson being presented. They may be bored but the yawning is more about the brain than the lesson. When brains get too warm, they do not function properly. **Yawning helps cool the brain so it can function better. In fact, yawning keeps the brain alert against danger.**

Binghamton University

Research is a major emphasis at Binghamton University in Binghamton, NY, a State University of New York, SUNY. Binghamton is a public university with the academic rigor of an elite private college. Three researchers led the way in analyzing data relating yawning to brain temperature. Andrew Gallup along with Michael Miller and Anne Clark led the study.

Bird Study on Yawning

The three researchers within the Department of Biology at Binghamton recently released results of a study done with birds. The researchers selected parakeets that live in the wild in Australia because in spite of drastic temperature changes these birds do not seem to yawn as much as other species and they have large brains compared to other birds.

The birds were exposed to three environments.

- Increasing temperature
- High temperature
- Control temperature

While yawning did not occur when the birds were exposed to high temperatures or control temperatures, the birds did yawn when the surrounding temperature began increasing. The yawning was measured at double the normal rate.

"Based on the brain cooling hypothesis, we suggest that there should be a thermal window in which yawning should occur," Gallup said. "For instance, yawning should not occur when ambient temperatures exceed body temperature, as taking a deep inhalation of warm air would be counterproductive." [Jennifer Viegas, Discovery Channel, Dec. 15, 2008]

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INSPIRATION CORNER

**"And the day came when the risk it took to remain tight inside the bud
was more painful than the risk it took to blossom."**

-ANAIS NIN-

BRAIN BYTE



TRUE OR FALSE

Doing Sudoku every morning is ideal for cognitive fitness.

FALSE. Yes, stimulating and challenging the brain is vital for cognitive fitness. Doing something is always better than nothing. But instead of identifying one "best exercise," it is the **act of consistently altering the challenge** that flexes your brain muscle. Recent recommendations made by a panel of experts reviewing a poll by the American Society on Aging stated: "A single activity -- no matter how challenging -- is not sufficient to sustain the kind of mental acuity that virtually everyone can achieve." A *balanced cognitive workout* incorporates enough variety or novelty to work out all your mental muscles. "Cross training" your brain incorporates: motor coordination, emotional understanding, memory, focus and attention, sensory processes, communication, language skills and mental visualization.

DE-MYSTIFYING THE MOZART EFFECT MYTH

One of the most enduring myths in all of brain science is the so-called "Mozart Effect," the idea that playing classical music to babies and young children will increase intelligence. The myth has its roots in a 1993 study of college students in which the students showed performance improvement on a spatial reasoning task after listening to a Mozart sonata. Nobody paid much attention to the study until 1997 when author Don Campbell combined mysticism with some generously interpreted research results to produce the bestseller "The Mozart Effect."

So influential was Campbell's work that it impacted public policy. In the late 1990s, both Georgia and Florida passed legislation touting The Mozart Effect: funding distribution of classical CDs to new mothers in Georgia and mandating state-funded day care centers to play classical music every day in Florida. Nobody questioned how the 1993 study on college students that showed a 15-20 minute increase in a highly specialized skill (spatial reasoning) could support a claim that Mozart increases IQ in young children. To my knowledge, no scientist has ever published a study testing whether classical music has any impact on the intelligence of babies! Nonetheless, the myth persists.

What to do instead of bathing your toddler in Beethoven?

Have them play music for you. **Learning to play a musical instrument has many research-supported benefits to brain development including improved spatial abilities, language development and attention span.** Even that seemingly disorganized cacophony of banging on pots with a wooden spoon is helpful. It's not as beautiful as Beethoven, but it's more likely to grow more dendrites!

Reprinted from the July 2008 issue of BRAINwaves.

