

Members of the ADDUCE Consortium

Central Institute of Mental Health (Mannheim)

Centre for Paediatric Pharmacy - Research UCL School of Pharmacy (London)

European Network for Hyperkinetic Disorders

Evelina Children's Hospital, Guy's & St Thomas's Trust (London)

Institut National pour la Santé et la Recherche Biomédical (Paris)

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ADDUCE NEWS

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Drugs Use Chronic Effects

April, 2015



Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder is a medical condition characterized by **inattention, hyperactivity and/or impulsivity**, which causes impairment in several life domains.

If the symptoms are more severe or if other methods of treatment such as behavioural therapy haven't sufficiently improved symptoms, medication might be recommended to treat ADHD. **Methylphenidate** (e.g. Ritalin, Concerta XL, Equasym, Equasym XL, Medikinet, Medikinet XL) is the most commonly prescribed medicine for children with ADHD and is also increasingly used in adults.



Like all medicines, methylphenidate (MPH) can cause **side-effects**, yet not all individuals are affected by these adverse effects.

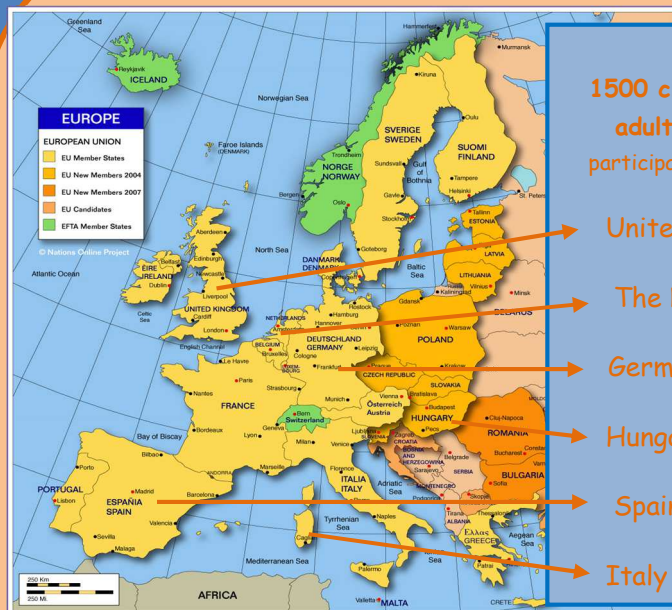
Although MPH has been used in the treatment of ADHD for many years now, we still have a lot to learn about its wanted and unwanted effects, especially when it is used continuously for **a longer period**, like 1 year or more.

Our European project on side-effects of methylphenidate

The ADDUCE (Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder drugs use chronic effects) project is an EU-network aiming to investigate long-term adverse effects of MPH in children and adults. More specifically, the **long-term effects of stimulants** on growth, the neurological system, psychiatric states and the cardiovascular system are studied.



To this end, growth and development of lots of children, adolescents and adults attending clinics across several European countries are currently **closely followed** for a period of 2 years. In specific, the ADDUCE studies have incorporated participants in the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, Hungary, the Netherlands and Italy.



So far, more than
1500 children, adolescents and adults with and without ADHD participated in the ADDUCE project!

United Kingdom	307
The Netherlands	77
Germany	184
Hungary	572
Spain	23
Italy	362

Recruitment is still ongoing for some of the ADDUCE studies so we expect even more participants!

What do we measure during the ADDUCE project?

During the visits to the clinics, a **full assessment** is conducted by asking the participants (and their parents) a number of questions regarding their ADHD, their feelings and mood. They are also asked a few sensitive questions on the use of alcohol or drugs and on the consideration of harming themselves or taking their own life.



Further, a **physical examination** is conducted, including examining the heart and measuring height, weight, blood pressure and pulse.



In some clinics, a **brain scan** or an **X-ray of the wrist** has also been taken.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROJECT!

What about the findings of the studies?



We hope the information gathered as part of this research will help us learn more about the **long term adverse effects of MPH**, so we can help make its use even **safer** than now.

If our findings prove to be significant, we hope to **publish** them in significant journals and share our results with others in the field of ADHD by making presentations at conferences. The information of the participants will remain anonymous in any of these publications.



At present, several teams of researchers are **analyzing the data** of the first visit(s) and preliminary results are expected soon. As the follow up measurements of the participants are still ongoing, we need some more time to get a clear picture of the long term side-effects of MPH.

Based on the views and experiences described by a subgroup of participants in the UK, a **questionnaire** was developed which in the future may be used to systematically assess for the **presence of potential adverse cognitive, motivational and mood-related side effects** of methylphenidate. This can assist clinicians in identifying adverse effects which may require further exploration, and tailoring support/treatment accordingly.



PLEASE CONTINUE YOUR VISITS!



Thanks to you, we already gathered **lots of information** on the possible **side-effects of methylphenidate!**

However, it is very important to **follow up** on your visits for the coming months! This enables us to learn more about the **effects of methylphenidate on the long term**, which is the specific goal of the project.

