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## Ritalin | Ritalin Addiction | Ritalin Physical Effects

**Ritalin** ([methylphenidate, benzedrine](#)) is a central nervous system stimulant, similar to amphetamines in the nature and duration of its effects. It is believed that it works by activating the brain stem arousal system and cortex. Pharmacologically, it works on the neurotransmitter dopamine, and in that respect resembles the stimulant characteristics of cocaine. When taken in accordance with usual prescription instructions, it would be classified as having mild to moderate stimulant properties, but when snorted or injected it has a strong stimulant effect.

**Ritalin** is manufactured by CIBA-Geigy Corporation, and is supplied in 5 mg., 10 mg., and 20 mg. tablets, and in a sustained release form, Ritalin SR as 20 mg. tablets. It is readily water soluble and is intended for oral use. It is a controlled substance, i.e. the government strictly regulates the amount that may be manufactured, through a system of rigid manufacturing quotas. When abused, Ritalin tablets are taken orally, crushed and then snorted, or dissolved in water and "cooked" for intravenous injection. There are numerous reports in medical journals about permanent and irreversible lung tissue damage related to injection of crushed Ritalin tablets. In order to make the 5- to 20 mg. dose tablets large enough to handle easily, at least 100 mg. of "inert ingredients" are added to the tablets to increase their size. Depending upon size and formulation, the following inert ingredients are found in **Ritalin tablets**, according to the manufacturer: lactose, starch, polyethelene glycol, magnesium stearate, sucrose, talc, cellulose, mineral oil, and various dyes and conditioning agents. While these ingredients are "inert" when taken by mouth, they can cause serious problems when injected or snorted.

See also - [Alternative ways of treating ADD/ADHD](#)

## **Ritalin addiction**

A growing number of youngsters taking the drug Ritalin (methylphenidate) experience **overdoses**,

researchers report. The study looked at the frequency of

### **Ritalin overdose**

cases reported to a regional poison control centre in Detroit. Children ages 6 to 9 years were at the greatest risk of overdose, compared with other age groups. Over a two-year period, 289 cases were reported. Of these, 31% developed symptoms. Most common adverse effects included tachycardia (elevated heart rate), agitation and lethargy. Most cases were due to parents or caregivers unintentionally giving patients excessive amounts of the drug.

## **Ritalin and addiction**

The amount of addicts in recovery who used Ritalin as children is alarming. This poses two scenarios, either [Attention Deficit Disorder ADD](#) is part and parcel of addiction or the effect that Ritalin has on the brain significantly pre-conditions children with the physical memory of the stimulation of dopamine. The physical memory of the chemical effects that Ritalin could be anchored in children only to be awoken later in life when the adult experiments for the first time with dopamine stimulating drugs. The awakened memory could result in immediate dependence with addiction as the result.

## **Health consequences of intravenous and/or injection use of Ritalin**

The hypodermic syringe was designed to deliver a concentrated dose of a drug quickly and efficiently. In doing so, it bypasses many of the body's natural defence mechanisms such as the skin, respiratory cilia, digestive acids, etc. The syringe allows anything in it (drugs, dust, bacteria, pollen, allergens, yeasts, viruses, fillers, etc.) to pass directly into the blood and body tissues. The rapid delivery of drugs via injection makes it difficult for the user to control the intensity of the drug effect, thus making toxic overdoses more likely. When drugs are prepared for injection by a street user, dust, dirt, and other contaminants fall into the liquid. Bacteria, talc, lint, and other particles are injected along with the drug. The "inert ingredients" that manufacturers include to increase the bulk may be harmless when taken by mouth, but talc, cellulose, mineral oil, and sugars (among other fillers) can create serious problems when injected directly into veins or body tissues. Complications from injection drug use include:

drug overdoses and toxic overdose reactions, blood clots from scar tissue, particles in the liquid, cotton and lint fibres etc., infections ("blood poisoning," abscesses, hepatitis, HIV/AIDS, scars ("tracks" and adhesions) pulmonary problems ("addict's lung," embolisms, etc.), skin and circulatory problems.

## **Health consequences of snorting Ritalin (intranasal insufflation)**

The delicate epithelial tissues that line the nasal cavities and air passages may be damaged by direct contact with drugs. Ritalin tablets contain the hydrochloride salt of methylphenidate and yield dilute hydrochloric acid when they come into contact with moisture. While this is not a

problem in the stomach (hydrochloric acid is one of the digestive acids used in the stomach), in the nasal passages the acid can "burn" the delicate nasal tissues, resulting in open sores, nose bleeds, and possibly in deterioration of the nasal cartilage.

## **Signs of Ritalin addiction and abuse**

### **Common signs and side effects of Ritalin use**

**The side effects of Ritalin addiction include but are not limited to:**

- drug addiction
- nervousness and insomnia
- loss of appetite
- nausea and vomiting
- dizziness
- headaches
- changes in heart rate and blood pressure (usually elevation of both, but occasionally depression)
- skin rashes and itching
- abdominal pain
- weight loss
- digestive problems
- toxic psychosis
- psychotic episodes
- severe depression upon withdrawal

**High doses of stimulants produce a predictable set of symptoms that include:**

- loss of appetite (may cause serious malnutrition)
- tremors and muscle twitching
- fevers, convulsions, and headaches (may be severe)
- irregular heartbeat and respiration (may be profound and life threatening)
- anxiety, restlessness
- paranoia, hallucinations, and delusions
- excessive repetition of movements and meaningless tasks
- formication (sensation of bugs or worms crawling under the skin)

**While death due to non-medical use of Ritalin is not common, it has been known to occur.**

## **Common symptoms of a Ritalin overdose**

### **Symptoms of Ritalin overdose may include:**

- agitation
- confusion
- convulsions (may be followed by coma)
- delirium
- dryness of mucous membranes
- enlarging of the pupil of the eye
- exaggerated feeling of elation
- extremely elevated body temperature
- flushing
- hallucinations
- headache
- high blood pressure
- irregular or rapid heartbeat
- muscle twitching
- sweating
- tremors
- vomiting

## **Ritalin addiction treatment programs**

Ritalin is a highly addictive prescription drug. Recovery and rehabilitation from Ritalin addiction may require a treatment program ranging from certified addiction counselling to treatment at a residential alcohol and drug rehab centre, depending on the extent of the addiction and a number of other factors.