*Author Frank Kros is the president of **The Upside Down Organization (UDO)** and executive vice president of **The Children's Guild**. UDO is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the education and advocacy of Transformation Education, an organizational philosophy and operating system for child serving organizations. UDO offers professional development experiences, mentoring services, learning tools and organizational branding that help improve the skills of people who educate, parent, guide and care for young people.*

For more information contact: 410.444.5415 or visit www.upsidedownorganization.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

HIGH NOON WEBCAFE - MARYLAND COALITION OF FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH ADDRESSING BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOL

Thursday, May 7th, 12 - 1pm

Speaker: Peter Leone, Ph.D., Professor, Dept of Special Education, University of MD, College Park

Did you ever think there had to be a better way to address problem behavior in school than suspension, seclusion or expulsion? Functional behavior assessments are a problem-solving process to address problem behavior. Once the purpose of the behavior is identified, a behavior intervention plan can be developed. Learn the techniques and strategies to conduct assessments and develop management plans.

For More Information or to Register, contact Carol: callenza@mdcoalition.org

CHADD'S BALTIMORE CONFERENCE: AGES & STAGES OF LEARNING AND ADHD

Saturday, May 9th, 8:30am – 5:30pm, Baltimore Hilton

Extensive Information for Teachers, Parents, Adults, and Mental Health Professionals about Managing AD/HD.

For More Information: 301.306.7070, Conference@chadd.org

BENEFIT TRAIL RIDE

Sunday, May 17th, Fair Hill NRMA – Fair Hill, MD

Experience the trails of Fair Hill. Acres of equestrian trails located in scenic Cecil County. All proceeds benefit Chesapeake Therapeutic Riding. Minimum sponsorship or donations: \$20. Prizes for top 3 riders with highest sponsorship or donations!

For Entry Forms or More Information: 410.569.4983, www.chesapeaketherapeuticriding.org

ASSESSING A TEEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Tuesday, May 19th, 6pm, Franklin Square Hospital, Kotzen Auditorium, 9000 Franklin Square Dr

All teenagers can be moody at times. But when can it become cause for concern? Wondering how to tell the difference? Does your teen: Display excessive anger (i.e., yell, scream or curse) on a regular basis; Throw things, damage property or get in trouble with police or school officials on a regular basis; Sleep too much or hardly at all; Have a sudden change in school performance; Make statements about harming him/herself or others? If you answered YES to any of these questions, this free seminar may prove helpful. Find out what you can do to help a teen through these difficult years.

For More Information or to Register: 443-777-7900, franklinsquare.org/teen.

GIVING A FISH A BATH: THE UNTOLD STORY OF THE ADOLESCENT MIND

Wednesday, May 20th, 8:30am – 4pm, Hilton Garden Inn – BWI, Linthicum, MD

Presented by Frank J. Kros, MSW, JD

Recent discoveries in neuroscience offer exciting insights into how the brains of our teens really work and the special "brain-based" challenges facing adolescents as they mature. If you've ever thought that the adolescent mind could not be understood, this workshop will equip you with the latest insights and information on teaching, guiding and empowering the teenage brain.

Early Bird rate (up to April 12): \$149 / Registration rate (after April 12): \$169.00

For More Information, or to Register: 410.870.2481, www.upsidedownorganization.org

ADHD DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT CONFERENCE

Thursday, May 21st, 1 – 5pm, Towson United Methodist Church, 501 Hampton Ln (Exit 27B)

Speakers include: **Dr. Stuart Varon**, psychiatrist; **Dr. Michael Feedman**, Educator; **Dr. Fran Bowman**, Educational Psychologist; **Dr. Joseph Kaine**, psychologist; and **Dr. Michael Sherlock**, pediatrician.

For Questions and to Register: 410.321.8822. Fee is \$20.

Yawning Cools the Brain, Con't from p.3

Yawning, a Thermostat for the Brain

So, why do people yawn when they are about to go to sleep or when they wake up? Certain activities increase temperatures in the brain:

- Exhaustion
- Sleep deprivation
- Prior to an epileptic seizure
- Prior to migraines
- Thermoregulatory dysfunction as in multiple sclerosis

During the above times, the brain knows that something is not right because brain temperature rises. It calls for yawning in the form of a cool-down and the brain wakes up from cooler air. This provides needed alertness. After all, if the enemy may be approaching, yawning is a wakeup call for vigilance and protection.

