

HOW ADHD MEDS WORK

THE BASICS

ADHD is linked to differences in chemicals in the brain called neurotransmitters. The main ones are **dopamine** and **norepinephrine**.

These chemicals help your brain with focus, motivation, and self-control.

In ADHD brains, there is usually less of these chemicals available or they don't work as efficiently.

IMPORTANT:

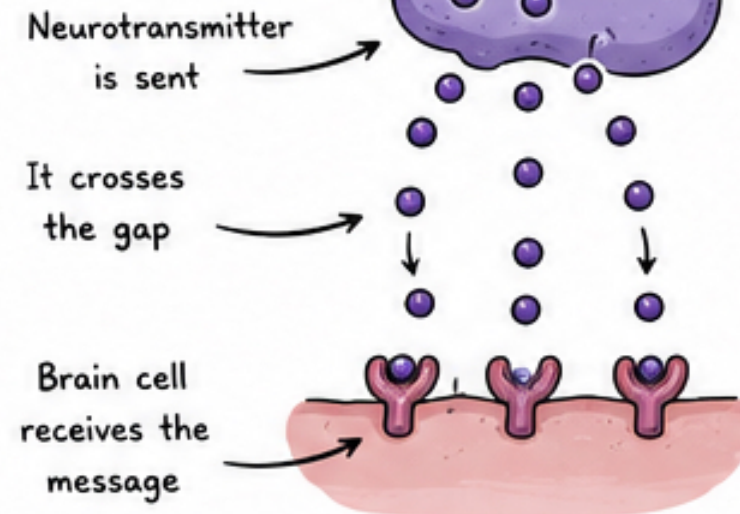
Medication doesn't change who you are. It helps your brain work better so your skills and effort can shine.



1. WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE ADHD BRAIN?

Typical Brain

Neurotransmitters (dopamine and norepinephrine) are made, sent, and received smoothly.



ADHD Brain

Fewer neurotransmitters are available, so the message is weaker or lost.



Result: Harder to focus, stay organized, control impulses, and regulate energy.

2. HOW ADHD MEDICATION WORKS

Most ADHD meds increase the amount of dopamine and norepinephrine in the brain. They do this in two main ways:

Stimulant Meds

(e.g., Adderall, Vyvanse, Ritalin)

They help your brain cells keep more dopamine and norepinephrine available for longer.

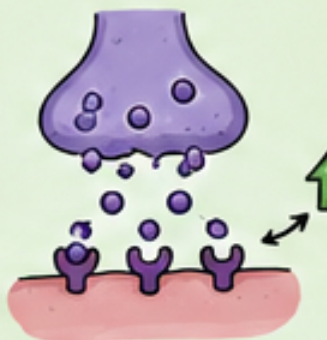


Blocks the "reuptake" (reabsorption) pump, so more chemicals stay in the gap.

Non-Stimulant Meds

(e.g., Strattera, Intuniv, Qelbree)

They work in different ways to increase or steady these chemicals or improve how the brain uses them.



Helps the brain make more or use them more effectively.

More available chemicals = stronger signals = better focus, control, and follow-through.



THE GOAL



ADHD meds help your brain work with you, not against you. They give you a better chance to focus, learn, and live the life you want.



3. WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

Medication doesn't give you instant motivation. It helps your brain remove roadblocks.

WITHOUT MEDS

- Distracted easily
- Tasks feel overwhelming
- Hard to start or finish
- Mind feels noisy
- Impulsive decisions



WITH MEDS

- Easier to focus
- Tasks feel manageable
- More in control
- Clearer mind
- Better choices



4. IMPORTANT TO KNOW



It takes time.

Meds can take days to weeks to find the right one and the right dose.



They help, but they're not a cure.

Skills, habits, sleep, exercise, and support still matter.



You still have to put in effort.

Meds open the door—YOU walk through it.



Everyone is different.

What works (and side effects) can be different for everyone.

Always work with a doctor or nurse.

Never start, stop, or change your medication without medical advice.

