

# Is ritalin overprescribed in the US

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



of the of the Outline Thesis: Nowadays Ritalin is being excessively prescribed by the doctors in the US and the level of its usage on children has reached an alarming state. 1. Background A. Reasons for spread of drug 1. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. 2. Spread in the late 1900s. 3. Prescription of Drug 2. Statistics A. Initial use of Drug B. Increase in production C. Current consumption of Ritalin

Is Ritalin overprescribed in the US? It has been estimated that about five percent of the school going children suffer from ADHD. ADHD is an abbreviation of Attention-deficit Hyperactivity disorder. Diagnosis of this disorder is extremely hard but generally the sufferer show conditions of hyperactivity and inattention to the listener. There is no exact cure of the disease but Ritalin is used widely as a nervous system depressant which stimulates certain chemicals in the brain and produces a calming effect on the children. Nowadays Ritalin is being excessively prescribed by the doctors in the US and the level of its usage on children has reached an alarming state. The use of Ritalin in US has increased by almost six hundred percent during the years 1990-1998. According to United Nations, the usage of Ritalin in US is five times greater than the consumption of the entire world combined. Ritalin is supposed to be used only by children who suffer from ADHD but the Ritalin has been so widely spread around the country that adults have also begun to use it. Children who are naughty and difficult to control are given dosages of Ritalin thinking that they also suffer from ADHD. As Ritalin gives a soothing and calming effect on a person, it has become increasingly common among the teens and adults. The result is the demand of Ritalin has increased considerably. According to the studies conducted by the government, currently about 4 million school going children suffer from

Attention deficit disorder but the number of prescriptions of Ritalin exceeds 20 million. It has been established by research that the drug is safe and does not produce any long-term side effects. This has encouraged the companies to market for their drugs directly to the general public. The public has therefore more access and information about the drug. This course of action is wrong as the information about Ritalin should only be used by proper qualified physicians. But on the other hand it has not been established that it has any long-term beneficial effect on the children. Ritalin produces a temporary calming and sedating effect and does not prove beneficial in curing the child. Although negative effects of the drugs are not yet known, the drug is classified under Schedule II along with cocaine and morphine indicating that it has an addictive effect. Regular dosage of Ritalin hence makes the children addicted to it and regular dosages become mandatory in the hope of treating their disorder. More than 150000 children in the US were using Ritalin in the year 1970. In the year 1974, this number had rocketed to 500000. Just three years later there were almost 1.8 million children who had been prescribed Ritalin on a daily dosage. The immense demand in Ritalin required more production of this drug. During the 1990s, the production of Ritalin had increased by seven hundred percent. More than three million people were prescribed Ritalin in 1991 and this figure increased to 11 million in 1998. It is easy to conclude from these facts and figures, that regardless of its success in controlling ADHD, its use has dramatically increased over the years. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or ADHD is a strange disorder which cannot be diagnosed by any sort of physical test. It is hence very difficult to establish that a child is indeed suffering from ADHD.

Children, who are inattentive in school but pay proper attention while playing sports and video games, do not suffer from ADHD. The effectiveness of Ritalin has been so widely publicized that it is now considered a guaranteed cure for those who suffer from ADHD. Doctors and parents consider Ritalin as an easy solution for children who show symptoms of ADHD, though in reality they may not be suffering from it. The end result is that almost every child per classroom is being treated with Ritalin regularly. The increased dependency on Ritalin is the reason that it is indeed being overprescribed in the US. With such a huge demand of Ritalin, its production is likely to increase multifold in the coming years. However having such a large portion of population dependent on drugs is a harmful prospect. Pharmaceutical companies and Government should discourage the use of Ritalin and place strict limitations on doctors on its prescription. Researches should be started and funded by the government which can discover the possible causes and cure of ADHD and in the meanwhile Ritalin should be prescribed after complete diagnosis of the disorder. Works Cited CNN Health. " Ritalin debate: Are we over-medicating?". 2001. Web. 21 June 2011. DeGrandpre, Richard. Ritalin Nation: Rapid-Fire Culture and the Transformation of Human Consciousness . W. W. Norton & Company; Reprint edition , 2000. Print.