

## The Columbia Daily Tribune

# Adderall runs short nationally

## Local sites still have Adderall available.

By [Rudi Keller](#)

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A shortage of some drugs used to treat attention deficit disorder has driven up prices but has not caused serious disruptions in local treatments, doctors and a pharmacy owner said this week.

Nationwide, the Food and Drug Administration is reporting shortages of amphetamine mixed salts preparations, sold under the brand names Adderall and Vyvanse. The drugs are used to help calm patients, allowing them to focus on tasks for longer periods. Some of the most common users are school-age children diagnosed with ADD after being unable to cope with classroom rules.

"I haven't been completely unsuccessful in locating it for someone," said Ann Bromstedt, owner of Kilgore's Medical Pharmacy. "Sometimes we will call the doctor and then use a higher-dose tablet and break it in half for them. I don't know that I have personally turned anybody away."

Attention deficit disorder, also known as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, is a developmental disorder characterized by inattentiveness, being easily distracted from or bored with a task, and impulsivity. If the patient also is hyperactive, it means they fidget in their seats, are often constantly in motion and other inappropriate and excessive activity.

Drugs such as Adderall work by replacing the need for external stimulation with internal stimulation, said [Robert Kline](#), a Columbia pediatric psychologist. The stimulants work by causing the body to produce more dopamine, a key brain chemical tied to feelings of well-being.

"Certain parts of the brain are underaroused" in attention deficit disorder patients, [Kline](#) said. "The stimulants are revving those brain centers up."

The use of drugs to control attention deficit disorder has been criticized as a step often taken just to control unruly children. Although it might seem illogical to give a hyperactive patient a stimulant, it does work, [Kline](#) said. "People ask, 'Why I am going to give my child who is hyperactive a fuel?' But if you give them more fuel, they get better."

There are several possible explanations for the shortage. The patents on regular Adderall have expired, allowing generic drug makers into the market. Newly crafted versions include extended release drugs, such as Adderall XR or Vyvanse.

The Drug Enforcement Administration is putting greater scrutiny on the amphetamines that are the raw material for the drugs, according to some reports. And the Wall Street Journal reported yesterday that a new study of prescription drug use found that the use of attention deficit disorder drugs tripled among people ages 20 to 44 from 2001 to 2010.

That could be the result of an aging population already on the drug combined with new diagnoses of the disorder in adults.

The shortage locally does not appear to be too severe, said Aneesh Tosh, an adolescent medicine physician at MU Children's Hospital.

"I have not had a patient or parent bring that up to me," he said. "And there are many other alternatives that I do use with patients."

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