



## **ADHD INFORMATIONAL PAMPHLET** (THIS IS STUDENT'S COPY)

**Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)** is a neurological disorder that effects executive functioning in the brain. It can cause difficulties in sustained focus and concentration. Occasional difficulty in focusing, getting organized, and completing class work and assignments is common for college students at times of increased stress, and does not necessarily indicate a person has ADHD.

There are three main types of ADHD: Hyperactive, Inattentive and Combined. In the hyperactive type, students have problems with hyperactivity, fidgeting, trouble sitting still and impulsive behaviors such as blurting out answers and being intrusive. Students with the inattentive type of ADHD have problems with concentrating, focusing and seem to get lost and have problems completing tasks. The combined type of ADHD has symptoms associated with both the hyperactive and inattentive type. The disorder is first seen in childhood before age 12.

### **ADHD Can Mimic Other Disorders**

Executive function abilities fall on a spectrum from those with excellent organizational and focus skills to those with significant impairments. The impairments must be significant and affect at least two areas of a person's life in order to meet the criteria to be diagnosed with ADHD. Other problems, too, can cause problems that look like ADHD. For example, other learning disorders can make a student look like they have inattentiveness problems. Anxiety and depression have a significant effect on the ability to concentrate and focus. Substance use can impair one's ability to concentrate and focus. Sometimes there is more than one factor involved.

### **ADHD Treatment**

ADHD is treated with different approaches. These include cognitive behavioral therapy and others, particularly if patients want to manage symptoms without medications. Medications are also commonly effective for treatment.

### **CAPS Policy**

Most ADHD medications are Controlled Substances that are tightly regulated by federal and state laws. When stimulant medications are prescribed and monitored after a thorough evaluation by a qualified and licensed clinician, they often have a significant and positive impact. When they are prescribed or misused without appropriate medical oversight, stimulant medications can lead to addiction, psychosis, and other serious cardiovascular side effects. In recent years, the use of ADHD medications without prescriptions by college students has increased considerably.

CAPS recognizes ADHD as a well-supported medical/psychiatric diagnosis that has the potential to limit an individual's full capacity in different life areas, including academic performance. Most medications that are effective are controlled substances that carry substantial risks if used improperly. Therefore, a higher level of caution and diagnostic clarity is required to avoid the substantial risks involved with medication misuse and potentially serious consequences.