Yawning Is NOT a Sign of Boredom

Instead of being a sign of boredom, yawning could be seen as a sign that students are interested in what you are saying and yawn to gain heightened awareness. Gallop says, "Yawning more accurately reflects a mechanism that maintains attention, and therefore should be looked at as a compliment!"

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http://educationalissues.suite101.com/article.cfm/yawning_cools_the_brain#ixzz0An133X6k

"IT'S YOUR HEALTH" RADIO BROADCAST DEVOTED IN MAY TO SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER

MAY 5TH IDA ZELAYA- Sensory Street – Baltimore's unique educational consulting company providing strategies for kids with sensory challenges in school, at home, or out-and-about. www.SensoryStreet.com and LORI FANKHANEL, Founder of SPD Canada www.SPDCanda.org

MAY 12TH DR. LUCY MILLER, Founder of the SPD Foundation. The SPD Foundation: expanding knowledge, fostering awareness and promoting recognition of Sensory Processing Disorder since 1979 and Author of "Sensational Kids: Hope and Help for Children with Sensory Processing Disorder." www.SPDFoundation.net

MAY 19TH CAROL KRANOWITZ. M.A. Author of "The Out-of-Sync Child." www.out-of-sync-child.com

MAY 26TH MARY SUE WILLIAMS, OT and SHERRY SHELLENBERGER, OT. Authors of "How Does Your Engine Run?® A Leader's Guide to the Alert Program® for Self-Regulation" describing an innovative program that supports children, teachers, parents, and therapists to choose appropriate strategies to change or maintain states of alertness. www.alertprogram.com

Many audio segments are available to download. For more information, visit itsyourhealthradio.org.

It's Your Health is a radio program based in Lowell, MA, dedicated to providing strategies for healthier living. Host Lisa Davis inspires change towards healthier living by interviewing local and nationally known health experts, and guests.

HIGH COURT HEARS SPECIAL EDUCATION CASE

EdWeek.org detailed the U.S. Supreme Court case that is, according to author Erik W. Robelen, “expected to further flesh out the circumstances under which a parent can seek reimbursement from the public schools for the private education of a student with disabilities.”

In *Forest Grove School District v. T.A.* (Case No. 08-305) the issue centers on reimbursement for costs in enrolling a public school student in a private school in order to receive special education services not provided by the public school system.

It seems T.A. has long been struggling academically and demonstrating increasing symptoms of behavioral problems, became depressed, and began using illegal substances. Only two years earlier, a district evaluation had concluded that he did not have a disability and therefore was ineligible for services, yet notes from district meetings suggested he might have ADHD.

According to the administrative hearing under the IDEA, a district evaluation concluded that in fact their son did have ADHD, yet not affecting his performance enough to warrant services. Later, the hearing officer ruled that ADHD was a qualifying disability under IDEA and that he should be reimbursed the private school monthly tuition.

There are obvious implications this may have on nationwide cases. According to Eric D. Miller, a lawyer for the U.S. Department of Justice: “there’s no basis for supposing that there would be a vast expansion of liability,” yet argued that the instances of students placed in private schools to get special education service are “quite rare.” This type of ruling would simply assure that parents could seek reimbursement for such measures.

Editorial Projects in Education Inc. publishes Education Week, American education's newspaper of record, the Teacher Professional Development Sourcebook, Digital Directions, edweek.org, teachermagazine.org, and TopSchoolJobs.org. It is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization based in Bethesda, Md. Its primary mission is to help raise the level of awareness and understanding among professionals and the public of important issues in American education, covering local, state, and national news and issues from preschool through the 12th grade.

SUMMER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

If you are still trying to make decisions on how to incorporate learning opportunities into your family’s summer plans, or have some areas you or your child would like to concentrate on during the summer months, contact Confident Student to discuss some of our most popular services: **College Transition Services, SAT Preparation, English/Writing/Math remediation, or Social Skills Groups.**

Summer Learning with Confident Student isn’t simply learning taking place in the summer, but an opportunity to rediscover the joys of learning. It also can prove to increase confidence once different methods bring about better results. Confidence can be a powerful motivator and help your learner explore other interests on his or her own, as well as start out the new academic year stronger and self-assured.



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